Science of Thought and the Culture of Democracy in Postwar Japan, 1946-1962

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Abstract

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This dissertation examines efforts to foster a culture of democracy in postwar Japan, focusing on *Science of Thought,* one of the most influential associations engaged in publicly rethinking democracy in the years after fascism and defeat. The group was founded in 1946 by seven young intellectuals whose wartime experiences had convinced them of the urgent need to bridge the gap between the world of intellectuals and that of "ordinary people." My dissertation shows how the group's many attempts to realize that goal embodied a vision of democratic experimentation that had to be re-articulated again and again in response to challenges that arose in connection with geopolitical events and also with the social changes that accompanied economic recovery and growth.

For *Science of Thought*, democracy was not something that could be decreed by occupation authorities or conjured into existence by the media. Its seeds had to be sought in the "thought" (shisō) of the "man on the street." Contributors to the group's journal espoused a "science of thought" capable of enabling researchers to discover the mental worlds and implicit philosophies of ordinary people. Drawing methodological insight from American pragmatist philosophy and social science, the group conducted statistical surveys and interviews, and produced content analyses of popular movies, novels, and comic books in an unusual experiment to probe the mind of the "common man."

In the charged political context of the early fifties, members of the group searched for new ways to nurture democracy from the grassroots. Inspired by the apparent success of the ongoing social revolution in China, members began promoting and facilitating educational and cultural

movements underway in the Japanese countryside. In the process, *Science of Thought* became an anchor for a nation-wide network of factory workers, engineers, students, and housewives linked together by reading groups and writing circles.

As economic growth began to transform Japanese society in the late fifties and early sixties, the group's earlier faith in the inherent democratic pragmatism of ordinary people gave way to promoting a more oppositional stance, embodied in the classless ideal of the citizen-activist confronting the pressures of conformism in mass society and white-collar life. On the basis of this ideal, the group became an enthusiastic supporter of the large-scale protests against the US-Japan Security Treaty in 1960, which marked the beginning of citizen movements that influenced Japanese civil society in the subsequent decades.

The evolution of the group from a small research circle into a standard-bearer for citizen's activism in the sixties can be seen as a metonym for the experience of postwar progressives, an experience that included moments of pro-Enlightenment optimism and anti-American nationalism. Rather than through developing a specific theory of democracy or citizenship, the significance of *Science of Thought* lay in the way it exemplified democracy in practice. The accumulated practical experience of the intellectuals and citizens associated with the group remains relevant to those who continue to grapple with the dillemas of democracy today.

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This dissertation is dedicated to my family.

Introduction: *Science of Thought* **and Democracy**

Twentieth-century democracy was shaped by the collision of two contradictory modern projects. The first project, associated with the European Enlightenment and ideas of human progress, was a struggle to emancipate individuals from traditional ties in politics, religion, morality, and economics in order to enable their full participation in representative self-government. The second, often associated with nineteenth-century criticism of the Enlightenment, was directed toward ameliorating or overcoming the negative effects of social processes associated with modernity, such as the unchecked advance of the division of labor, conformism to the demands of mass society, imperialist expansion, the formation of new class hierarchies. These trends made the task of popular self-government difficult or impossible, although the same processes might also appear to further earlier Enlightenment goals of undermining older social formations that were imagined to impede the emergence of free individuals.[1] Efforts to grapple in different ways with the points of contradiction in these two projects generated a wide range of political and intellectual orientations – socialist, progressive, liberal, corporatist, conservative, communist – which became broadly aligned with democracy as something to be aspired to, or preserved, by taking measures to contain its self-destructive tendencies. Political theorists have argued that the strength of a democratic polity is its adaptability and capacity to "error-correct" over time.[2] In other words, democracies provide opportunities and institutional mechanisms to mediate creatively between ongoing emancipatory projects and emergent criticism of their unwanted side-effects.

The difficulty of settling on a simple definition of democracy arises in part because of the accumulation of different meanings and ideals that have come to be associated with it over the

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[1] Georg Simmel used a similar schema for characterizing the difference between 18th and 19th century
[2] An influential attempt to make this argument appeared in John Dewey, *The Public and its Problems* (Chicago: A. Swallow, 1927). For a more recent attempt, see Jack Night and James Johnson, *The Priority of Democracy: Political Consequences of Pragmatism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011)

course of a discontinuous historical genealogy, one that gave rise to democratic political movements that deviated in various ways from classical liberal visions centered on political regimes founded upon popular sovereignty and the inviolability of individual rights. Global and local crises, including war and economic depression, prompted diverse attempts to rethink the relationship between democratic ideals and critiques of modernity. As a result, the line separating "democratic" from "anti-democratic" " ideas and institutions was redrawn again and again.[3]

The mid-twentieth-century political events associated with World War II, decolonization, and the Cold War impelled intellectuals around the world once again to debate the future of democracy in terms of its ideals and its critics. In the defeated nations, many believed that the uncertain political situation and the urgent tasks of postwar reconstruction offered unprecedented opportunities to put democratic ideas into practice. In Japan, this practice included supporting Allied Occupation reforms aimed at promoting democracy, joining political parties, and actively engaging in journalism and education at a moment when public opinion appeared promisingly fluid.

Although some Japanese intellectuals had attempted to influence public opinion and policy during the war, many observers believed that the wide-ranging civic involvement of intellectuals in the immediate postwar period was unprecedented. Reminiscing about the period from 1945-1948, the legal scholar Kawashima Takeyoshi (1909-1992) wrote that he had the opportunity to join dozens of new intellectual associations, ranging from specialist legal associations proposing drafts for a new constitution to the Association of Democratic Scientists (Minshushugi kagakusha kyôkai), a group of liberal to left progressive scholars who joined to form a nation-wide network of activist democrats. Similarly, associations like the Cultural Union for the Democratic Renewal of Germany (*Kulturbund zur demokratischen Erneurerung Deutschlands*) in Berlin, the Heidelberg Action Group for

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[3] For example, recurrent debates about secularism, cultural assimilation, and national identity often revolve around the question of what might encourage or hinder participation in democratic political life.

Democracy and Free Socialism (*Heidelberg Aktionsgurppe zur Demokratie und zum freien Socialismus*), and the Free German Cultural Society (*Freie Deutsche Kulturgesellschaft*) in Frankfurt produced networks of political and intellectual engagement. New monthly journals *Die Wandlung* (1945-1949) and *Aufbau* (1945-1949) in Germany and *Sekai* (1945-) and *Tenbô* (1946-1951) in Japan helped to link the shared goals of postwar reconstruction to ideas of democracy as a form of spiritual rebirth, providing new outlets for intellectuals to reach a non-specialist audience.[4] Interest in political engagement among intellectuals was not limited to Japan and Germany. In France, new and relaunched journals such as *Les Temps Modernes* (1945-), *Socialisme ou Barbarie* (1948-1965), and *Esprit* (1932-) provided similar opportunities for politically engaged intellectuals.

The journal *Science of Thought* (*Shisô no kagaku*, 1946-1996), the subject of this study, originated in this moment of intense associational and political activity among Japanese intellectuals across the political spectrum. It was founded by a group of seven young intellectuals -- the political theorist Maruyama Masao (1914-1996), philosopher Tsurumi Shunsuke (1922-), sociologist Tsurumi Kazuko (1918-2006), Christian activist Takeda Kiyoko (1917-), Marxian economist Tsuru Shigeto (1912-2006), and physicists Taketani Mitsuo (1911-2000) and Watanabe Satoshi (1910-1993). *Science of Thought* and its affiliated association, the Institute for the Science of Thought (1949-), became two of the longest lasting and most influential examples of intellectual cooperation to arise out of the political ferment of the war.

Four of the founders -- Tsuru, Takeda, and the Tsurumi siblings -- met while studying in the United States before the outbreak of the Pacific War in 1941. In 1942, the four returned to Japan. Tsurumi Shunsuke became an English translator for the Japanese Navy in Java, and Tsurumi Kazuko and Tsuru Shigeto put their knowledge of America to use as researchers affiliated with the

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[4] On the network of engaged democrats in postwar Germany, see Sean Horner, *Catastrophe and Renewal: Germany's Engaged Democrats Between East and West, 1945-1960*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Dissertation, 2007), chapter 2.

Taiheyô kyôkai (Pacific Association). The Taiheiyô kyôkai was a think tank founded in Tokyo in 1938 by the politician Tsurumi Yûsuke (1885-1973), father of Shunsuke and Kazuko; it was devoted to social scientific research on the United States and the Pacific.

On the basis of the difference in industrial capability between Japan and the United States, the returnees believed that the defeat of Japan was inevitable. Even as Tsuru and Tsurumi Kazuko were still working on essays analyzing the weakness of the "American character" for the Taiheyô kyôkai, they had already begun searching for ways to involve themselves in the coming postwar reconstruction. They contacted Maruyama, Taketani, and Watanabe – like-minded intellectuals who had begun preparing essays intended to influence public opinion after the war ended. Tsurumi Shunsuke returned from Java and joined this circle of acquaintances in 1944. In 1945, with financial backing from their father, Shunsuke and Kazuko reorganized the Taiheiyô kyôkai as Senkusha ("Vanguard Company"), the first publisher of *Science of Thought*. Shunsuke, who went abroad to attend school in America at the age of 16 and had difficulty readjusting to life in Japan after the war, became absorbed in running the journal, which provided him with both an intellectual outlet and social network.

The journal debuted in May 1946 to eager readers who quickly bought out its initial print-run of 20,000 copies. Early issues devoted considerable space to book reviews that displayed its founders' knowledge of America and access to Anglo-American works of philosophy and social science. The objectives for the journal laid out in the first issue emphasize the task of "importing thought" from America and Britain and applying it to Japanese society. The initial objectives were as follows:

> 1) Our journal takes its main objective to be the assimilation of logical and empirical (論理実験的) methods in areas of thought (思索) and practice.

> 2) We would like to discuss the various methodological problems that accompany this attempt. Our journal will concentrate on importing global intellectual currents that

complement the above objective. As an initial starting point, we will work to introduce Anglo-American thought to Japan.

3) Our journal will maintain a critical attitude, taking care that in introducing foreign thought, we do not stop at the level of explication. Furthermore, we will consider how this foreign thought can be used as a tool to analyze and critique Japanese society.

 4) Our journal will create a column for readers to contribute criticism to articles to which authors can then respond. In this way, through an active discussion among readers and writers, the thought (思想) represented by the journal will gradually be elaborated upon and evolve. [5]

The journal quickly became a site for innovative projects aimed at bridging the gap between the world of intellectuals and that of "ordinary people," at that time considered the domain of tabloid journalism. While intellectually prestigious journals like *Sekai* debated the merits of socialism and existentialism in the context of the Cold War, *Science of Thought* focused its attention on investigating the daily life of firemen and analyzing popular comics. The group turned away from ongoing debates about "-isms" and "-cracies" toward subjects traditionally considered unworthy of serious intellectual attention.

For *Science of Thought*, democracy was not something that could be decreed by the occupation authorities or conjured into existence by the media. Its seeds had to be sought in the "thought" (*shisō*) of the "man on the street." Contributors espoused a "science of thought" capable of enabling researchers to discover the mental worlds and implicit philosophies of ordinary people. Over time the interdisciplinary social scientific project associated with *Science of Thought* grew into a nation-wide movement aimed at creating a common space where people could participate in the creation of a kaleidoscopic democratic culture, one in which it was possible to -- at least temporarily -- step

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[5] "Sôkan no shushi," *Shisô no kagaku*, (Jan., 1946), 3

outside conventional social roles, whether that of housewife, worker, or professional, and become a public philosopher.

The Institute membership reflected the founders' intention to ignore traditional disciplinary divisions and social categories, eventually including a political mix of pragmatists, Communists, liberals, and anarchists and an occupational mix of professors, scientists, artists, political activists, workers, amateur anthropologists, technicians, and university students. By 1950, the Tokyo-based group included 120 members, a number that expanded rapidly with the opening of branches and reading groups in cities all over Japan.[6] Although the group derived inspiration from the intellectual salons of the French Enlightenment and the Metaphysical Club of nineteenth-century America, their own meetings, conducted against the backdrop of the Cold War, proved more volatile than they had expected. Members hurled charges of elitism at one another and traded accusations that contending factions were trying to undermine the Institute's openness and turn it into a front for Soviet or U.S. propaganda. Even as it maintained a prominent public presence, the group's journal folded and restarted publication five times before achieving stability in 1962. Over the course of its first two decades of existence, many of the original founders of *Science of Thought* moved toward other intellectual pursuits. Tsurumi Shunsuke was the important exception. He began his intellectual career as an interpreter of American pragmatism for the journal and achieved fame as an anti-war activist involved in protests against the US-Japan Security Treaty and the Vietnam War in the 1960s. He remained heavily involved in editing the journal and managing the Institute throughout his long career. To a considerable degree, his intellectual turns both mirrored and influenced that of the overall group even as its membership changed and enlarged over time.

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[6] The 1950 member list is reproduced in Tamura Norio, "'Atarashii shinbungaku' no tanjô to 'masukomi'-ron no eikyô," *Komyûnikêshon kagaku* 35 (2012), 131。

The experience of *Science of Thought* exemplified several of the challenges encountered by postwar thinkers who tried to break from the past and realize a new form of democracy. In the *Prison Notebooks,* Antonio Gramsci argued that while every political movement "creates a language of its own," the participants in such movements often take for granted the clarity of widely circulated concepts to the "average reader." Indeed, the intellectual output of the *Science of Thought* was part of a larger struggle to articulate a truly new democratic language for postwar Japan and convey these concepts to "ordinary people." This was perhaps most literally true in early articles in the journal *Science of Thought*, which analyzed artificial languages and promoted dozens of new terms and neologisms, most of them drawn from Anglo-American analytic philosophy, Peircean semiotics, and new social sciences like communications research.   While these initiatives were intended to make intellectual activity more practical, accessible, and scientific, early attempts at constructing a new language were susceptible to pitfalls encountered by other contemporary movements that tried to propagate a critical consciousness beyond the sphere of traditional intellectuals.

In time, *Science of Thought* moved toward a multi-faceted approach to the task of mediating between professional intellectuals and "ordinary people." This task of mediation required both an intellectualizing of the quotidian and a quotidianizing of the intellectual. In other words, the group worked to expand the definition of "thought" (思想) and "philosophy" (哲学) to include forms of everyday, practical activity associated with people from different walks of life. Through this effort, *Science of Thought* developed a pluralistic vision of thought and practice that became an important part of the intellectual legacy of postwar Japan.

Postwar Intellectuals and the Past

The founders of *Science of Thought* shared a skepticism about the sudden enthusiasm for democracy among intellectuals and politicians who had so recently supported the war effort,

including not least themselves. For with the exception of Taketani Mitsuo, none of the members had actively resisted the war. Yet, even as they participated in mobilization, they also took notes, observing linguistic behavior in the military and seeking passive resistance among women drafted to work in supply factories. They thus greeted the end of the war with a mixture of remorse about their own conformism and optimism about the prospect of discovering the building blocks for democracy among the lived experience of the masses, with whom they had first come in close contact during the war.

Other intellectuals previously wary of political engagement embraced the opportunity after the war to break out of the confines of academic specialization and address a wider reading public. The new and revived journals, associations, political parties, and Occupation reforms seemed to promise a role for intellectuals as participants in a collective effort to reconcile the original project of modernity with critical efforts to overcome the pathological consequences of modernization – among which the war appeared a proximate and spectacular example. This turn to civic engagement was overtly associated with the widespread sense of guilt and regret experienced by intellectuals in the aftermath of the war. Many felt they had not done enough to resist the rise of fascism in the thirties, and a shared sense of failed public responsibility, a "community of contrition," was part of the psychological foundation for associational activity after the war. [7]

If recent wartime experiences impelled their activism, the strategies of engagement adopted for working through their sense of personal conflict had a deeper history. Historians point to the role of the Dreyfus Affair in *fin-de-siècle* France in the formation of the ideal of the intellectual who makes use of cultural authority derived from specialized knowledge in order to intervene publicly to remedy a social problem or injustice in a different field.[8] In addition, the proliferation of research

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[7] Maruyama Masao, "Kindai nihon no chishikijin," in *Kôei no ichi kara*, (Tokyo: Mirai-sha, 1982)

[8] E.g., Pierre Bourdieu, "The Corporatism of the Universal – The Role of the Intellectual in Modern

universities around the world since the late nineteenth century taught intellectuals in higher

education to associate their experience with the academic division of labor with broader social

processes linked to the atomization of the individual in modern society.[9] Dividing one's time

between specialized research and civic engagement – which could expose negative aspects of

contemporary society – was one strategy by which intellectuals sought to reconcile the contradiction

between the ideals of modernity and its trenchant critiques.

Postwar calls for civic engagement were often framed in terms of reasserting the role of the

public intellectual in the boundaries of newly permissible speech. Such calls could sometimes seem

calculated to avoid political controversy in the context of military occupation. In his 1945 lectures

on "The Question of German Guilt," the philosopher Karl Jaspers advocated increased civic

involvement while warning intellectuals to avoid engaging in "propaganda."

> The fact that we have a military government now means, without my having to say so in so
> many words, that we have no right to criticize the military government.
>
> But all that denotes no repression of our research, only a firm compulsion to refrain from
> doing what is never our business: dabbling in political actions and decisions of the day. To
> me it seems that only malice would consider that a restraint of our research into the truth...
> This again does not mean that we have freedom to engage in propaganda. Propaganda
> might perhaps be tolerated if in line with the political aims valid today. At the university it
> would even then be a calamity.[10]

In Japan, intellectuals frequently called for wholesale cultural reconstruction rather than

appealing to a more narrowly framed democratic political program. The postwar critic Hanada

Kiyoteru (1909-1974) named his new journal *Sôgô bunka* (*Integrated Culture*). Alongside a translation

of E. M. Forster's "two cheers for democracy," the editorial postscript to the first issue of the

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World" *Telos* 81 (1989).

[9] E.g., Stefan Collini's account of "specialization and its discontents" in Britain from the 19th and
20th centuries. Stefan Collini, *Absent Minds*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), chapter 20.

[10] Karl Jaspers, *The Question of German Guilt*, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2001), 4

journal *Tenbô* (*Prospect*) juxtaposed the task of reflecting on defeat with a cosmopolitan mission to overcome the fragmentation of knowledge through a unitary vision of world history.

> The tragedy of defeat is rooted in the vulgarity and weakness of Japanese culture (*bunka*). Everyone knows the great task of constructing a new culture will not be easy to accomplish. It requires investigating the past, scrutinizing the present, and foreseeing the future. This must take place at the level of a unified, organic world historical vision (*tenbô*).

Although the editors asserted that the mission of the journal was to assist in the construction of a new culture, the language they used to articulate their vision of the intellectual as a figure charged with unifying the disparate fragmented spheres of specialized knowledge and technique into a coherent whole was in fact quite familiar. A poll from 1933, which asked college students whom they most respected in contemporary society, revealed that the popularity of the Marxist Miki Kiyoshi (1897-1945) and the liberal Hasegawa Nyozekan (1875-1969), surpassed that of Mussolini, Gandhi, Lenin, and all other Japanese public figures. Miki and Hasegawa were public intellectuals who wrote timely, politically engaged essays for a non-specialized educated audience.[11] Although both were eventually silenced or receded from the public scene during the war, other thinkers continued to advocate the importance of publically visible intellectuals in mediating between the wartime demand for technological modernization and the preservation of a unifying, totalizing form of culture – albeit expressed in a political register that was, if not always straightforwardly aligned with fascism, at least more difficult to associate with increased demands for democratic participation.

Dismissing much of the public involvement of intellectuals during the years of total mobilization as fascist, while associating democracy with an increased public role for intellectuals could also seem to connote the *restoration* of political normalcy, associated with Taishô democracy in Japan and the Weimar Republic in Germany, after the aberrant experience of fascism and war. Although this restorationist impulse was most often associated with the return of "Old (Taishô)

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[11] Takeuchi Yô, *Kakushin gensô no sengoshi* (Tokyo: Chûô kôronsha, 2011), 415

Liberals" like Hasegawa to public visibility in Japan, the assertion of a traditional public role for intellectuals was not necessarily liberal or conservative. Nostalgia for the interwar past could equally imply the positive recognition of a suppressed revolutionary tradition in Japan associated with the Communist Party, which was founded as an underground political association during the Taishô period in 1922.[12] During the early postwar years, old liberals linked arms with old revolutionaries in the Association of Democratic Scientists (*Minka*) and the Peace Discussion Circle (*Heiwa mondai kondankai*).

Yet within this popular front, the founders of the journal *Science of Thought* were among the many intellectuals seizing the opportunity to form associations and address a wider reading public after the war who believed that democracy connoted more than the restoration of any form of the status quo. As younger intellectuals who had come of age during the war – the 45ers in Germany and the wartime generation (*senchûha*) in Japan – they were less likely to associate democracy with the parliamentary or leftist politics and pluralistic atmosphere of the 1920s. Rather than a salvageable tradition to be drawn upon in a new postwar beginning, liberal and revolutionary movements associated with interwar democracy appeared to them at best well-intentioned failures.[13] They were worried more about strands of continuity from wartime and into the postwar years despite the dominant rhetoric of democracy. This generational optic helps explain why younger intellectuals in Germany and Japan remained skeptical about the rootedness of democratic ideas and institutions in the postwar context.[14]

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[12] The revived journal *Yuibutsuron kenkyûkai* worked to recuperate this Marxist intellectual legacy after the war. See Ôi Tadashi, "Kenkyûsha soshiki to minshushugi – Nihon yuibutsuron kenkyûkai no koto" (*Shin nihon bungaku*, Oct. 1961).

[13] Kuno Osamu, Tsurumi Shunsuke, Fujita Shôzô, *Sengo nihon no shisô*, (Tokyo: Iwanami, 2010), chapter 1.

[14] For the German case, see Dirk Moses, *German Intellectuals and the Nazi Past* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), chapter 3.

Such skepticism about democracy during the Occupation did not, however, impel them to withdraw from politics or abandon democratic ideals. It served rather as an impetus to attempt a more radical break from the past and to search for new ways to work toward democracy. The journal *Science of Thought* and its attendant association, The Institute for the Science of Thought, stood out as organizations that managed to sustain a creative intellectual movement which sought new forms of democratic activity in the changed social and political landscape of postwar Japan. The founders of Science of Thought were committed to a broadly shared progressive mission of advancing an emancipatory project associated with Enlightenment ideals of democracy while remedying its emergent defects, yet they pursued this mission in a way that altered the categories – including the social category of the intellectual – which many postwar thinkers took for granted.

Experiments in Democratic Practice

The intellectuals associated with *Science of Thought* worked to build a culture of democracy in Japan in a trial-and-error process across several decades. While tracking these twists and turns, I argue that the group's varied intellectual activities embodied a vision of radical democracy which had to be re-articulated again and again in response to challenges that arose in connection with political events and also with the social changes that accompanied economic recovery and growth. Radical democracy entailed making the imaginative life of the mind a public good, of interest to everyone, and defending it against attempts to keep it the possession of any single class, political party, or institution. It also meant opposing creeping conformism in schools, workplaces, households, and politics, in order to secure a space for free and engaged democratic expression. To this end, Science of Thought searched Japan for examples of grass-roots democracy-in-action. They drew attention to factory workers writing poetry about their daily lives in the "circle movement" of the early 1950s and to a branch of the peace movement that evolved out of the personal ads section of a tabloid,

phenomena that they believed momentarily negated the functional distinctions among ordinary

citizens, public intellectuals, and career politicians.

The struggle in *Science of Thought* to embrace such a range of ideologies and cultural

production as worthy of serious consideration led one literary critic to mock the group as a "street

vendor" peddling ideas as if they were varieties of "fried offal."[15] This characterization, not unlike

Plato's critique of sophistry, touched upon the group's vision of democracy as a messy, chaotic

system that scrambled what had once been perceived as the natural order of things. The degree to

which this radical, egalitarian vision of participatory democracy and intellectual culture was actually

realized in postwar Japan, and whether a new "post-postwar" vision is now needed are topics of

debate in Japan today. These contemporary debates are intertwined with retrospective assessments

of the legacy of the US occupation, the Cold War, and the rise and fall of Japan's "postwar

economic miracle."   A study of the Japanese Science of Thought movement thus engages the

familiar and conflicting ideas of democracy found in many societies in the last half of the twentieth

century, ideas that remain difficult and contentious in the present.

The postwar embrace of democracy began with the characterization of the immediate past as

hierarchical and wracked with irrational beliefs. Chapter 1 shows how intellectuals affiliated with

Science of Thought forged a shared negative image of the prewar and wartime years, centered on the

elite culture of Imperial Higher Schools, which many of them had attended and later regretted.

During the first quarter of the twentieth century, educators like Nitobe Inazô promoted a

cosmopolitan ideal of intellectual and moral self-cultivation (*kyôyô*) in the liberal arts as an end in

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[15] "After the war, "social scientists," foremost among them *Science of Thought*, set up shop as street vendors who used everything, even the nest egg of the old lady next door, as ingredients. They seasoned their fried offal (horumon ryôri) with pragmatism or historical materialism as sauce…" Fukuda Tsuneari, "Ronsô no susume" *Fukuda Tsuneari Hyôronshû*, vol. 7 (Tokyo: Shinchôsha, 1966), 159.

itself, often in protest against the increasingly specialized and exam-centric world of the university and the government bureaucracy. These educators and the Japanese and Western thinkers they promoted became intellectual celebrities, with devoted disciples called "philosophical youth," who pored over their works in extracurricular reading groups. Their popularity persisted during the hardships of war and defeat, when high school graduates roamed used bookstores in search of their works.   Many of the new pro-democracy intellectual groups that formed after 1945 were hostile toward this display of devotion to thinkers such as Nishida Kitarō, whose philosophy they associated with the fascist past. Progressives argued that his work was a sign of the fanaticism and insularity of prewar intellectual culture.   The initial impetus for a rational, easy to understand, and radically democratic "science of thought" originated in part from this negative image of the past.

Chapter 2 addresses the ways in which members of Science of Thought looked to American society for solutions to the apparent contradiction between intellectual and democratic culture. Like many disillusioned intellectuals in Western Europe, members of Science of Thought regarded World War II as resulting in a shift in intellectual, cultural, and economic dynamism away from Old World centers to the United States, with the Soviet Union as its only potential rival. Japanese thinkers were attracted to America, not only because of its perceived difference from their own society, which they often criticized as rigid and hierarchical, but also because of its difference from Europe, which they now associated with fascism and imperialism. When the economist Tsuru Shigeto claimed that in America "philosophy melts into everyday life," he was expressing a yearning for a world in which politics, popular culture, and intellectual production seemed to reinforce one another in a mutually beneficial relationship that contrasted with the fragmentation of Japanese society after the war. In order to recreate American patterns in Japan, the group gravitated toward the new science of "communication," a concept invested with considerable intellectual expectations in postwar America as the key to solving scientific, diplomatic, and even psychological problems. The efforts of Science

of Thought to reform intellectual culture after the war were guided by an ideal of clear, transparent communication. Good communicators made good democratic citizens, yet the notion that communications science was adequate to the task of realizing democracy came to seem naive in the context of the increased political polarization during the Cold War. Although *Science of Thought* opposed US Cold-War foreign policy, its promotion of Anglo-American thought and the fact that four out of seven of its founders had been partly educated in the United States earned them the derogatory label "America-nik" (Amerika-ya).

Suspicion that the group was a vehicle for American interests intensified when some of its members received a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation in 1949 to study the "Effects of the Japanese Language on Communication." The group conducted statistical surveys and interviews, and produced content analyses of popular movies, novels, and comic books in an unusual experiment to probe the mind of the "common man." This was part of the early interdisciplinary research project on the "Philosophy of Ordinary People," (*Hitobito no tetsugaku*), the subject of chapter 3. In some ways paralleling the effort of Mass Observation to study the everyday life of the working classes in Britain, the project was significant as an experiment in redefining the scope of philosophy in postwar Japan. Science of Thought members used their empirical work as an opportunity to criticize intellectuals who considered popular culture too vulgar to be worthy of serious analysis. They asserted that the implicit "philosophy" (哲学) that structured the everyday life of a fireman, for example, was no less worthy of intellectual exegesis than the philosophical works of Nishida Kitarô or William James. The results of their investigation suggested that "common folks" were generally pragmatic thinkers who were ambivalent about the political issues of vital concern to intellectuals during the Cold War. I argue that the empirical results of their research were less important than their focus on blurring the distinction between highbrow and lowbrow culture by treating daily life as a series of philosophical dilemmas.

In the early fifties, members of Science of Thought began to feel that the social scientific methods they were using to document the lives of the common man were getting in the way of the effort to help Japan overcome the separation between intellectuals and the masses. Disillusioned by the rise of McCarthyism in the US and Japan's continued dependence on US military power, Japanese intellectuals began to question their reliance on so-called imported systems of thought from abroad and top-down models of intellectual dissemination. Science of Thought's intellectual cosmopolitanism came under renewed attack, and some members of the group embraced the Left-wing nationalism that arose during this period. Others were drawn to the newly founded People's Republic of China whose leaders they saw as pursuing an admirably indigenous path toward modernity independent of the Soviet Union. In this context, Science of Thought shifted its focus toward grass-roots educational movements in the countryside, which are the focus of chapter 4. This shift entailed more than a change in the object of analysis to include questioning of the status of the observer, thus renewing some of the themes of self-cultivation that Science of Thought had rejected during the late 1940s. In 1952 the sociologist Tsurumi Kazuko criticized her earlier use of quantitative social scientific methods, saying that henceforth she would become an active part of the communities she studied. Extremely conscious of her elite background as the US-educated daughter of a prominent liberal politician, she worked hard as a participant in amateur writing circles organized by women textile workers in Yokkaichi and helped to popularize their critical observations of everyday life through print and radio. Although these circles were rooted in local communities, many progressives imagined them as parallels to the reading and writing groups in the People's Republic of China. Circles in both countries were thought to play a role in a bottom-up transition toward revolutionary "village democracy" in Asia.

In 1952 the Japanese economy had more in common with that of China than that of either the US or the USSR, but this situation changed with the onset of high growth in the latter half of the

decade. At that point, Tsurumi Shunsuke worried that increasing material prosperity and the

homogenization of everyday life caused by postwar consumer society was blunting the critical edge

and creativity of the circle movement. Chapter 5 examines how a group of young college students

affiliated with Science of Thought responded to these changes by teaming up with Tsurumi in a

collaborative research project on the phenomenon of *tenkô* (political conversion). While the project

ostensibly focused on conversions to fascism among Leftist Japanese intellectuals during the 1930s,

the researchers' concerns arose in fact from the political situation of young Leftists in the late fifties,

caught between conformism to the demands of either the Communist Party or white-collar life

during the period of high growth. The social and political difficulties they confronted resembled

those characterized by the American sociologists David Riesman and C. Wright Mills, but as college

students, they were particularly concerned about politically active classmates who shed their radical

beliefs and committed an "employment conversion" (就職転向) upon graduating from university.

They focused on the ways in which the disconnect between politically radical youthful beliefs and

later conservative behavior reinforced conformism in both the 1930s and the 1950s. As Japan

became an economically more equitable society, the group's earlier belief in the pragmatism of

ordinary people gave way to promoting an oppositional stance, embodied in the classless ideal of the

citizen-activist confronting the pressures of conformism in mass society and white-collar life.

In conclusion, I consider the role of *Science of Thought* during and after the large-scale protests

that erupted in response to the US-Japan Security Treaty in 1960. *Science of Thought* provided one of

the central rallying points during these protests, which marked the beginning of citizens movements

that influenced Japanese civil society in the subsequent decades. The evolution of the group from

an elite research circle outside the academy into a standard-bearer for citizen's activism in the sixties

can be seen as a metonym for the experience of postwar progressives, an experience that included

moments of pro-Enlightenment optimism and anti-American nationalism. Did *Science of Thought*

succeed in its sometimes quixotic quest for popular democracy in postwar Japan? "Not quite" is

the answer, but they did help to move society toward a more expansive definition of democracy as

something that depended on the activities of citizens, not just of politicians. Yet, rather than

through developing a specific theory of democracy or citizenship, the significance of *Science of*

Thought lay in the way it exemplified democracy in practice. An experimental approach to

democratic practice lay at the center of the group's two-front struggle to both realize the

emancipatory project of modernity and overcome its pathological consequences. The accumulated

experience of the intellectuals and citizens associated *Science of Thought* remains relevant to those who

continue to grapple with the unfinished project of democracy today.

<u>Chapter 1: The Negative Origins of Postwar Thought</u>

> Few persons realize how deeply "philosophy" has affected the thinking of modern Japanese. Ever since this new discipline had been introduced in Japan under the name of "exquisite science," it caught the hearts of young Japanese students… Many became so engrossed with philosophic problems that, unable to free themselves from entanglement, they chose death. Modern Japan (1867-) will be known as a society with the highest rate of "philosophic suicides" in the history of the human race. With the advent of the American Army in 1945, Japan is supposed to have been free from old idiosyncrasies and to have taken to American ways of thinking that is true, to some extent. But so far, there is no indication of the fact that Japan is cured of "philosophy."
> 　　　　-Tsurumi Shunsuke, "An Experiment in Common Man's Philosophy," 1951

> Philosophy is surprisingly fashionable today. Young men talk about "absolute dialectics" and argue about "absolute nothingness." Young women carry around a copy of *The Self-Aware Limitation of Nothingness* in their handbags and display *The Fundamental Problem of Philosophy* on top of the piano.
> 　　　　-Miyagi Otoya, "Fashion in Philosophy," 1947

On July 20th, 1947 the *Asahi* newspaper printed a captioned photograph that came to

symbolize the austere yet enthusiastic intellectual atmosphere that rose amid the ruins of early

postwar Japan. Taken at 2 AM in the morning in the Kanda district of Tokyo, an area home to

dozens of used bookstores and publishing houses, the photo depicts a line of young men leeping

outside at night covered in blankets. The row wraps around a street corner punctuated by a broken

pillar. These men were camped outside the headquarters of the publishing house Iwanami Shoten to

purchase Volume One of the Collected Works of the recently deceased Nishida Kitarô (1870-1945),

the founder of the Kyoto School of Philosophy.

The day before, July 19th, 1947, almost two years after the end of World War Two, Iwanami

had begun publishing the collected works (全集) of Nishida, who died in 1945, months before the

war ended. The first volume contained the definitive edition of his most famous work, *Inquiry into

the Good* (善の研究), originally published in 1911. It was the initial explication of Nishida's

philosophical system, grounded upon a concept of a pure experience (純粋経験) ungraspable from

the standpoint of a Cartesian subject/object dichotomy, yet accessible to creation (*poesis*) in artistic or ethical activity.

People began lining up the evening of July 16th to buy a copy, and by the morning of the 18th their number had grown to roughly two hundred. The short caption, "Sleepy Nishida Philosophy," explained that these "students" were there because they were hoping to catch a glimpse of a "facet of eternity" (永遠の相) through Nishida's philosophy. They had brought chairs and took turns getting food rations while holding places in line. The author guessed that at least some of those queued up intended to scalp the book on the black market at an inflated price.[16]

Figure 1.1, The photo published in the *Asahi shinbun* on July 20th, 1947 of customers waiting for the release of *Nishida Kitarô zenshû* Volume 1.

Decades later, the photograph remained an artifact tinged with nostalgia for intellectuals who had reached maturity during the forties and fifties. It came to represent a bygone age of hungry students wandering the war ruins for used books and debating philosophy and politics with strangers on street corners. In a lecture the scholar and public intellectual Maruyama Masao planned to

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[16] "Nemui Nishida tetsugaku" *Asashi shinbun,* (July 20, 1947), 2

deliver in a joint appearance with Jean-Paul Sartre in the 1960s, he referred to the photograph as evidence that students were "starved" for philosophy after the wartime drought, a condition he contrasted with growing intellectual apathy of the present. In retrospect, the photograph represented the intellectual ferment that led to the founding of hundreds of periodicals that discussed democracy during the Allied Occupation. Interest in Nishida's moral philosophy later came to seem of a piece with the new, mostly ephemeral periodicals that gave expression to an outpouring of "painful, earnest, self-critical, and intensely idealistic" sentiments in defeated Japan.[17]

Yet at the time the photo was published, the anonymous "philosophical youth" symbolized by the sleeping Nishida devotees invoked suspicion and criticism, particularly on the pages of the new journals like *Science of Thought* that had sprung up to advocate the creation of a new democratic culture in postwar Japan. The caption and early commentary on the photo suggested that it was a metaphor for the sleep-like, reality-denying state of young people who had not yet "awakened" to the pressing task of rebuilding and reforming Japan. Critics tried to rouse these philosophical disciples from their somnolent state by attacking Nishida for his wartime political activities and those of his Kyoto School followers, the "obscurantism and mysticism" of the philosophical language he employed, his apparent cultural nationalism, and the pernicious effect of his writings on readers, who they imagined might swing violently from political apathy and mental depression to fanatical displays of devotion reminiscent of wartime ultra-nationalism.[18]

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[17] See for example John Dower's juxtaposition of the photo with the postwar publishing boom in support of democracy and science in *Embracing Defeat*, (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999), 186-187

[18] Later scholars argued that many of these criticisms of Nishida and the Kyoto School philosophers were based on poor and irresponsible scholarship with little basis in their actual writings. Some pointed to the influence of the Japanese Communist Party during these years to explain the outpouring of criticism directed toward the Kyoto School, arguing that the intellectual leadership of the Party perceived Nishida and Tanabe's "bourgeois idealist" moral philosophies to be in competition with dialectical-materialism for the hearts and minds of Japan's youth. Still others have labeled the critique of the Kyoto School's advocacy of Japanese tradition a form of "deferred ethnocentrism" among Eurocentric Japanese thinkers eager to import ideas from abroad in order to

The criticism of Nishida and his followers played an important role in forging a negative image of the wartime past and, out of that image, defining a new democratic intellectual subjectivity after the war. In this context, "Nishida" connoted more than his biography or collected works. He was embedded within a larger conception of intellectual culture and sociability in Japan, one that had coalesced in the early twentieth century and found its emblematic expression in the "philosophical youth" (哲学青年) associated with elite imperial high schools and the ideals of *kyôyô* (教養), or intellectual self-cultivation.

After World War II, intellectuals who organized themselves into hundreds of small pro-democracy associations felt the need to combat the archetype of the "philosophical youth," which they associated with the image of their own past. In line with their present selves, they sought a a more politically engaged and scientifically minded alternative. The sleepy Nishida followers were a manifestation of a shared constitutive other that bound together a diverse ideological coalition committed to a redemptive form of democratic subjectivity that would stand in stark contrast to the immediate past.

Early postwar criticism of philosophical youth was a way for progressive intellectuals to grapple with a host of issues: the relationship of philosophy to life in mass society, the legacy of the liberalism of the 1920s and its ideal of individual self-cultivation (*kyôyô*), and the urgent problem of

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rescue Japan from its fallen state. Although the adequacy of the anti-Nishida critique has been much debated, less attention has been paid to the reasons why this kind of philosophical criticism was such a pressing issue for so many intellectuals after the war. I venture an answer to that question by showing the connection between the critique of Nishida and the intellectual culture of *kyôyô* it was perceived to be embedded within across the wartime divide. For other approaches to postwar criticism of Nishida, see Christopher Goto-Jones, *Political Philosophy in Japan*, (London: Routledge, 2005), 5, J. Victor Koschmann, *Revolution and Subjectivity*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 88, and Bret W. Davis, "Turns to and from political philosophy: the case of Nishitani Keiji" in *Re-Politicizing the Kyoto School as Philosophy* edited by Christopher Goto-Jones, (London: Routledge, 2008), 30

facilitating political and intellectual cooperation among progressives with diverse ideological and educational affiliations in an atmosphere of deep skepticism toward the climate of moral exhortation that had existed during the war. This last demand explains why the behavioral sciences, with their future-oriented, modernist aura, played such an important role in the eventual discourse on *kyôyô* and philosophical youth. By diagnosing enthusiasm for idealist ethical philosophy as a symptom of psychic depression in modern capitalist society, it offered an explanation and a scientific diagnosis of the reticence of many youth to participate in the progressive "democratic front" (民主戦線) of postwar liberals and Marxists.

Anguished Youth and the *Kyôyô* Culture of Reading

The critique of Nishida and the Kyoto School was the latest attempt to transform an intellectual culture of ethical idealism and self-cultivation – or *kyôyô* – which originated in the late Meiji and Taishô periods (1890s-1920s).[19] *Kyôyô* referred to the holistic cultivation of individuals through an appreciation of mostly European canonical works of art, literature, and philosophy believed to have stood the test of time. It was associated with the German idealist thought pervasive in elite higher schools, and in the bilingual environment there it formed a linguistic cluster with terms like *Kultur* (high culture) and *Bildung* (cultivation). The *kyôyô* ideal remained popular among Imperial higher school youth before, during, and even after the war.[20] Indeed, the culture of *kyôyô* had been a central part of the intellectual formation of many of its postwar critics.

[19] Some historians emphasize the links between *kyôyô* and Confucian ideals of self-cultivation, while others emphasize its connections to Europe. See Hajimu Nakano's brief description in, "Kuki Shûzô and *The Structure of Iki*" in *Culture and Identity,* edited by J. Thomas Rimer, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 271. For an account that describes a "Japanese-style" of *Kultur* that blends different traditions, see Tsutsui Kiyotada, *Nihon-gata "kyôyô" no unmei* (Tokyo: Iwanami gendai bunko, 2009).

[20] For statistical evidence of the steadfast popularity of books associated with the culture of kyôyô on High School campuses, see Tsutsui, op. cit., ch. 2.

Kyôyô first emerged as a counterbalance to the emphasis on exams, memorization, and the mastery of technical subjects in the official school curriculum established in the late nineteenth century. Middle and higher school education, available only to a few, became a valuable source of social capital during the Meiji period (1868-1912). For families who belonged or longed to belong to the nascent middle-class, educational success was seen as the primary route to advancement and fulfillment of the Meiji ideal of "rising in the world" (立身出世). The competitive struggle to enter middle and high schools intensified during the first two decades of the twentieth century, causing anxiety over entrance examinations among students and parents. Preparation for these exams consumed an increasingly large portion of students' time before and after class, and "examination disease" (試験病) was soon declared a pressing "social problem" (社会問題).[21] Educators and child experts voiced concern about the effects of this competition on the development of children into healthy adults. In this context, advocates of *kyôyô* stressed the need to cultivate aesthetic sensibility and build character (人格) through art and physical training. Early popularizers like Katô Totsudô (1870-1949) associated these aims with reviving earlier Confucian and Buddhist ideals of self-cultivation (修養) in education which had decreased in importance since the establishment of the modern school system in 1872.[22]

Early on, *kyôyô* found a receptive audience on the campuses of imperial higher schools. This was partly due to the fact that students who managed to gain admission to these elite schools had a relatively smooth path into a prestigious imperial university and experienced less examination pressure than students elsewhere. The cosmopolitan educator and diplomat Nitobe Inazô (1862-1933) promoted the *kyôyô* ideal when he became Headmaster of the prestigious First Higher School

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[21] Mark Alan Jones, "Children as Treasures: Childhood and the Middle-class in Early Twentieth-Century Japan" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2001), 114

[22] On the relationship between shûyô and kyôyô, see Tsutsui, op. cit., chapter 1.

in Tokyo in 1906. There *kyôyô* became associated with reading great modern and classical works of philosophy and literature – often in informal reading and discussion groups – in a way that focused on self-cultivation (*bildung*) and the search for truth rather than preparation for college entrance exams.

The elite higher school was an environment in which young readers of Nishida thrived. Nishida himself was uninterested in promoting the canon of *kyôyô*, which he believed to be based upon obsolescent German idealism and classicism. Yet his work was first brought to the attention of a non-specialist audience in the twenties by one of the stars of the *kyôyô* world, the playwright Kurata Hyakuzô (1891-1943). Kurata, a self-proclaimed "anguished youth," claimed that reading Nishida's critique of atheistic materialism in his first book, *Inquiry into the Good* (*Zen no kenkyû*), empowered him to overcome the mental agony that had troubled him since adolescence and to rediscover the world as a place of infinite possibilities.

Inquiry Into the Good, first published by Iwanami in 1911, was based on philosophy lectures Nishida prepared as a teacher at the elite higher school in Kanazawa. Like many classic works of early twentieth-century philosophy, including those of Martin Heidegger and William James, the text occupied a space between academic philosophy and popular "highbrow culture." Nishida intervened in ongoing debates in epistemology, providing answers to questions such as, "Where and when is the origin of the subject-object divide?" and "What makes the opposition between materialism and idealism possible?" Nishida responded to these longstanding dilemmas with an original synthesis of Neo-Kantian idealism and William James's metaphysical pluralism, combined within the rubric of an originary, yet always present, "pure experience" that dissolved the oppositions among subjects and objects, idealism and materialism. It bears certain striking similarities to the work of Henri Bergson with its emphasis on intuition as a path to pure experience. Although Nishida had not read Bergson at the time he wrote, he immediately recognized that they

shared much in common when he encountered the French philosopher's work after becoming a professor at Kyoto University.

Nishida does not stop at technical questions of epistemology. From the foundational concept of pure experience, he derives ethics, love, and – at the end of this short book – God. This movement reflected Nishida's intention to reconnect philosophy with practical concerns, moving the problem of epistemological foundations, "how is knowledge possible?" to the question "How should I live?" In addressing that question, Nishida saw himself countering the tendency in academia to either specialize in a technical subject (science), or to focus on rereading and reinterpreting great works of philosophy and literature, full of exemplary life models, without creating anything radically new. This mindset explains why he distanced himself from his teacher at Tokyo Imperial University Raphael von Koeber. Koeber was a professor of Greek philosophy and aesthetics who came to Japan from Germany in 1893 and tried to instill an appreciation for the ideals of *Kultur* and *Bildung*.[23] Besides Nishida, his students included Natsume Sôseki, Mori Ôgai, Abe Jirô, and Watsuji Testurô, all writers whose works became a part of the canon of *kyôyô*.

Yet Nishida's attempt to make philosophy more relevant to life did not translate into accessibility in his writings, which were considered famously difficult by higher school youth. After *Inquiry into the Good*, Nishida's published work became even more difficult to understand. He believed that Frege's critique of philosophical psychologism in Husserl applied to his own work, and he internalized his disciple and colleague Tanabe Hajime's sophisticated critique of his concept of pure experience. Rather than clarifying the glosses in his highly condensed *Inquiry*, he repeatedly revised his system around concepts other than "pure experience," such as "absolute nothingness" and "place." An anecdote from Kasuya Kazuki's memoir of the early postwar years is suggestive. A philosophically inclined high school student roaming used book stores in Tokyo shortly after World

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[23] Fujita Masakatsu, *Nishida Kitarô* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2007), 23

War II, he was repeatedly drawn towards Nishida's works, but when he actually managed to acquire a copy of a used book amidst the shortages, he wrote that "It appeared to be written in some alien language..."[24] Yet the seeming incomprehensibility of some of Nishida's writings seemed to stoke the desire among students to decipher their true meaning.[25] Belying Nishida's original intentions, postwar critics believed that the obsession with the difficulty of his texts contributed to widening the chasm separating intellectuals from the masses.

Studies on the Good was not widely read outside academic circles until the publication of playwright Kurata Hyakuzō's essay collection *Departure with Love and with Consciousness* (*Ai to ninshiki to no shuppatsu*) in 1921, a philosophical and autobiographical *Bildungsroman* of his young adulthood. According to a survey conducted in the thirties, this book, affectionately nicknamed *Deppa* (after the French pronunciation of "depart") by its fans, was the most popular extracurricular text among elite students at Kurata's alma mater, the First Higher School in Tokyo. Kurata's chapter on Nishida in *Deppa* catapulted the mostly unknown *Inquiry into the Good* to the position of fourth most popular book on the list, just below Kurata's play, *Shinran and his Disciples* (*Shukke to sono deshi*), the third most popular text.[26] In surveys conducted from the twenties through the forties, Nishida and Kurata were at or near the top of similar popularity rankings at Imperial High Schools throughout Japan.[27]

The book was a crossover hit among students of philosophy and literature, who typically had widely divergent reading lists. Kurata played with the opposition of these two groups of students by opening *Deppa* with a letter written from the perspective of his early twenties in which he, a self-described "philosophical youth," criticizes a friend who preferred to read works of literature. The young Kurata at first thought his literary friend a sophist because he preferred beauty (literature)

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[24] Kasuya Kazuki, op. cit., 14

[25] Miyagi Otoya, "Tetsugaku no ryûkô" *Science of Thought* (Jun. 1947), 196

[26] Suzuki Norihisa, "Kaisetsu," in *Ai to ninshiki to no shuppatsu,* (Tokyo: Iwanami bunko, 2008), 343

[27] See the lists in Tsutsui, op. cit., ch. 2

over truth (philosophy). The narrator Kurata came to see that the opposition between truth and beauty was false, and both are united in an all-encompassing concept of the good. Drawing on Nishida, Kurata argued that the different intellectual inclinations separating students in categories of philosophical, religious, or literary youth were based on false oppositions and a failure to comprehend the unity of the universe in pure experience.[28] The experience of reading Kurata, together with authors like Miki Kiyoshi, Abe Jiro, and Ide Takashi, helped forge a collective identity among aspiring young intellectuals throughout Japan that transcended their allegiance to specific higher schools or reading circles.

Kurata devoted an entire essay in the collection to outlining the argument of *Inquiry into the Good*, with lyrical embellishments sprinkled throughout. For example, he compared Nishida's unique place in the shallow, vulgar world of philosophy to the scent of a "pale white flower on a hanging bell plant in the midst of a barren wasteland in the shadow of a mountain."[29] In the preface to the essay collection, he asserts that his understanding of Nishida at the time was "childish, and academically it serves as nothing more than an introduction to epistemology, but it was important for me at the time, and it is important today because I am reluctant to feel loathing for the precious memory of the time during which I wrote that essay. And also because, even if youth in general to do not devote their life to philosophical inquiry, the essence of epistemology, an essence one must absolutely know, is contained in the text."[30]

Why was knowledge of this essence so important? Kurata claimed that a chance encounter with Nishida's work saved him from philosophical anguish. With the benefit of hindsight, he claimed that much of his anguish was brought on by faulty middle-school instruction, in which he

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[28] Kurata Hyakuzô, *Ai to ninshiki to no shuppatsu,* (Tokyo: Iwanami bunko, 2008), 16-18

[29] Ibid, 51

[30] Ibid, 10-11

was taught natural science and a materialist explanation for existence without learning idealist

epistemology (唯心論的な認識論). For Kurata, the mechanistic worldview implied by the study of

scientific laws deprived life of meaning. The competition for wealth and knowledge among Kurata's

elite peers only reinforced what Kurata saw as the nihilistic worldview that everything was

predetermined in advance by impersonal laws of natural evolution.

Until this inadequacy in the school system was remedied, Kurata believed that his essay on

Nishida should serve as a supplement to the general education of all young adults. He wrote:

> Until I was liberated from the inappropriate demand that the natural scientific knowledge I
> had been taught according to faulty methods in middle school serve as an explanation for
> actual existence - a demand that was beyond the scope of that knowledge's proper limits –
> what unnecessary and truly wretched agonies did I experience! You could even say that for
> that reason I expended over half my total youthful energy. My agony could have been
> avoided, or at least lessened by half, if only my middle school natural science teacher had
> added that, as an explanation for existence, this here is just one way of thinking – not the
> only one – and that there are others. If I only I had known that among these others, there
> exists an idealism completely opposed to the way I had been taught. I cannot help thinking
> that most youth suffer from the same anguish.[31]

Kurata had reason to believe that his youthful experiences were not unique. Both nuanced

and stereotypical portraits of "anguished youth" (煩悶青年) like himself were ubiquitous in

literature and journalism during the Taisho period (1912-1926). Critics eager to grasp the "spirit of

the age" believed that the appearance of melancholy young people signified disillusionment with

modernity and progress. One source of this trope was the media frenzy surrounding the 1903

suicide of Fujimura Misao, a 16-year-old student at the First Higher School who quoted Hamlet

before throwing himself off a precipice in order to "measure the space between heaven and earth."

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[31] Ibid, 11

In the wake of the incident, there was much debate over whether his suicide was a statement of bold individualism or a cowardly retreat from reality.[32]

The journalist Tokutomi Sohô (1863-1957) defined "anguished youth" as an emblematic social type in his 1917 essay "Taisho Youth and the Prospects of Empire" (大正の青年と帝国の前途).[33] Tokutomi argued that anguished youth represented Taishô disillusionment with the Meiji ideal of rags-to-riches success (*risshin shusse*) – a turn away from service to the nation toward self-oriented inwardness. Global trends in philosophy seemed to abet this turn, visible in one of the first "thought guidebooks" that catalogued fashionable intellectual terms and "isms". In this guidebook Shimonaka Yasaburô (1878-1961), the founder of the publisher Heibonsha, defined "modern thought" (近代思想) as a collection of various philosophies "prioritizing the emotions and individuality" – the antithesis of "scientistic panaceism" (科学万能主義). Excessive exposure to modern thought could lead to "über-Kultur" – glossed as "excessive *kyôyô*." He mockingly described this condition in a separate entry as "lofty thinking" (高い思想) combined with an "inability to associate with common and vulgar people." He wrote that in its advanced stages this condition could cause one to become completely useless as a human being.[34]

According to Shimonaka's text, three exemplars of "modern thought" were William James in America, Henri Bergson in France, and Rudolf Eucken in Germany.[35] Euro-centrism aside, Nishida, who drew on James and Bergson in his work, could have been added to this list as Japan's national representative. Kurata and Nishida saw the emotions, and melancholy in particular, as a potential

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[32] An extended discussion is in Donald Roden, *Schooldays in Imperial Japan*, (University of Wisconsin Madison diss. 1975), 442. See also Henry Dewitt Smith, *Japan's First Student Radicals,* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972) xi

[33] Hiraishi Noriko, "Meiji no 'hanmon seinen'-tachi" *Bungei gengo kenkyû*, (Mar. 2002), 83

[34] Ibid, 14

[35] Shimonaka Yasaburô, *Ya kore wa benri da!* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1914), 29-30

source of creative energy that could be directed toward intellectual and literary pursuits outside the confines of academic study.[36] The anguish of anguished youth was a manifestation of life itself struggling to overturn rigid, overly cultured patterns of thought. They saw the philosophical revolt against Cartesian intellectualism that began in *fin-de-siècle* Europe, Japan, and the United States as finding its sociological embodiment in the figure of anguished youth.

In the press, the student culture of reading philosophy associated with *kyôyô* was stereotypically presented as excessively inward directed or, in the eyes of less sympathetic observers, a cause for mental instability among "troubled youth." Extracurricular reading was also associated with Marxism and "thought crimes" during the twenties, but following further crackdowns on Leftist activity in the thirties, reading philosophy came to seem like a therapeutic or even unpatriotic escape from practical concerns and the anxieties of modern civilization.

In the 1930s, intellectual popularizers like Kawai Eijirô (1891-1944), a professor of economics at Tokyo Imperial University, fought back against this view of youthful intellectualism. He tried to promote a more politically engaged "*kyôyô*-ism" (教養主義) to fill the vacuum left by the suppression of Marxism in the 1930s. According to Kawai, the self-cultivation of *kyôyô* was necessary to avoid the pitfalls of Marxism, which erred in trying to change the world under the pretense of the false objectivity of a disembodied observer standing outside the capitalist totality.[37] Yet this initial turn towards self-cultivation was just one moment in the creation of culturally literate, politically engaged national subjects – liberal, anti-fascist reformers instead of Marxist revolutionaries. Given the concerns of the Marxists Tosaka Jun and Fukumoto Kazuo with questions of consciousness and epistemology, Kawai's characterization of Marxism as unconcerned with

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[36] Fujita Masakatsu, *Nishida Kitarô* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2007), 8

[37] Atsuko Hirai, *Individualism and Socialism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), 129. *Kawai* Eijiro, *Gakusôki,* in *Kawai Eijirô zenshû* vol. 18, (Tokyo: Shakai shisô-sha, 1967)

subjectivity was not entirely accurate, but it did tap into a broad shift in philosophical interests toward questions of subjectivity. This shift was prompted in part by the circulation of ideas derived from physics, most notably Einstein's theories of relativity and Werner Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, which drew attention to how the position of the observer could impact scientific measurements, at a time when Marxist writings were becoming both less available and dangerous.[38]

Kawai's idealistic vision of *kyôyô* never fully displaced the public image of philosophical youth as aloof, melancholy dilettantes, and their presence became increasingly problematic in the context of total mobilization for the war in China in the late 1930s. Relentlessly attacked by rightists for being insufficiently proud of Japan's unique cultural heritage, Kawai, a consistent and vocal critic of Marxism – he called it an "infectious mental disease" – eventually suffered the same fate as the Marxists. Indicted in 1939 for "disturbing peace and order" and "corrupting public morals" in his writings attacking fascism, he died of a heart attack a few months after his trial finally concluded in 1943.[39]

Yet texts associated with *kyôyô* increased in popularity among high school students during the thirties and forties. At a time when supposed Marxist tracts began disappearing from bookstores, high school students eagerly consumed works from the late Meiji and Taishô periods by Natsume Sôseki, Abe Jirô, Kurata Hyakuzô, and Nishida Kitarô that adopted a stance of ethical idealism against the alienating and instrumentalizing effects of modern civilization. In the twenties and thirties, the Marxists Tosaka Jun (1900-1945) and Kozai Yoshishige (1901-1990) criticized these thinkers as bourgeois idealists. When they, too, were driven from the scene in 1937, critics like

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[38] For example, the Marxian journal *Materialism Research* carried articles that discussed recent developments in quantum physics and Werner Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle. See for example Kuwaki Ayao, "Ryôshi-ron no hattatsu" *Yuibutsu-ron kenkyû*, (Jan. 1933).

[39] Atsuko, op. cit., 199

Minoda Muneki, leader of the rightist association Genri Nihonsha, made increasingly strident attacks on *kyôyô* as the domain of decadent, unpatriotic liberals.

Despite support from the Ministry of Education, Minoda and other overtly right wing and fascist authors failed to make significant inroads against *kyôyô* among elite higher school students. In 1938, the Ministry of Education published a list of recommended books and authors for "ideological guidance" (思想指導). Among the top recommended authors, only the Heideggerian ethicist Watsuji Tetsurô, a former colleague of Nishida's in Kyoto, became popular among higher school students during the war. These students were partly insulated from broader trends that favored novels about the war with a nationalist message. Even at the height of wartime mobilization in the forties, students at imperial higher schools still preferred to read Natsume Sôseki's *Kokoro* (1914) or Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment* (translated in 1914) over more recent works celebrating the imperial cause in Asia – much to the consternation of education officials.[40]

After the war, books associated with *kyôyô*, in short supply due both to the paper shortage and their perceived irrelevance to the war effort, retained their popularity among students. This was a source of concern for intellectuals who believed that the war had demonstrated the inability of intellectuals associated with cosmopolitan ethical idealism to resist fascism. The suspicion arose that *kyôyô* had directly or indirectly contributed to the rise of militarism. Many postwar progressives who embraced these suspicions had themselves participated in the culture of *kyôyô* during their formative years.

Tsurumi Shunsuke (1922-), a self-described "delinquent youth" (不良少年) with a troubled relationship to his prestigious family, memorized Fujimura Misao's suicide note and attempted to kill himself several times by overdosing on sleeping pills while loitering in coffee shops in Shibuya. His

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[40] Ibid, 78

father, the liberal politician and famous writer Tsurumi Yûsuke, eventually sent him to live with acquaintances in America, where he was able to escape the psychological burden of his family's celebrity. During his teens, Shunsuke was attracted to the writings of Kurata, but he became disillusioned by Kurata's fervent support of the war effort.[41]

Ide Takashi (1892-1980), who published *A Notebook of a Philosophical Youth*, was ranked second only to Kurata in terms of his popularity at the Tokyo First Higher School. His most popular work was the contemplative *Before Philosophy* (哲学以前), which linked all intellectual inquiry to existential sorrow. He exhorted students mobilized for the war in China effort to "die a beautiful death," but after the war ended, Ide joined the Japanese Communist Party and became a vocal critic of the *kyôyô* culture he had once represented.[42]

In the 1920s, Kurata seemed to believe that relief for his sorrows could be found in a kind of epistemological pluralism. Yet during the war Kurata, like Ide, embraced ultra-nationalism, much to the dismay of some of his youthful followers. Tsurumi recalls that his disillusioned reaction to Kurata's behavior during the war instilled in him the desire "negate philosophy" entirely. As he put it in an interview, "I now felt philosophers did nothing but play with words."[43] During the war, he channeled anger over his sense of betrayal into the writing of "On the Talismanic Use of Words" – his famous debut publication for the first issue of *Science of Thought* in 1946. He argued that strictly separating emotion-driven from logic-driven speech acts would re-order the potentially dangerous state of linguistic confusion unleashed by philosophical idealism.

Tsurumi and other intellectuals argued that epistemological pluralism had produced an atmosphere of linguistic confusion and mass psychosis during the war. Yet Kurata's lyrical

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[41] Tsurumi Shunsuke, *Kitai to kaisô* vol. 1, (Tokyo: Shôbunsha, 1997), 29

[42] Fukuma Yoshiaki, *"Sensō taiken" no sengoshi,* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron. 2009), 68

[43] Tsurumi, op cit., 29

interweaving of epistemological and psychological problems continued to mediate the popular

reception of Nishida's work in the immediate postwar years, even as social psychologists and

existential writers sought to usurp the place of philosophers in addressing the sorrows of youth.

Different criticisms of the Kyoto School suggested different visions of postwar intellectual

culture. In some cases, attacks on Nishida suggested that consistent opposition to anything

remotely associated with fascism or Japanese cultural chauvinism was more important than

unconstrained intellectual inquiry. The young people who came together to form *Science of Thought*

tended to focus less on Nishida's relationship to fascism and the content of his philosophy and

more on the intense difficulty of understanding his writing. In a special issue of the group's journal

in June 1947 on "Philosophical Trends in Japan," the psychologist Miyagi Otoya and the sociologist

Takeda Ryôzô both suggested that the intense effort required to decipher the meaning of Nishida's

texts led to the formation of an insular community of philosophers estranged from both the general

population and other intellectuals less inclined to metaphysical speculation.[44] The flipside of this

critique was that, above all else, postwar critics now had to find ways of engaging with non-

philosophers to erode the barriers separating intellectuals from the masses and philosophers from

social scientists, who were among the most vocal supporters of multi-disciplinary cooperation in the

many new associations that formed after the war.[45]

Science versus *Kyôyô*

Attacking the "philosophical youths" who continued to consume texts by Nishida and other

authors associated with *kyôyô* was an implicit act of self-criticism. Before and during the war, many

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[44] Miyagi Otoya, "Tetsugaku no ryûkô" *Shisô no kagaku,* (Jun. 1947). Takeda Ryôzô, "Seinen shinri to tetsugaku ryûkô no shakaigaku" *Shisô no kagaku*, (Jun. 1947).

[45] The legal sociologist Kawashima Takeyoshi speaks of this enthusiasm for multi-disciplinary associations, including Science of Thought, in his intellectual autobiography, *Aru hôgakusha no kiseki*, (Tokyo: Yuikaku, 1979).

postwar intellectuals eagerly consumed the philosophy they later condemned as "idealistic." The *kyôyô* ideal was an important part of the educational experiences of even its vocal critics, most of whom who were not opposed to the idea of an intellectual canon per se. The nuclear physicist and co-founder of *Science of Thought* Taketani Mitsuo (1911-2000) criticized the Kyoto School while promoting the works of Roman Rolland, Paul Valéry, Beethoven, Karl Marx, and Galileo among others, but he suggested that the traditional canon of philosophy and its relationship to science and everyday life had to be transformed in the interests of a new democratic Japan.

Taketani criticized the intellectual insularity of wartime Japan and proposed a postwar ideal of openness and cooperation in the founding issue of *Science of Thought* of May, 1946. Neither an overt critique of wartime fascism nor a blueprint for Japanese democracy, it was a revised version of an article Taketani wrote during the war on the history of science, entitled, "How Can Philosophy Recover its Effectiveness?" He criticized academic philosophers for devoting too much time to the insular and "unscientific" task of endlessly interpreting and reinterpreting canonical texts. He urged them to adopt more scientific methods that might allow them to cooperate more effectively with other intellectuals in the construction of postwar democracy. Taketani's conception of science as a trail-and-error practice did not imply claiming a stance of methodological objectivity, but instead meant repeatedly *risking failure* through the application of ideas and methods – perpetual works-in-progress – to the everyday world.

Taketani argued that the adequacy of all ideas had to be discovered in their practical relationship to everyday life. The unpalatable alternative to this conception of philosophy was represented by a member of the Kyoto School, the philosopher and historian of science Shimomura Toratarô, whose exegetical work on the neo-Kantian philosopher Ernst Cassirer Taketani singled out for criticism. He argued that Kyoto School philosophers were interested only in constructing and reconstructing pristine, internally consistent systems of thought (思想), an approach that, unlike

scientific experimentalism, rarely exposed them to failure and the need to radically change their ideas. As he put it, instead of trying to understand Cassirer's complicated interpretation of Kant, they ought to be searching for new ways to "correct Kant" themselves.

Taketani's criticism touched on a broader tendency among intellectuals during the war who became enthusiastic participants in democratic associations after it ended. Later commentators noted that many intellectuals active in progressive causes after the war had turned during wartime to seemingly esoteric studies of European intellectual history, sometimes with hidden political intentions.[46] When the war ended, they expressed remorse over their failure to speak out against the war and vowed to exercise vigilance over possible signs of a relapse to militarism. The head of Iwanami Shoten, publisher of Nishida's Collected Works, expressed this remorse by launching the politically engaged, Left-leaning current affairs magazine *Sekai* in December, 1945. In the first issue, he expressed the sentiments of many when he wrote that he felt ashamed over the "lack of courage" that had prevented him from openly resisting the war. He promised that *Sekai* would be a conduit between the public and intellectuals of different ideological persuasions, disparate groups imagined to have grown estranged from each other, who were interested in the task of building a democratic Japan.[47]

Written before the end of the Pacific War and revised only months after surrender, Taketani's article was part of a moment of ideological pluralism between the end of World War II and the polarization of the Cold War, a moment that saw the emergence of the journal *Sekai*, *Science of Thought*, and hundreds of other journals and associations.[48] This loose progressive coalition was

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[46] A famous example is Hanada Kiyoteru's work on the European Renaissance, *Fukôki no seishin*, (Tokyo: Kôdansha, 1986), essays of which were published during the war.

[47] Cited in Oku Takenori, *Rondan no sengoshi*, (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2007), 48-51

[48] Sean Forner argues that a similar moment of ideological pluralism and radical hope toward democracy existed in Germany. Sean Horner, "Catastrophe and Renewal: Germany's Engaged Democrats between East and West, 1945-1960" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2007), 3-5

partly held together by the Association of Democratic Scientists (Minshushugi kagakusha kyôkai or

"Minka" for short), an organization founded in January 1946 that traced its roots to short-lived anti-

fascist organizations in Tokyo and Kyoto during the thirties. Taketani had written for the anti-fascist

journal *Sekai bunka* (*World Culture,* 1935-1937) and, in addition to helping to start *Science of Thought*,

was a founding member of Minka. He called for a "democratic synthesis" of Deweyian pragmatism

and Marxism that would supplant the Kyoto School, an urgent task for the popular-front coalition

of liberals and Marxists in Minka.

The Marxists, pragmatists, existentialists, and liberals who populated the intellectual

landscape of postwar Japan could all find reasons to put aside their sectarian differences and band

together against the Kyoto School and the ideal of *kyôyô* with which it was associated. Though they

disagreed about the proper role of philosophy in postwar Japan, the common enemy was clearly

marked. For example, fellow Minka member Yamada Sakaji criticized Taketani's inaugural article

for attacking philosophy with too broad a brush, making it difficult for Marxists to develop a true

"science of praxis" – a task that required reflecting on the problem of subjectivity raised by Nishida

– yet he made no attempt to actually defend the Kyoto School or philosophical idealism, and he was

certain that both would vanish in the aftermath of proletarian revolution.[49] Taketani responded to

his criticism in an article entitled "Conditions for Cooperation with Philosophers," arguing that

philosophical discussion had to remain as "practical" (実践的) as possible in order to enable

effective collaboration – anything else was "dilettantism" (ディレタンティズム). He pointed to

the fact that he was able to collaborate with Yukawa Hideki, who would soon be awarded the Nobel

Prize for physics, on scientific matters despite the fact that they did not see eye-to-eye on questions

of subjectivity and dialectical materialism. The Yamada and Taketani debate about the scope of

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[49] Taketani Mitsuo, "Kagakusha to no kyôryoku no tame no jôken" *Riron*, (Feb. 1947), 55

practical philosophy and intellectual cooperation took place on the assumption that it was necessary

to relegate the ideal of *kyôyô* to the past.[50]

For many intellectuals, criticizing the culture of *kyôyô* and advocating a "scientific" approach

to philosophy was a way of announcing that they had renounced their wartime opinions and turned

toward a new democratic future. During the war, many of these critics had contrasted the

superficiality of American civilization with the depth of *Kultur* in Europe and, to a lesser extent,

Japan. During the build-up to war with the United States in 1938, Tsurumi Yûsuke (1885-1973), the

father of *Science of Thought* founders Tsurumi Shunsuke and Tsurumi Kazuko, founded a think-tank

devoted to strategic research on the United States and the Pacific. In 1944, the association

published *The National Character of the Americans* with contributions from Kazuko and Tsuru Shigeto,

an American-educated economist who also helped found *Science of Thought* after the war. In the

opening essay "The Intellectual Weakness of the American National Character," Tsuru pointed out

the "cultural retardation" of the Americans in regards to *kyôyô* (教養の匍行性). He criticized the

tendency of American pragmatists to use stock-market metaphors when conducting philosophical

discussions, citing as evidence William James's famous statement about the "cash-value of ideas."

This was in line with the wartime characterization of the United States as a technologically advanced

yet soulless, materialistic civilization.[51]

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[50] Around the same time, the Marxist Umemoto Katsumi also asserted that Nishida and Tanabe had a number of important insights into the nature of subjectivity. He linked the Kyoto School's concern with this subject to the critical humanism of Marx's early writings. A year later he attacked the "mechanistic materialism" of Engels' *Anti-Dühring,* a text frequently cited as theoretical support by postwar "anti-idealist" Nishida critics, including Taketani Mitsuo in the first issue of *Science of Thought.* Umemoto's articles produced a heated exchange in Leftist circles that became known as the "subjectivity debate" (主体性論争). Taketani Mitsuo, "Tetsugaku wa ika ni shite yûkôsa o torimodoshiuru ka" *Shisô no kagaku* (May, 1946). See also Koschmann, Victor. *Revolution and Subjectivity in Postwar Japan* (Chicago: University of Chicago press, 1996) 95

[51] Tsuru Shigeto, "Amerika kokuminsei no shisôteki zuijakusei" in *Amerika kokuminsei no kenkyû*, edited by Tsurumi Yûsuke, (Tokyo: Taiyô kyôkai, 1944), 13

After the war, critics commonly asserted that the philosophical idealism associated with *kyôyô* was out of touch with the times because, unlike Marxism and logical positivism, it was antagonistic to the sciences. Tsurumi Shunsuke furthered Taketani's criticism in a short pamphlet called "Reflections on Philosophy" (Tetsugaku no hansei), also published in May 1946. In it, he wrote that the division of the sciences into specialized disciplines had the effect of making philosophy appear like a fossilized remnant from pre-modernity. In ancient Greece, all branches of knowledge, including natural sciences, were part of philosophy. Yet in the modern age, scientific inquiry was severed from philosophy and developed according to its own autonomous logic, leaving philosophy behind as an anachronistic outlet for irrational and narcissistic intellectual impulses. Avid consumption of Kyoto School texts was evidence of the persistent demand for such an outlet. Yet by turning to social science and re-routing these intellectual impulses through critical observations of philosophy's effect on behavior, philosophy could be saved from complete obsolescence, though reduced to the auxiliary role of regulating linguistic behavior. The role of rational philosophy was to (1) expose irrational philosophy through linguistic analysis and (2) work with the empirical social sciences to explain to people what they were *actually doing* when they engaged with irrational philosophy. This was to produce a moment of recognition that could release them from the jargonistic haze of such Kyoto School concepts as "infinite mediation" and "contradictory nothingness."

Again and again members of Science of Thought asserted the need to think outside the confines of the "bureaucratic establishment" (官僚機構) associated with the imperial Higher Schools and universities, which they accused of training the elites that blindly led Japan into a disastrous war. Members hoped to appeal to readers outside this elite stratum by discussing in unadorned language works of social science and analytic philosophy from America and England that they associated with empiricism and logical reasoning. Yet despite these efforts, the Institute for the

Science of Thought's internal surveys suggested that the journal was primarily read by young high school and college students – the prime consumers of *kyôyô* – during its first two decades of publication.[52] The journal and institute were torn between, on the one hand, trying to reform a preexisting academic culture of philosophical reading, and, on the other, leaving that culture behind in search of a new, vaguely defined, critical reading public after the war.

The Scandal of Philosophy in Postwar Japan

    Kyôyô represented the antithesis of the postwar coupling of science and democracy. It was difficult to understand, impractical, unscientific, elitist, and associated with the past instead of the future. In the aftermath of World War II, intellectuals associated with *Science of Thought* felt the need to combat the romanticized archetype of Imperial Higher School-educated "philosophical youths" with a more politically engaged, sociable, scientifically minded counterpart.

    Thus while one part of the intellectual narrative of the early Occupation years consisted of the resurgence of politically engaged Marxian social science, this was accompanied by a dramatic staging of the scandal of philosophy among youth. Disapproving responses to the Nishida boom dovetailed with Tsurumi's assertion that Nishida's so-called modern philosophy was atavistic. After 1945, Japanese philosophy, as represented by Nishida Kitarō, Tanabe Hajime, and some of their pupils and colleagues at Kyoto University, was dismissed as escapist, faddish, or crypto-fascist in popular front journals such as *Tetsugaku hyōron* (*Philosophical Critique*), *Riron* (*Theory*), the revived *Yuibutsuron kenkyūkai* (*Materialism Research*), and *Science of Thought*.

    People sleeping on a street corner waiting to purchase a copy of the first volume of the *Collected Works of Nishida Kitarô* was regarded as a scandalous event, and the discourse surrounding it touched on the separation of a degraded intellectual culture from the "present reality of postwar

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[52] Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai, *Kaihô* vol. 1 (Tokyo: Kashiwa shobô, 1982), 68-69

Japan." The scale and devotion of the student all-nighter was remarkable enough to prompt a

critical editorial ten days later in the *Asahi* newspaper of July 30th. In an article published in the

long-established front-page column "Vox Populi, Vox Dei" (Tensei jingo), the journalist Aragaki

Hideo (1903-1989) ridiculed the Nishida craze. Aragaki, who mixed progressive ideas and populist

commonsense (良識) in his commentary on current events, sarcastically wrote of the sleeping

Nishida devotees that he, "had never heard of students in Berlin or Heidelberg behaving like that in

order to buy a work by Hegel." He complained that while he understood that "during the period of

confusion after defeat, young people might seek firm support for their mental lives in philosophy"

this kind of "fanaticism" (熱狂さ) was "a bit over the top," or at least "un-philosophical" (非鉄

学).[53] He continued:

> Professor Nishida used Western philosophy as a starting point from which to systematize
> Oriental thought, and his achievements are considerable. "Nishida philosophy" is the staple
> of the philosophical diet in Japan, and everything else appears to be a side dish or seasoning,
> but the result has been the transformation of "Nishida philosophy" into an idol (偶像化). It
> goes without saying that these students need to learn the simple fact that 'Nishida
> Philosophy' is not the only philosophy out there. The Japanese people of today need to
> think over the question as to whether or not "Nishida philosophy" will have any use at all as
> a guiding principle from now on.[54]

Aragaki presented the postwar Nishida craze as absurdly out of sync with the time of New

Japan. For him, the line of sleeping students was vivid proof that philosophy was no longer sacred,

as perhaps it might have been in the time of Hegel, but now was rather just one commodity among

others. "Where people gather to lawfully acquire goods, queuing up is a commonsense rule. That

books of philosophy are mere *goods* (モノ) of a sort is the long and short of it…"[55] The absurdity for

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[53] Aragaki Hideo, "Tensei jingo" *Asahi shinbun*, (July 30ʼ 1947), 1

[54] Ibid

[55] Ibid

Aragaki was that, although the current situation made clear that books of philosophy were commodities subject to the vicissitudes of an economy plagued by shortages, students continued to sacralize them by means of their enthusiastic behavior.

Aragaki's satire of the behavior of the sleeping students and the postwar critique of Nishida and *kyôyô* was part of an ongoing debate on the relationship between philosophy and mass culture that unfolded throughout the capitalist world. Philosophical texts associated with *kyôyô* had become mass-produced commodities in Japan after Iwanami Shoten began releasing inexpensive paperback versions in 1927. Once philosophy became an object of mass consumption, critics expressed anxiety over whether *kyôyô* was about self-cultivation and the pursuit of eternal truth or about status and the competitive pursuit of socially-recognized cultural capital.[56]

The *Asahi* editorial also touched on multiple fault-lines, notably of class and generation, that cut across the cultural landscape of postwar Japan. The notion that the experience of Wo pdfrld War II had created distinct, sometimes violently opposed, generational identities appeared at a very early date. Less than six months after surrender, the literary critic Ara Masato published an influential article in *Kindai bungaku* (*Modern Literature*) in which he urged members of his generation to recapture the youth they had sacrificed during the war years by renouncing a system of ethics centered on martyrdom and embracing rational egotism in its place. Ara's binary (martyrdom vs. egotism) brings the absurdity of Aragaki's depiction of devotional consumerism into focus. These ascetic students appeared to be martyrs without a cause.

For Ara, who was involved in heated debates with postwar Marxists, it mattered little whether the object of self-sacrifice was the emperor, as in the case of kamikaze pilots, or the proletariat, as in the case of Marxist Tosaka Jun, whose posthumously republished works also

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[56] For more on this process of commodifying cultural and literary canons in connection with the rise of mass-market publishing in twentieth-century Japan, see Edward Mack, *Manufacturing Modern Japanese Literature*, (Durham: Duke University Press , 2010).

became popular after the war. Dying in prison as the war ended, Tosaka was celebrated as a symbol of intellectual resistance by the Japanese Communist Party. Yet he was implicated in Ara's critique insofar as it was directed toward a personality, the martyr type (殉教型), that he argued had become hegemonic during the war, and he thought had not changed after 1945. Despite disagreement between some Marxists and rational egotists like Ara over how to characterize a thinker like Tosaka Jun, they agreed on the anachronistic irrationality of the Nishida craze, which seemed to them a fascist remnant antithetical to postwar democracy.

The Consolations of Social Science

The period after World War II has been referred to as a "new opening" (*atarashii kaikoku*), with the implication that Commodore Perry's expedition in 1853 was the old opening of the country.[57] Writing of her difficulty obtaining new books from England or America during the war, Tsurumi Kazuko drew a parallel between that period and the Tokugawa-era policy of isolationism.[58] Yet, although censorship existed under the Allied Occupation, previously banned books by Marxist writers gradually reappeared in print, and new books from England and America began to trickle into the country through the library run by the Occupation's Civil Information and Education Section (CIE).

Many progressive thinkers welcomed this change while remaining wary of the effects of unfettered intellectual tolerance, especially when that tolerance permitted "philosophy" to exist that appeared to lack a secure foundation in scientific reason. Written long after this period, in the 1970s, Maruyama Masao's essay on Japan's "old opening" in 1853 cited Bergson's opposition between

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[57] For example, Tsurumi Shunsuke, *Atarashii kaikoku*, (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 2008)

[58] Tsurumi Kazuko, "Sengo no naka no 'Shisô no kagaku'" *Tsurumi Kazuko mandara*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Fujiwara shobô, 1997), 29

open and closed systems of morality to describe the implications of the event.[59] Bergson's

philosophy had been hotly debated from the 1910s to the 1930s, yet he was generally ignored or

dismissed as an irrational metaphysician in the years immediately following the war, the moment

Maruyama was now retrospectively imagining as a "new opening." Interest in Bergson, along with

that in the Kyoto School, was problematic for thinkers who wished to make a break from the

"philosophical fads" (哲学流行) they associated with the prewar culture of *kyôyô*. Among those

who witnessed the rise of militarism, it was feared that extreme openness could lead to a repetition

of the shift from the liberalism of the twenties to the fascism of the thirties. Before his death,

Tosaka Jun argued that Taishô democracy provided a stage for fascism to take hold and negate

liberalism in Japan. The stigma attached to idealist philosophers of the Taishô period was connected

to this fear of relapsing into fascism.

Progressives of various intellectual affiliations waged a battle in the forties and fifties to win

the hearts and minds of the youth away from idealist, vitalist, intuitionist thought.[60] In some cases,

exemplars of prewar idealism denounced their early works and former teachers and became

spokesmen for the effort to reach out to idealist youth and wean them from the philosophy of the

past. For example, Yanagi Genjurō, a former member of the Kyoto School of philosophy, became

the head of "Wadatsumi no kai" an organization that drew secondary school students from all over

the country into the peace movement.

Other thinkers psychologically and sociologically analyzed the causes for the popularity of

idealist philosophy as part of an attempt to combat its postwar influence. Intellectuals associated

with *Science of Thought* argued that its popularity was a result of the incompletely modernized, semi-

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[59] Maruyama Masao, "Kaikoku" in *Chûsei to Hangyaku*, (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1998)

[60] For more on the critique of Bergson and vitalism after the war, see Suzuki Sadami, *'Seimei' de yomu nihon kindai*, (Tokyo: NHK Books, 1996).

feudal condition of Japan. One characteristic was the estrangement of intellectuals from the masses, an estrangement that psychologically manifested itself in the minds of intellectuals as disjuncture between their subjective consciousness and their empirically observable behavior in a variety of social contexts. This gap was a central concern of Maruyama's famous analysis of Japanese fascism. Influenced by Karl Schmitt's notion that the essence of politics is the decision, Maruyama argued that military leaders lacked an awareness of their own decisive acts of leadership. This rendered them incapable of owning up to their war responsibility, a condition he contrasted unfavorably with the Nazi leadership.[61] The Durkheimian social psychologist Miyagi Otoya applied a similar argument to philosophical youth, arguing that there was a disjuncture between their subjective belief that they were individualistic thinkers, and his objective observation of their conformist, trend-pursuing behavior as aspiring intellectuals.

Miyagi's article appeared in June 1947, a month before the famous photo of students camped out to buy Nishida's work. It was part of a special issue on "Research on Philosophical Trends in Japan" (日本における哲学流行の研究), in *Science of Thought*. Besides Miyagi in psychology, the Marxist historian Hani Gorô and the sociologist Takeda Ryôzô analyzed Nishida and the Kyoto School as a "philosophical trend" from their respective disciplinary perspectives.

In the first essay, "The Historical Analysis of Philosophy," Hani Gorô gave a Marxist interpretation that linked the craze for abstruse philosophy to the semi-feudal condition of Japan. He argued that idealist philosophy came to stand in for the political activities forbidden by the repressive state apparatus. Yet in a seeming nod to postwar existentialism's focus on individual experience, Hani argued that the *experience* of producing and consuming philosophy under semi-feudal conditions in Japan contained universal insight into philosophy as a flight from the reality of

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[61] Maruyama Masao, *Thought and Behavior in Modern Japanese Politics,* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), ch. 3

class struggle. According to Hani, Japanese thinkers, including Marxists like himself, had always gravitated towards abstract, highly academic philosophical language because direct confrontation with the reality of class exploitation was forbidden by the semi-feudal state. Yet there was dialectical ambivalence in his recollection of the thirties. Rather than a purely negative experience, reading idealist philosophers brought him into contact with the plight of earlier thinkers who, like himself, resorted to unnecessarily complicated language in order to articulate a critique of existing society. In a postwar environment of skepticism toward ethically charged displays of remorse or regret, Hani, like many others, characterized the war as a learning experience. Hani wrote of the time when "the obtuse philosophies of thinkers like Hegel, Kant, and Nishida came into fashion":

> At that time, I arrived at a certain discovery. It was a notion that the philosophical thought of Hegel and Kant did not come in a form that was natural, necessary, and complete, but one that was unnatural, incomplete, and unnecessary. What Kant or Hegel tried to express was critical reason or dialectic, but they were unable to assert that directly or completely. They expressed their incomplete assertions in a roundabout fashion, and replacing reality with an abstraction, they entered into abstraction for the sake of abstraction, and ended up adopting a form that was unnecessarily difficult to understand.[62]

The crux of the essay was that "philosophy" (哲学) had always been, in both Europe and Japan, a distorted depiction of the truth of historical materialism, either due to its unwillingness or inability to directly confront reality. Philosophizing was a flight into abstraction. By engaging in self-reflection on the unnecessary abstraction in his earlier Marxist studies, Hani came to the conclusion that this conscious or unconscious act of fleeing had a universal quality to it. It affected everyone – from Kant in eighteenth-century Germany to Japanese Marxists working under "semi-feudal" conditions. Thus, while the universal tendency of philosophy to distort reality was proof of the transhistorical truth of historical materialism and the centrality of class struggle, it also suggested that historical materialism, insofar as it was expressed and consumed as philosophy, was always in

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[62] Hani Goro, "Tetsugaku no rekishiteki bunseki" *Shiso no kagaku* (Jun. 1947), 194

danger of falling back into distortion and abstraction, in the same way that Japanese democracy was always threatened by remnant forces of reaction.[63]

This second point, that Marxism was susceptible to counter-productive abstraction, might explain why Hani argued in his conclusion that historical materialists must cooperate with logicians and psychoanalysts in order to make their thoughts clearer and solve new problems.[64]   Hani explained away philosophical trendiness by pointing to the temerity of the bourgeoisie and the power of the repressive state, but he left to psychological analysis the question as to why, in Occupied Japan, some people were drawn toward politics and engaged social science, while others continued to be attracted by the mystagogy of Kurata and Nishida.

The psychologist Miyagi Otoya's contribution "Philosophical Fashions" (哲学の流行) addressed this question by pointing out various unconscious motives for reading philosophy. Miyagi, who had studied psychology in France before the war, drew on Emile Durkheim's analysis of communalism among Australian aborigines to argue that, even if students failed to grasp Nishida's concept of "absolute contradictory nothingness," their ongoing struggle to do so gave them a sense of collective solidarity as aspiring intellectuals. What was troubling to Miyagi was the degree of slavish conformism among so-called truth seekers who all tended to gravitate to the same body of difficult texts. To Miyagi, the texts of Nishida, Kurata, and other exemplars of *kyôyô* were ultimately nothing more than totems signifying inclusion in an elite group.[65]

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[63] "Thus, present fashion for philosophy is first due to the fact that in the present, despite the progress of the democratic revolution in Japan and the realization of political freedom, the people have no confidence in this freedom, and are fearful of the oppression that might return at any time. Further, this is due to the fate of things left remaining in the democratic revolution of present reality, and it is due to the attempted avoidance of that reality." Ibid, 195

[64] Ibid, 195

[65] Miyagi, op. cit., 196

Miyagi's focus on the practical, social function of reading philosophy was not new. Kurata had connected his original attraction to Nishida to the spiritual anguish he felt as a young man, and one of the most widespread interpretations of the postwar "Nishida craze" was that his philosophical texts provided spiritual support for troubled youth. Using the language of addiction, critics argued that idealist philosophy filled a spiritual vacuum, at least temporarily, but led to disastrous consequences over the long-term. It instilled a propensity toward impulsive behavior, manifesting itself in long periods of political apathy followed by irrational bursts of ultranationalism or suicide.

Miyagi and Hani linked the desire for Kyoto School philosophy to Japan's semi-feudal condition and the undeveloped subjectivity of individuals, but other social scientists suggested that the need for spiritual support that drove young people to Nishida might be a reflection of the more immediate postwar situation. This was implied in Aragaki's *Asahi* editorial on the Nishida craze in the *Asahi* as well as in psychoanalytic research. The Freudian psychoanalyst and early Institute for the Science of Thought member Imura Tsunerô wrote an article in 1949 on "Delusional Psychosis in Defeated Nations." Imura wrote that delusional patients are distinguished from ordinary people by:

> a way of seeing things that is marked by an intensely subjective bias… This intense
> subjectivity is different from our everyday fantasies and daydreams. It is not an imaginary
> fulfillment of desire. Thoughts of something betraying and threatening one's self-worth are
> torn from the boundaries of the self and projected outwards as an objective thing. This type
> of process is a fundamental schizophrenic mechanism.

According to Imura, the most common delusional narrative was that of being pursued by an imagined being. He wrote that in the past these imaginary mental projections usually took the form of Buddha, Nichiren, or fox spirits, and delusions concerning menacing radio and electric waves were characteristic of modernity. During and just before the war he had heard of numerous accounts of being persecuted by the police or the military police (kenpeitai). He argued that

incidents of this sort occurred with no relation to the patients' intelligence or whether or not they were cultured (literally, whether or not they had *kyôyô*). He gave the example of an unnamed progressive intellectual who kept a detailed record of his thoughts of persecution before eventually committing suicide.[66]

After the war, Imura observed that delusions of grandeur had become more common. Well-known examples in the past included people claiming they were of royal blood. An incident occurred in which someone claimed that the enthroned emperor was an imposter and that he was in fact the real emperor. After the war, Imura reported an uptick in the number of people who began claiming they were related to famous foreigners such as General MacArthur. He gave details about a case he was personally involved in concerning a young person who claimed he was an orphan who had been born abroad. This patient refused to speak to anyone in Japanese, preferring English. He refused packages that were addressed to him unless they used a foreign-sounding nickname he had been given and were presented as being "packages from abroad." He claimed to be unable to recognize his own relatives.[67] Imura concluded from this case that a new form of psychosis had emerged among young people after the shock of defeat. They felt a sense of guilt and inferiority over having been born Japanese.

Minami Hiroshi (1914-2001), an active member of the Insitute for the Science of Thought, envisioned a new discipline of applied psychology that would provide support for these "anguished youth." He had attended lectures on experimental psychology and Freudian behaviorism in high school, which was generally studied in departments of medicine at the time. He entered the University of Tokyo department of medicine with the intention to study physiology, but he dropped out of the program after completing the initial course in anatomy, a class that focused on animal and

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[66] Imura Tsunerô, "Haisenkoku no môsôkyô" *Gendai shinri*, (Jan. 1949), 27

[67] Ibid, 35

human dissections.[68] Around this time Minami recalled a teacher of anatomy walking a few paces

ahead of a group of students when his hat was suddenly blown off by a gust of wind. When Minami

reached down to pick up his hat, his teacher exclaimed, "Hey thanks. I'm glad it was my hat that

flew off and not my head." According to Minami, the teacher committed suicide not long after this

exchange.[69] He argued these kinds of experiences led him away from science and toward

"fundamental problems of human existence." Hoping to tackle his existential crisis head on, Minami

transferred to the philosophy department at the University of Kyoto in 1937, the year the Sino-

Japanese war began. He wrote of this change as a partial outgrowth of the psychological anxiety that

had plagued him throughout his entire life.

> Moving from natural science to philosophy was not such a big leap for me. In my youth, I once fell into a state of neurosis thinking about questions like, "What is man? What is life? What is death?" When I was an elementary school student, I was afraid of dying. When I was in bed I was terrified that someone would sneak in through the window and kill me, and for a long time I suffered insomnia. The mental instability of my youth formed the backdrop against which I thought about mental problems (心の問題) for humans in general, and not just myself, when I became an adult psychologist.

> Thus, as I continued with my studies of natural science, these mental problems (心の問題) [that concern all of humanity] never left my mind. This was entwined with my own personal anguish (苦悶), and contained the fundamental philosophical problems of "What is man? What does it mean to live?" In this circumstance, I became interested in the idea of a psychological science that would mediate between philosophy and natural science. I went to the philosophy department at the University of Kyoto because these kind of inward desires matched with what the department provided its students at the time.[70]

The following year, still dissatisfied in the philosophy department, Minami made the leap

from philosophy back to psychology and then from Japan to the United States. With the help of a

childhood friend of his mother, the Gestalt psychologist Takagi Sadaji, Minami entered a doctoral

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[68] Miinami Hiroshi, *Deai no jinsei: Jiden no kokoromi*, (Tokyo: Keiso shobo. 2004), 13

[69] Ibid, 14

[70] Ibid, 17-18

program in psychology at Cornell University, where he found an audience more receptive to his ideas of applied psychology. After the war he remarked that psychology in America was unique because it had become a more popularized discipline there than in any other country in the world.[71] Freudian and behaviorist concepts had entered everyday speech, and psychology seemed less dependent on strictly empirical biological research and dissection than in Japan.

In his early postwar writings Minami attempted to "do psychology" in a way that would speak to young intellectuals who he believed were experiencing the same sense of spiritual aimlessness he once felt. One of his first publications after the war was a book on suicide, *An Analysis of the Anxiety of Living* (*Ikiru fuan no bunseki*). It was filled with statistics and Durkheimian analyses linking suicide to the social environment in Japan and Europe. It also included symptomatic readings of popular philosophical texts that romanticized suicide, including Fujimura Misao's suicide note of 1903 and the more recent posthumous memoir of the higher school student Haraguchi Tôzô, *Etude of a Twenty-Year Old* (*Nijûsai no echûdo*), who committed suicide in 1946. Both texts were emblematic of "anguished youth" and the continued existence of a *kyôyô*-infused culture of extracurricular reading in postwar high schools. Minami's emphasis on "anxiety" (不安), the word chosen by Miki Kiyoshi, an exemplar of *kyôyô* associated with the Kyoto School, to translate Heidegger's term *Angst*, was no coincidence, given Minami's own background in philosophy at Kyoto University. Rather than directly criticizing Nishida's followers as "idealist," he offered an alternative approach to the topic that many believed formed the basis of the appeal of Nishida's philosophy among the youth, the problem of existential anxiety.

Using social science to understand something as seemingly individual as suicide was not new. Emile Durkheim's *Suicide* (1897) was a foundational text in the discipline of sociology, and the link he drew between suicide and Protestant individualism, education, and the "spirit of free inquiry"

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[71] Minami Hiroshi, "Amerika kôdôshugi no keifu". *Riron*, (Jun. 1950), 1

paralleled certain Japanese criticisms of the culture of *kyôyô*.[72] Aside from the question of social causality in Durkheim's text, could social science say anything of significance to an individual considering suicide? Minami opened with a section entitled "Letter to a Young Friend" – obviously meant to be someone contemplating suicide. Minami suggests that in the capitalist society we live in today, it is impossible to live a totally guilt-free life, but by identifying the social causes of psychological anguish while also objectively understanding the seductive appeal of texts that romanticize suicide, we can distance ourselves from our own feelings in a way that is psychologically therapeutic.

Decades earlier, Max Weber had responded to this question differently. In 1918, the final year of World War I, Max Weber addressed a crowd of students at the University of Munich. He noted that his young audience was hungry for "experience" – a hunger that would have been familiar to Kurata Hyakuzô and his followers. In response to the students' apparent desire for spiritual guidance, Weber proceeded to sharply distinguish between the natural sciences' "technical mastery of life" and the question of what makes life actually worth living:

> And still less can it be proved that the existence of the world which these sciences describe is worth while, that it has any 'meaning,' or that it makes sense to live in such a world. Science does not ask for the answers to such questions.

> Consider modern medicine, a practical technology which is highly developed scientifically. The general 'presupposition' of the medical enterprise is stated trivially in the assertion that medical science has the task of maintaining life as such and of diminishing suffering as such to the greatest possible degree. Yet this is problematic. By this means the medical person preserves the life of the mortally ill man, even if the patient implores us to relieve him of life, even if his relatives, to whom his life is worthless and to whom the costs of maintaining his worthless life grow unbearable, grant his redemption from suffering.[73]

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[72] Emile Durkheim, *Suicide: A Study in Sociology*, (London: Routledge, 2002), 112

[73] Max Weber, *From Max Weber*, translated by H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, (Oxford: Oxford University Press.), 144

For Weber, social psychology's "value-freedom" was a stoic, tragic refusal to mix questions of fact with questions of value, a principle later enshrined in much of postwar American social science. Minami emphasized "value-freedom" as freedom *from* the urge to succumb to self-hatred in a historical configuration that places an impossible moral burden on the individual to harmonize the contradiction between the necessity of living in the competitive world of capitalism and ideal moral values associated with democracy and cooperation. Minami believed that an awareness of this contradiction was in itself therapeutic for anguished young males attracted to philosophy, but it left unanswered the question of how to go about resolving that contradiction. This question led back to the issue of articulating a positive conception of democratic subjectivity, one that entailed individual involvement in the building of a new democratic culture in Japan.

Conclusion

The critique of the Kyoto School, *kyôyô*, and the culture of the imperial higher schools was the starting point of the search launched by *Science of Thought* and other postwar associations for a new form of intellectual subjectivity capable of building a democratic Japan. The ideal of a rational, easy to understand, practical, and radically democratic "science of thought" was forged out of the negative image of the intellectual culture of a past that lingered on in the present. This past manifested itself in the form of philosophically inclined young people camping out on street corners or roaming the ruins of Tokyo in search of works of philosophy. In part, the move to pathologize "philosophical youth" was the obverse of the remorse many intellectuals experienced over their own earlier embrace of *kyôyô* in Imperial High Schools during the war.

By 1950, educational reforms during the Occupation ended the system of Higher Schools in which most of these postwar intellectuals had been educated. For the most part, the schools were absorbed into national university departments that administered general education courses ironically

called departments of *kyôyô*, or general education, but at this time, the attention of the intellectuals of *Science of Thought* was directed elsewhere. After criticizing the Kyoto School and trying to contain its influence in early issues of the journal, members turned to the task of articulating a positive conception of democratic intellectual subjectivity – the intellectual as a democratic communications specialist.

Chapter 2: Communicating Democracy: America and the Enlightenment of the Intellectual

> A loss of faith in the older religious moralities and a failure to develop a rational secular morality with world-wide mass appeal has left millions deeply uncertain, both as to their own aims and as to those of others. A deep sense of skepticism arises from certainty of having been duped in the past; certainty that men in high places today are seeking to continue that dupery; and *un*certainty as to what one's own goals would have been had the dupery not taken place.
> -Bruce L. Smith, "The Political Communication Specialist of Our Times" 1946

> At any rate, the relationship between nations and people that will allow the fullest use of the world's resources to meet human needs under freedom and order and in peace, calls today for nothing less than the building of a world consensus, for a social psychological integration of the human race commensurate with the interdependent far-flung and rich material resources and human energies of the world.

> In mobilizing the instrumentalitites of mass communication for the building of that consensus, we cannot fail to remind ourselves that along with the perfection of these means of human intercourse science has also perfected unprecedented means of mass destruction. But in the case of neither the instruments of mass communication nor of atomic energy do the inventors of the instrument dictate the uses to which they shall be put.
> - Louis With, "Consensus and Mass Communication," 1948

War and defeat left a void that could not be easily filled by professing a new allegiance to democracy and other allegedly universal values represented by the victory of the United States over Japan. This occasioned a search for new "guiding principles" (指導原理) that would incorporate the experience of the recent past and provide a basis for future action.[74] Intellectuals heatedly debated the merits of new and old "isms" like Marxism, existentialism, and variants of humanism. They sought to determine which philosophy would provide the most appropriate "guiding principle" for the present age.

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[74] See Aragaki Hideo's use of the term in Aragaki Hideo, "Tensei jingo" *Asahi shinbun*, (July 30, 1947), 1. The problem of "guiding principles" was often framed as the need to choose among the "three isms": Marxism, pragmatism, and existentialism. See also R. S., "Interigencha to tetsugaku," *Tetugaku hyôron* 3, no. 1 (1948): 33-34. Shimizu Ikutarô, "Markusu-shugi, jitsuzonshugi, puragumatizumu" *Chisei*, (Apr. 1957).

The journal *Science of Thought* was founded as part of this search, but its founders, influenced by their experiences in America and Japan during the war, were less interested in finding an ultimate answer to the question of guiding principles. The heroic search for an intellectual panacea was, in their view, a part of the problem. Rather than ultimate solutions, what was necessary was a more "workmanlike" attitude to the task of nurturing a democratic, egalitarian culture to break down the barrier that separated intellectuals, who brooded about guiding principles, from the people, who were more concerned with making a living. Changing the way intellectuals performed in public would make possible "an active debate among writers and readers through which we expect the thought (思想) represented by this journal will be gradually elaborated upon and evolve."[75]

The journal approached this problem from two angles, expressed by the categorization of articles in its early issues: "Communications Research" and "The Philosophy of Everyone." This chapter focuses on communications research, which sought the "democratization" of intellectuals by encouraging them to change their public communicative practices. The problem of communications had links with wartime propaganda research in both the US and Japan, but after the war, the unfamiliar term "communication" was reintroduced by *Science of Thought* in a way that tried to distinguish between Harold D. Lasswell's "value-neutral" science of social control and a more democratic connotation grounded in John Dewey's ideal of open, egalitarian exchange among groups from different social and educational backgrounds. Tsurumi Shunsuke drew on the concept to criticize the exclusionary, solipsistic "meta-language" (メタ言語), full of philosophical jargon,

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[75] Starting a debate between writers and readers was one of the stated goals for the journal. It is listed in the founding statement in the first issue. Shisô no kagaku, "Sôkan no shushi," *Shisô no kagaku*, (Jan., 1946), 3

used by postwar critics and authors and to advocate techniques that could involve a wider audience

in democratic conversation.[76]

Science of Thought operated within an intellectual paradigm associated with American

pragmatism and behaviorism, which placed particular emphasis on the loanword "communication"

(komyunikêshon) as a new American concept and field of scientific research. The concept was

bound up with a vision of a society founded upon the transparent exchange of ideas among

autonomous communicators, and this image in turn suggested practical sites for linguistic reform.

Their aim was to create an enlightened, communicative, cooperative, and democratic intellectual

community. In 1948, Science of Thought hosted the first public lectures on communication at a time

when the word was largely unknown to the Japanese public. Besides lectures, articles in the journal

included attempts to learn from, critique, and understand the success of producers of popular

culture, such as books, music, film, and even advice columns. Other articles introduced American

communications research, books on Peircean semiotics, or artificial languages, like Charles Ogden's

BASIC English and Otto Neurath's Isotype. This research was conducted against the backdrop of

official language reform that began in 1946 with the support of the US Occupation. This reform

simplified the Japanese writing system by reducing the number of Chinese characters permitted in

newspapers, magazines, and government documents. Writers associated with Science of Thought

supported these reforms but felt that they did not go far enough. Simplifying the writing system was

not enough to induce real change in the way the intellectuals interacted with a larger public.

Through a twin focus on communication reform and empirical, ethnographic research,

Tsurumi Shunsuke and other members of Science of Thought tried to move beyond both utopian

and dystopian accounts of the implications of new media technology and mass culture toward the

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[76] Tsurumi Shunsuke, "Sengo shôsetsu no katachi" *Tsurumi Shunsuke shû* vol. 3, (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1992)

Figure 2.1, examples of Otto Neurath's International System of Typographic Picture Education (ISOTYPE) from the May 1948 issue of *Science of Thought*.

reform of both the "text-based, rational" intellectuals and the "visual-oriented, emotional" masses.[77] *Science of Thought* was premised on the idea that these two groups constituted two distinct, mutually estranged cultures that had much to learn from each other. The urgent task of reconciling the two provided *Science of Thought* with a perspective from which to investigate popular culture and radicalize early Occupation-led educational and language reforms intended to "democratize" Japanese society, a task that became increasingly difficult in the politically charged atmosphere of the Cold War.

In postwar Japan, the term "enlightener" (keimôshugisha) was originally a derisive label applied to intellectuals who were accused of condescendingly trying to reform and modernize the masses from the top-down.[78] The term came out of clashes between Marxists, who claimed to stand on the side of the masses, and "modernist" social scientists like Maruyama Masao and Ôtsuka Hisao. Marxists argued that these thinkers overemphasized the undeveloped "semi-feudal" subjectivity of the masses, who were in need of reform or "enlightenment" from above. In one sense, this label seemed to fit the intellectuals associated with *Science of Thought* during their period of promoting ideals of "communication" soon after the war. They argued that American "communications research" was founded on universal values of science and logic, and that it had an important pedagogical role. Yet they seemed to direct their exhortation to become clear communicators more at other intellectuals and their past selves than at the masses, who they believed were less responsible for the state of linguistic and communicative confusion that had existed during the war.

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[77] Visual/textual split from Tsurumi Shunsuke, *Taishû bungei*, (Tokyo: Kawade shobo, 1954), ch.1

[78] On the genealogy of the term "enlightenment" in postwar Japan, see Hidaka Rokurô's introduction to *Kindaishugi*, (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1964).

Before and After Science: **The Origins of *Science of Thought***

The journal *Science of Thought* appeared on newsstands among dozens of new periodicals with the word "science" (科学) in the title, including: *Science World* (科学世界), *Science and Life* (科学と生活), *Friend of Science* (科学の友), *Scientism* (科学主義), *Science and Art* (科学と芸術), and *Science for the Cultured*（文化人の科学), all of which appeared between 1945 and 1946. Between 1948 and 1949 some readers had a choice between *Science of Thought* and the Marxist-Leninist journal *Science <u>and</u> Thought* (思想と科学).[79] The enthusiasm for science suggested the hope for a transformed future far removed from the ruins of the war. Members of Science of Thought turned to the latest developments in logical positivism, communications science, and neuroscience in an attempt to satisfy the insatiable demand.

Intellectual and journalistic enthusiasm for science was not new. Alhough the Marxist discourse on scientific socialism was suppressed in the 1930s, intellectuals in and outside the government bureaucracy promoted the application of scientific practices – hygiene and scientific management, for example – to everyday life and fueled enthusiasm for technological achievements, particularly after World War I. In 1930 the ethnologist Yanagita Kunio wrote that the disruption caused by the war in Europe alerted government officials to the need to promote self-sufficiency in technological research connected with the natural sciences, although he noted that there was considerably less enthusiasm for the social sciences, which were associated with dangerous socialist ideas from abroad.[80]

It may seem paradoxical that science and nationalism went hand-in-hand at a period when the Japanese government and many intellectuals were adopting an antagonistic stance toward many

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[79] Kôno Toshirô et al. *Sengo zasshi,* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobo), 210

[80] Yanagita Kunio, *Meiji Taishô shi sesôhen* (Tokyo: Kôdansha), 429

things associated with the "West." Yet historians and philosophers active during those years were also working to dislodge science from an exclusive provenance in Europe and the United States by (1) discovering indigenous sources of science in Japan and (2) emphasizing the contingency of the origins of modern science in Europe. In the thirties, new historians of Japanese science and mathematics like Saigusa Hiroto rediscovered pre-Meiji knowledge systems that seemed to foreshadow later discoveries - historical research that sometimes unintentionally gave historical weight to a wider discourse about the "genius of the Japanese race" and the inevitability of Japan's emergence as a Great Power based on its cultural character. At the same time, members of the Kyoto School of philosophy such as Shimomura Toratarô conducted new historical research on thinkers like Galileo and Copernicus that stressed the contingent and Christian origins of European science. The cosmopolitan Kyoto School, in dialogue with European thinkers like Martin Heidegger, stressed that the unique historical experience of the Japanese race equipped it with the capacity not only to learn from Europe but to remedy and overcome the technological excesses of Western civilization.[81]

Japan's defeat in 1945 overturned this discourse in two ways. First, many intellectuals decided that the war revealed that Japan was more stubbornly backward and feudalistic than they had believed - a refutation of scientific nationalism and a blow to the confident cosmopolitanism of the Kyoto School and to Marxists of the internationalist *Rôno-ha* school who had de-emphasized feudalism in their view of Japan's current mode of production. Second, government-sponsored research into the sciences of social control during the war, including propaganda studies, failed to overturn the Marxist and pragmatist views that the social and natural sciences had been neglected, if not suppressed, and that what little research existed was dominated by aloof experts and elites. After the war, Marxist intellectuals, some of whom were released from prison or returned from exile

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[81] Hiromi Mizuno, *Science for the Empire*, (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2009), ch. 5

abroad, were able to resume a discourse on science that stressed the task of replacing bourgeois

science, fragmented into multiple fields and provincial in origin, with a dialectical, popular

proletarian science that would ultimately remedy this unevenness. This science was sometimes

referred to as a "science of thought" - a concept derived from Engels's *Anti-Dühring* and *Dialectics of

Nature,* as well as from the recently deceased Marxist Tosaka Jun's *On Science* (科学論).

This latter approach to science was evident in journals suppressed during the war such as

Tosaka's *Materialism Research* (*Yûibutsuron kenkyû*, 1932-1938) and Hani Gorô and Kobayashi Isamu's

Under the Banner of Emergent Science (*Shinkô kagaku no hata no moto ni*, 1928-1929). The name of Hani's

journal derived from the Soviet philosopher Abram Deborin's contemporaneous bilingual journal

Unter dem Banner des Marxismus, a fact that alludes to their internationalist attempt to associate

Marxism with such revolutionary scientific developments as quantum mechanics during the twenties

and thirties.[82] Leftists attempted to popularize science in a way that resembled the Red Science and

Social Relations of Science (SRS) movements in Britian led by thinkers like J. D. Bernal, Joseph

Needham, J. B. S. Haldane, and Lancelot Hogben, whose *Mathematics for the Million* was translated

into Japanese in 1939. In 1942, his *Science for the Citizen* was translated by a former member of the

Materialism Research group, Konno Takeo, who was later associated with *Science of Thought*.[83]

The most obvious successor to this discourse after the war were the publications of the

Association of Democratic Scientists (founded in January, 1946), with its politically diverse

membership that included "old liberals" from the Taishô period, Communists, and most of the

members of the Institute for the Science of Thought. Thus the task of re-imagining the relationship

between the natural and physical sciences was never an exclusively Marxist task. American

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[82] Kevin Doak, "Under the Banner of the New Science: History, Science, and the Problem of Particularity in Early Twentieth-Century Japan," *Philosophy East and West*, (Apr. 1998), 235

[83] For an overview of the Red Science movement see Edwin Roberts, "From the History of Science to the Science of History" *Science and Society,* (Oct. 2005)

pragmatists like Max Otto and John Dewey, whose following grew rapidly in Japan after 1945, were still engaged in their attempt to overcome the "backwardness" and "isolation" of the social sciences through a kind of scientific humanism.[84]

The two shifts, one toward a stronger characterization of Japan as scientifically backward and the other towards a revived universalist discourse on science, conflicted with each other insofar as the first stressed negative particularism (backwardness) while the second stressed internationalism. This contradiction accounted for a number of debates shortly after the war. If Japan was so backward, was it even possible for its working classes to work in concert with the working classes of developed capitalist countries? Should intellectuals first work to enlighten the backward masses on the model of the French Encyclopedists, or was this bourgeois model already outdated in a postwar world that might be moving toward communism?

In the midst of these debates, skepticism about the newfound enthusiasm for "science" was widespread among intellectuals: less because science could be quite destructive, as proved by the atomic bomb, and more because, like "democracy," lip service to science could be a mask for nefarious intentions. In part this was because many thinkers had become inured to a barrage of moralizing propaganda during the war, some of which exhorted imperial subjects to apply scientific principles to everyday life in order to cut down on waste during the war. It was not hard to detect continuity on this point even as the slogans changed. This did not result in a rejection of the proclaimed ideal of democracy per se but in skepticism about preachy and propagandistic methods of trying to mobilize support for it. The Kyoto School philosopher Tanabe Hajime's notion that a peaceful postwar democracy might be founded on collective moral feelings of remorse for the war was subjected to intense criticism. Many progressive intellectuals rejected such an overt appeal to

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[84] For a postwar expression of this view, see the posthumously published John Dewey, "Modern Philosophy." in *The Cleavage in our Culture: Studies in Scientific Humanism in Honor of Max Otto* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1952), 24-29

collective moral sentiments as reiterating the tactics of moral suasion during the war. They preferred

to appeal to universal values of science and democracy or even pure egotism. For example, in a

1946 essay that has come to symbolize "postwar thought," the writer Sakaguchi Ango glorified the

"shameless egotism" of the black market and the brothel as the true loci of democracy, and "the

liberation of mankind." The same year Maruyama Masao, the left-liberal historian of political

thought, wrote that the middling morality of Japanese politicians came off badly in comparison to

Machiavelli's prince, who was at least honest about the "satanic" nature of politics.[85]

In this light, overt egotistic behavior was preferable because it signaled moral autonomy, or

at least an apparent lack of interest in appeasing external moral authorities, whether Japanese or

American. The opposite of this was the "talismanic use" of democratic sloganeering out of

deference toward the status quo during the Allied Occupation. In the first issue of *Science of Thought*

in 1946, Tsurumi Shunsuke argued that the Japanese people had simply replaced one set of amuletic

slogans for another in order to appease a different, now American, superior.[86] In 1948, the China

scholar Takeuchi Yoshimi, later head of the Institute for the Science of Thought, described the new

postwar leadership as the substitution of one set of essentially identical "honors students" for

another.[87] In different ways, these thinkers emphasized that fundamental change had to occur at the

level of self-motivated behavior, not at the level of proclaimed adherence to abstract concepts like

democracy or science. The slogans might change in the transition from war to Occupation, but the

basic intention of currying favor with the authorities could remain the same.

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[85] Maruyama Masao, *Thought and Behavior in Modern Japanese Politics,* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), ch. 1

[86] Tsurumi Shunsuke, "Kotoba no o-mamori-teki shiyôhô ni tsuite" *Shisô no kagaku* (May 1946)

[87] Takeuchi Yoshimi, *What is Modernity?* Translated by Richard Calichman (New York: Columbia University Press), 68

Sakaguchi, Maruyama, Takeuchi, and Tsurumi all practiced a hermeneutics of suspicion, whereby real democracy was to be distinguished from obsequious propaganda put forth on behalf of the American occupiers, and the practical scientific method was to be distinguished from parroting scientific facts and fetishizing American or Soviet technology. Yet insofar as a hermeneutics of suspicion could be imagined as part and parcel of real democracy and the true scientific method, such skepticism, paradoxically, added to the allure of those two terms as rallying points for critics of varying political and intellectual orientations.[88]

The name *Science of Thought* was itself a compromise among a multi-disciplinary group whose individual members wanted to guide it in directions that reflected their individual intellectual interests. Other possible names included "Journal of the History of Thought," (Maruyama), "Science Review" (Taketani), and "Journal of Semiotics" (Tsurumi). According to an interview with Tsurumi Shunsuke years later, the original members assembled to decide on a name in what would become the group's office located in the Shisei kaikan in Hibya Park. Despite putting the different proposals to a vote, they were unable to reach a decision, each candidate garnering only one vote. Suddenly Ueda Tatsunosuke, a scholar of Thomas Aquinas, dropped in on the meeting and suggested "Art of Thinking" and then "Science of Thought" in English - a name that brought their disparate interests together, transcending the disciplinary and ideological boundaries that divided the group from the outset.[89]

Years later, Tsurumi wrote that some critics believed the name "Science of Thought" was derived from Engels' *Anti-Dühring* or *Dialectics of Nature*. He dismissed the notion, asserting that Ueda's idea of a "science of thought" was derived from the clear, logical argumentation in Aquinas' *Summa Theologica,* the subject of an article Ueda published in the first issue of the journal. It may

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[88] On the philosophical notion of a "hermeneutics of suspicion," see Paul Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), 44

[89] Tsurumi Shunsuke, *Genryû kara Mirai e,* (Tokyo: Shiso no kagakusha), 87

seem odd that a medieval theologian inspired the name of a journal officially founded in part to

"introduce the methods of logical empiricism in every field of thought and practice," but Aquinas

was highly esteemed by modernist philosophers like Otto Neurath of the Vienna School.[90] He

argued that in the future, when anti-metaphysical education had taken root, Aquinas and other

medieval scholastic philosophers would occupy pride of place in the history of philosophy for their

examples of logical argumentation, while the stock of German idealists would diminish in value.[91]

For his part, Ueda presented Aquinas as a rational philosopher who skillfully blended the "artificial

international language" of Latin with a colloquial sensibility that was clear, logical, and easy to

understand.[92]

Whatever Ueda's precise intention, the name would have carried different connotations for

the different members present. One example was the nuclear physicist Taketani Mitsuo, at 34 one

of the oldest members and the one with the clearest anti-fascist credentials, having been arrested

twice for his wartime activities in support of the popular front journal *World Culture* (*Sekai bunka*)

and the newspaper *Saturday* (*Dôyôbi*, which was modeled on the French Popular Front weekly

Vendredi). After the war Taketani helped found both *Science of Thought* and the overtly Marxist

Association of Democratic Scientists (*Minka*). He was also involved in postwar debates with other

Marxists in *Minka* and the relaunched *Materialism Research* over the meaning of "technology" and the

relationship between dialectics and the scientific method, which drew on the work of Tosaka Jun

and Engels's *Anti-Dühring*. Taketani was surely aware of the concept of a "science of thought" in

these Marxist works, which were reprinted during the early years of the Occupation.

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[90] See the founding statement of the journal reprinted in *Yomu hito, kaku hito, henshû-suru hito*, Edited by Kinen shinpojiumu o kiroku suru kai, (Tokyo: Shisô no kagakusha, 2010), 152

[91] Otto Neurath, "Unified Science and Psychology." in *Unified Science,* edited by Brian McGuinness (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel, 1987), 9

[92] Tsurumi Shunsuke, "Nazuke-oya e no kansha - Ueda Tatsunosuke" *Tsurumi Shunsuke Shohyô shûsei* Vol. 3 (Tokyo: Misuzu shobô. 2007), 20-21

In 1937, Tosaka had written an essay on the relationship between materialist science and literature entitled "Science of Thought" (*Shisô no kagaku*). He also referred to the possibility of such a science in his last major work *On Science* (*Kagakuron*).[93] He believed in the notion of a science of thought as a corrective to the tendency of the ontology-obsessed philosophy of his day, the Kyoto School, to merge with literature and hermeneutics, becoming unhinged from the objective material reality of science. Tosaka derived the notion of true philosophy as a science of thought from a passage in Engel's *Anti-Dühring*:

> Modern materialism is essentially dialectical, and no longer needs any philosophy standing above the other sciences. As soon as each separate science is required to get clarity as to its position in the great totality of things and of our knowledge of things, a special science dealing with this totality is superfluous. What still independently survives of all former philosophy is the science of thought and its laws - formal logic and dialectics.[94]

Some Marxists drew on works like *Anti-Dühring* to dismiss philosophical texts and scientific research that did not support the dialectical materialist standpoint, but according to Tsurumi Shunsuke, it was the Marxist physicist Taketani Mitsuo, not the members educated in America, who encouraged the group to embrace ideological pluralism. This included the non-Marxist viewpoints of the Bergsonian physicist Watanabe Satoshi and Tsurumi Shunsuke, who was influenced by American pragmatism and the New Criticism of I. A. Richards.[95] Taketani first suggested the system adopted by the journal, the "opposite of the just established UN security council," whereby each individual member of the editorial board had the right to push through the publication of a manuscript over the objections of other editors.[96]

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[93] Tosaka Jun, "Kagakuron" *Tosaka Jun Zenshû*. Vol. 3, (Tokyo: Keiso Shobo. 1966)

[94] Engels, Friedrich, *Anti-Dühring*, (New York: International Publishers),. 31

[95] Tsurumi Shunsuke, "Watashi no 100-satsu." *Tsurumi Shunsuke Shohyô shûsei* Vol. 3. (Tokyo: Misuzu shobô, 2007), 9

[96] Tsurumi Shunsuke ed. *Genryû kara Mirai e,* (Tokyo: Shiso no kagakusha, 2005) 3

Could there be an ecumenical interpretation of Engels' "science of thought" in line with group's eclecticism? Not only did Engels give formal logic pride of place alongside dialectics, he dismissed the idea of a "special science" of the totality standing above the individual sciences. The work of Antonio Gramsci also sheds light on the notion of a "science of thought." In the *Prison Notebooks*, he interpreted Engels' concern with a "science of thought" as a shift from a concern with totalizing philosophy towards a pedagogical concern with "techniques of thinking" that could exist alongside techniques of reading and writing. In a passage that strongly evokes *Science of Thought*'s project to study the philosophy of the "common man," Gramsci writes:

> The technique of thought will certainly not produce a great philosophy, but it will provide criteria of judgment, and it will correct the deformities of the mode of thinking of common sense. It would be interesting to compare the *technique* of common sense - I.e., of the philosophy of the man in the street - with the technique of the most advanced modern thought.[97]

This sense evokes Ueda's original idea of the "Art of Thinking," defined by Aquinas as akin to technique as "the right reason about certain works to be made." Linking thought to common skills like reading and writing also evoked Tosaka Jun's call for the "massification of science" at the end of *On Science*.[98] Science brought "down to earth" was coterminous with everyday techniques of practical reason and communication.

By problematizing science along with the boundary between intellectuals and the masses in its work on communications and "The Philosophy of Ordinary People," *Science of Thought* in part continued Tosaka's project to massify the sciences. At the same time, owing to its characterization of the wartime past as irrational and anti-scientific, the allure of American social science was great despite the fact that it was less concerned with overcoming such a dichotomy. This tension led the

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[97] Antonio Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks* volume 2, translated by Joseph A. Buttigieg, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 160

[98] Tosaka, op. cit.

group to try to distinguish between the American sciences of social control and the American sciences of individual empowerment that might play a role in the formation of democratic subjectivity in postwar Japan.

Turning to America, Turning to the People

From its inception, *Science of Thought* looked to American society for possible solutions to the apparent contradiction between intellectual progress and political democracy. They were not alone. After the war, many intellectuals who had previously assumed the superiority of European civilization over that of both Japan and the "machine civilization" of America were now asking the question "What can we learn from the United States?" *Science of Thought* was in a unique position to satisfy this desire for knowledge. Four out of the seven founders of the group – Tsurumi Shunsuke, Tsurumi Kazuko, Takeda Kiyoko, and Tsuru Shigeto – had studied at East Coast institutions of higher learning until the outbreak of war with the United States in 1941. After the war ended, they praised their former host country not for its technology and prosperity, but as a nation of autonomous, common-sensical citizen-scientists who were capable of cooperation despite ideological and class differences. When the Marxian economist Tsuru Shigeto claimed that in America "philosophy melts into everyday life," he was expressing a yearning for a world in which politics, social activity, popular culture, and intellectual production would reinforce one another in a mutually beneficial relationship. This image contrasted with that of prewar Japan as a fractured society composed of aloof intellectuals who worshiped *kyôyô*, manipulative fascist ideologues, and a mysterious mass of ordinary people whose lives seemed remote from the world of the intellectual elite.

This idealization of America was not naive. The members' experiences in America were more mixed than some of their early characterizations of the academic environment suggest, but

they still caught glimpses of genuine collaboration across ideological lines. For example, Tsuru

Shigeto, the oldest of the returnees from America, drew upon his experience helping to found the

Marxian quarterly *Science and Society* in 1936 while a graduate student of Paul Sweezy's at Harvard.

The relationship with Sweezy that would come back to haunt Tsuru when he was summoned before

the House Committee on Un-American Activities in connection with the suicide of the Canadian

diplomat and Japanese historian E. Herbert Norman in 1957.[99] Although Tsuru suspected the

American Communist Party might have been involved behind the scenes in formation of the journal,

he noted that V. J. McGill's article in the first issue, "An Evaluation of Logical Positivism," criticized

the philosophy of the Vienna Circle from the perspective of dialectical materialism, but then, in a

possible gesture to popular-front solidarity, went on to praise "the logical positivists at [the 1934

World Congress of Philosophy in] Prague who provided the strongest counterpoise to the

nationalism and mystagogy of fascist philosophy."[100] Tsuru claims that McGill's praise for the

logical positivists triggered a dispute between orthodox "canon-oriented" Marxists and thinkers like

Sweezy and Reinhold Niebuhr who were of a more ecumenical, "popular frontist" mindset. Articles

for the next issue by Niebuhr and Sweezy, as well as an article by Tsuru himself on the theorist of

market socialism Oskar Lange, were put on hold while this dispute played out.[101]

Yet Tsuru could still find much to like in the impetus behind the founding of *Science and

Society*, which informed his intellectual career back in Japan. Although *Science of Thought* was not

explicitly devoted to the development of Marxist scholarship, its mission overlapped with that of

Science and Society in several respects. Both journals proclaimed the necessity of overcoming the

fragmentation of individual scientific disciplines in order to investigate the connection between

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[99] Discussed in Tsuru Shigeto's autobiography *Ikutsu mo no kiro wo kaiko shite*, (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten. 2001) 124-6

[100] V. J. McGill, "An Evaluation of Logical Positivism." *Science and Society*, (Fall, 1936) 78

[101] Tsuru. op cit. pp. 127-8

science and society and between thought and action. Both journals initially recognized that this task was only possible if a variety of conflicting perspectives were brought together to develop a dynamic intellectual movement.[102]

Science of Thought drew a strategic contrast between the fragmentation of Japanese intellectuals into Marxist, Communist, Trotskyist, social democratic, and liberal camps with the "workmanlike attitude" of American intellectuals who collaborated across the boundaries of pre-established "isms" in order to further scientific progress. A short article in the 1949 issue of Science of Thought briefly introduced the American Journal of the History of Ideas, Philosophy and Phenomenological Research, and Philosophy of Science, with the remark, "What we feel jealous about is the fact that leftists and rightists cooperate in the editing and planning of these journals." Noting the philosophical diversity of Marxists, Platonists, logical positivists, pragmatists appearing in the same journal, the author remarked, "The people here, regardless of which camp they belong to, are in accordance insofar as they all try to test their assertions through public experience (公け的経験) at the end of the day. In Japan there is still no such tradition of "workmanlike-ism" (ワリキリ主義). There is not even clear evidence of efforts to rethink philosophical opinions in connection with experience. There is much we should learn from the field of philosophy in America."[103]

The returnees drew upon their contacts in America, as well as the Occupation's English-language library, to keep up with recent works of Anglo-American scholarship in philosophy – particularly on pragmatism and logical empiricism – and the behavioristic social sciences. Long reviews of these materials formed the bulk of the early content of Science of Thought, which began publication during a time of enormous demand for knowledge about the United States. The statement of purpose in the first issue gave pride of place to the "importation" (移入) of Anglo-

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[102] (unsigned article) "Science & Society: A Marxian Quarterly" Science and Society, (Fall 1936) i

[103] Unsigned article. "Beikoku no tetsugaku zasshi" Shisô no kagaku, (Mar. 1948) 64

American thought (英米思想). The literary critic Nakano Yoshio criticized the group in its early years for "monopolizing the supply of new academic books" and taking advantage of its privileged access to information about America.[104]

A few of these early reviews were later recognized as foundational texts in the genealogies of various academic specializations institutionalized after 1945, including communications research, semiotics, and media studies. Yet despite this later canonization, the first issue of *Science of Thought* declared its independence from established academia and its perceived division into isolated sub-disciplines and schools of thought removed from everyday concerns. Thus rather than becoming a mere conduit for American scholarship, it was founded with the intention of redefining *shisô* (思想), a word translated by the group as "thought" but with connotations that extend to "ideology" or even "philosophical system," in a way that would untether it from scholarly texts and make it more practical, more visible in everyday life, and more accessible to comparison, critique, and logical analysis than it ever had been before.

No less than some of its members' academic experience in America, *Science of Thought*'s orientation toward practical philosophy was informed by personal encounters with the ordinary Japanese during the war. These experiences helped crystallize their conception of the "common man" as someone whose mental life was tactically oriented toward adaptation and survival. Tsurumi Shunsuke, who came from an elite political and intellectual family, devised a critique of authoritarian language while serving in the wartime occupation of Indonesia and observing the way lower-ranking Japanese soldiers navigated the Navy hierarchy. Takeda Kiyoko was the daughter of a wealthy Christian land-owning family in Western Japan who traveled to New York in the 1930s and became a student of Reinhold Niebuhr at the Union Theological Seminary. After traveling back to Japan

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[104] Quoted in Tsuru Shigeto, "'Shisô no kagaku' ni yoseta kitai" In *Sengo 'keimô' no nokoshita mono*, edited by Yasuda Tsuneo and Amano Masako, (Tokyo: Hisayamasha, 1992) 167

with the two Tsurumis and Tsuru, Takeda worked in a supply factory in Shizuoka prefecture along with other women students mobilized for the war effort. Her observation there of covert passive resistance in the midst of seeming obedience formed the basis of her first articles on "people's philosophy" for *Science of Thought*.[105]

Their emphasis on practical, everyday philosophy clashed with an image of intellectual activity associated with the past, epitomized by those students lining up to buy the collected works of the philosopher Nishida Kitarô in 1947. Members of Science of Thought believed that the philosophical jargon of the Kyoto School, epitomized by the phrase, "absolute non-contradiction of nothingness," exacerbated the separation of "thought" from the everyday life of the people. Where Nishida wanted to create a distinct domain of transhistorical ontological inquiry insulated from the destabilizing effects of scientific progress, *Science of Thought* worked to bridge the gap that separated philosophy, science, and the mental techniques employed by ordinary people in everyday life.

Their mission resonated with the mission of two organizations in Japan that quickly came to loggerheads in the context of the Cold War. The first was the Rockefeller Foundation, which established contact with Tsurumi Shunsuke in 1949 and funded a project through the journal on "The Effect of the Japanese Language on Thought." In the research proposal for the project, *Science of Thought* included a "logical approach" and "sociological approach" that corresponded to their work on semiotics and communications theory, on the one hand, and the "philosophy of everyone," on the other. The group's interests converged with the Foundation's stated objective of democratizing Japan by reorienting intellectuals away from German influences and toward Anglo-American philosophy and social science. Yet members of *Science of Thought* opposed to US foreign policy during the Cold War argued against accepting funds from the organization, and the

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[105] Takeda Kiyoko, "'Hitobito no tetsugaku' o saguru." In *Sengo "keimô" no nokoshita mono,* edited by Yasuda Tsuneo, Amano Masako, (Tokyo: Hisayamasha, 1992) 184-185

Foundation withdrew its support after a member of the group, the social psychologist Minami Hiroshi, visited the People's Republic of China in 1951.[106]

The second major organization that crossed paths with *Science of Thought* in its early days was the Association of Democratic Scientists, a popular-front coalition of communist and non-communist progressive and liberal intellectuals founded in 1946. Considered a Communist-front organization by the Occupation authorities, *Minka*'s stated mission was to promote a positivist and rationalist sensibility and to replace philosophical jargon with "frank and easy-to-understand expressions."[107] From the start, membership in *Minka* and *Science of Thought* overlapped a great deal, but as the Cold War intensified, *Minka*-affiliated philosophers became increasingly critical of *Science of Thought*'s emphasis on American thought, pragmatism, and communications studies, labeling their work "idealist" and the group itself a collection of "America-niks." Yet for a brief time *Science of Thought* managed to straddle these two camps, advocating an ideal of realigning intellectual inquiry with everyday life, which persisted long after the heyday of "postwar enlightenment" and the "democratic popular front" had ended.

The Semiotic Policeman

Tsurumi Shunsuke's earliest vision for postwar philosophy as clear, accessible, and pertinent to the everyday life of non-philosophers appeared in his first book, entitled *Reflections on Philosophy* (哲学の反省), his intellectual debut. It was published in 1946, the same year Tsurumi, at age 24, helped launch the first issue of *Science of Thought* and contributed the famous article, "On the

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[106] Charles B. Fahs, "Comments on Japan and Suggestions for Rockefeller Foundation Policy There." Rockefeller Foundation Collection. Record Group 1.2, Series 609, Box 45, Folder 499, (January 26, 1948) 9

[107] Quoted in Yasuda Tsuneo. "'Minshushugi kagaku' to 'Shisô no kagaku'" in *Sengo 'keimô' no nokoshita* mono, edited by Yasuda Tsuneo and Amano Masako, (Tokyo: Hisayamasha, 1992) 47

Talismanic Use of Words." Both of these publications appeared despite the extreme paper shortage thanks to the intervention of his father, the politician and popular author Tsurumi Yusuke, who lent office space and the services of his reorganized and renamed publishing house, Senkusha.

Both the office for *Science of Thought* and Senkusha were located in the Shisei kaikan (Municipal Administration Hall) in Hibiya Park. Tsurumi's grandfather, the well known politician Gôtô Shinpei, had constructed the building in 1929. Gôtô was a former colonial administrator of Taiwan and a modernizing mayor of Tokyo who modeled the Shisei kaikan on the New York Bureau of Municipal Research. The space had previously been the home of the Taiheiyô kyôkai (Pacific Association). The Association was a kind of regional think tank founded by Tsurumi Yûsuke in 1938. It specialized in gathering statistics and strategic knowledge on Pacific Rim nations in the years leading up to and during war with the United States. Tsurumi Kazuko, Tsuru Shigeto, and other contributors to *Science of Thought* worked at the Association, where they drew upon their experiences in American academia to write articles elucidating the strategic weaknesses of the "American character." Inokuchi Ichirô, who wrote an important article in *Science of Thought* introducing the communications research of Harold Lasswell, had also been a researcher for the Pacific Association and collaborated with Tsurumi Yûsuke in a mult-volume biography of Gôtô Shinpei.

Before the war, Tsurumi Shunsuke had been a lackadaisical student obsessed with "philosophical suicide" and a potential embarrassment to his politically prominent family. He was sent to attend school in America in 1938 at the age of 16 through an acquaintance of his father's, the historian Arthur M. Schlesinger Sr., who introduced him to Tsuru Shigeto – then a graduate student in the economics department at Harvard.[108] After a year at the Middlesex School in Concord, Tsurumi entered Harvard University and majored in philosophy. There he attended lectures by

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[108] Tsurumi Shunsuke, *Kitai to kaisô*, vol. 1, (Tokyo: Shôbunsha, 1997) 15

Rudolf Carnap and had his BA thesis on Peirce supervised by W. V. O. Quine. He also attended a class on the "Pragmatic Movement in Philosophy" taught by Charles W. Morris, who was a visiting professor from the University of Chicago and would later host the Vienna Circle's "Unity of Science" project at that school with the support of a Rockefeller Foundation grant. Tsurumi's relationship with Morris helped *Science of Thought* secure its own grant through the Foundation after the war as part of the project, "The Effect of the Japanese Language on Thought."

After war broke out with the United States in 1941, Tsurumi discussed the international situation with Tsuru, who confidently predicted that Japan would lose the war on the basis of the relative economic power of the two countries. Tsurumi claims to have felt a strong emotional desire to be in Japan during its moment of inevitable defeat. It is also clear that he, along with other returnees who became collaborators at *Science of Thought*, wanted to be involved in the "era of construction" after the war referred to in 1946 *Reflections on Philosophy,* most of which was conceived before 1945. In 1942, four of the seven co-founders of *Science of Thought* then studying in America*,* Tsurumi Shunsuke, Tsurumi Kazuko, Tsuru Shigeto, and Takeda Kiyoko, boarded the USS Gripsholm, a repatriation ship, and transferred to the Yokohama-bound Asama-maru in the port of Lourenço Marques in the Portuguese colony of Mozambique.[109]

Tsurumi's repatriation was an opportunity ethnographically to observe semiotic behavior he had learned to separate into Peircean categories at Harvard. He later remarked in an interview that in the transfer of the returnees from one repatriation ship to the other, he was able to observe the switch between two all-encompassing "sign-systems" (記号体系). This switch was marked by a reading of the emperor's announcement of war with the United States on deck aboard the Asama-maru. Tsurumi believed the everyday behavior of the passengers aboard the ship changed after this

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[109] For more on the repatriation experience see Tsurumi Shunsuke, et al. *Nichibei kôkansen.* Tokyo: Shinchôsha. 2006

point in the journey. Their mannerisms became stiffer and they became more reticent. For him, the public reading signified the re-establishment of Japanese-style social hierarchy and deference to authority among a group that had socialized more casually while aboard the Gripsholm.

Tsurumi's Peircean-inflected *Reflections on Philosophy* reflected a reorientation of intellectuals away from holistic ideals of *Bildung* and *kyôyô* toward one of cooperation among the social sciences and toward the redefinition of philosophy as a collection of pragmatic, practical mental techniques. In line with this general reorientation, Tsurumi argued that in order to avoid being "behind the times" (時代遅れ) in a world of increasing scientific specialization, philosophy ought to be redefined as fulfilling three major functions - (A) providing the means to the semiotic criticism of linguistic propositions, (B) offering sets of guiding principles to decide among multiple courses of action, and (C) enabling a sympathetic understanding of different ways of life. Philosophy increased or decreased in importance according to the functional requirements of society, but owing to the demands of reconstruction, the widespread propagation of a kind of philosophical thinking was an urgent task in the aftermath of the war.

As part of this argument, Tsurumi divided history into two different moments: moments of construction and moments of crisis. The significance of philosophy during these two kinds of moments differed. During moments of crisis – his examples were, "war, uprising, or revolution" – philosophy could either play a partisan role or issue warnings about the violent side effects of the crisis, but these warnings would be largely ineffective. Conversely, moments of construction were ideal times in which to engage in the propagation of philosophical modes of thought in anticipation of the next crisis. Logical criticism was a kind of disaster preparedness for the next crisis, be it war or socialist revolution. Come what may, according to Tsurumi, moments of radical change, which he likened to a "surgical procedure," always have unwanted side-effects that could be alleviated through practical philosophical training.

Taking the example of World War Two as an obvious crisis, Tsurumi listed seven "habits of inaccurate semiotic sign utilization " among opinion leaders and the general populace that exacerbated the negative effects of war:

1) During the digestion of propostional statements, people habitually failed to note the degree of certainty that could be attributed to such statements at the time of noting their signifance. As a result, they did not distinguish highly certain from uncascertainable statements.

2) There was insufficient awareness that generalities are formed out of specificities, and that the specific ultimately creates the general. For this reason, general principles, that of liberating Greater East Asia for example, were grasped in a way that implied that they were entirely determined by their concepts alone. No one ventured to think that each factual instance of an individual drunkedly insulting a coolie laborer or beating servants without reason was actually connected with the principle.

3) Ideas of value were confused with ideas of truth.

4) Ethical value was grasped solely in stark terms of "good" or "evil" instead of an endless gradation leading from "better" to "worse."

5) Many epistemic concepts were arrayed into two columns corresponding to "good guys" and "bad guys." They lost their original specific meaning and existed simply to express something good or bad.

   For example, array A consisted of America = material civilization = guerrilla warfare = democracy = defeat = global domination = wild ambition = racism = philosophical materialism. Array B combines Japan = spiritualism = Hakkô ichû[110] = victory, etc.

6) People lacked the habit of concretely grasping the significance of abstract thought, discussions, and policies.

[110] Hakkô ichû (八紘一宇) was a widely circulated wartime political slogan derived from an ambiguous passage in the 8th century chronicle *Nihon shoki* pertaining to the mythical founder of Japan, Emperor Jimmu. Prime Minister Konoe Fumimarô used the phrase in connection with officially founding the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere in 1940. His cabinet asserted that the ancient reference to "Hakkô ichû" (lit: "eight cords, one roof") expressed the notion that Japan's raison d'État was to secure world peace through the construction of a new, unified order in Asia that included China. On the meaning and popularization of the term, see Walter Edwards "Forging Tradition for a Holy War: The *Hakkô Ichiu* Tower in Miyazaki and Japanese Wartime Ideology" *Journal of Japanese Studies*, (Summer 2003).

7) People had the habit of using unclear words as banners, and philosophical jargon was used opportunistically since it was impossible to pin down the meaning of it.[111]

Tsurumi was under no illusions that philosophical criticism of illogical language use would have had much purchase in wartime, but he did indirectly suggest the counterfactual hypothesis that things might not have become so bad had practical philosophical training in logical criticism been more prevalent at the time of the global crisis that developed into World War Two. "Unless preparations are made far in advance of a crisis, one cannot expect much from an attempt to alleviate by means of philosophical enlightenment the side-effects of that crisis. The optimal time to begin such preparations is when the negative effects that accompany such crises are deeply felt by everyone - in other words in the era of reconstruction right after a crisis ends."[112]

The task of the present, insofar as it was a moment of postwar construction, was to spread the elementary principles of philosophy to all the members of society rather than to "push the envelope" in terms of metaphysical speculation. Tsurumi particularly emphasized the role of semiotic training in general education. "For example, each student, when asked for an explanation of the significance of a special term, should not constantly try to evade the question by offering synonyms, but should clarify the interpretant (解義体) and designatum (指示体) by means of words that are transformable into the language of primitive experience." How is such training practical? Tsurumi's response was that, "citizens (国民) equipped with such habits will not be charmed by the flattery (美辞麗句) of war-mongering politicians, and will see through to the cruelty that lies concealed in their utterances." This approach should transform philosophy from an elite symbol of social status into a mundane skill wielded by everyone: "In this sense, philosophy would no longer

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[111] Tsurumi Shunsuke, "Tetsugaku no hansei" *Tsurumi Shunsuke chosakushû* vol. 1, (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 1975), 253-254

[112] Ibid, 254

be a sophisticated branch of learning that instills a kind of self-conceit in students, but would be considered a rather lowly subject like arithmetic."[113]

Tsurumi's diagnosis did not imply that he wanted to transform language use into the pure exchange of clear, logical propositions. His emphasis on education and the popular dissemination of practico-logical techniques helps explain Tsurumi's qualified approval of the "pseudo-propositional" use of metaphor. Metaphors were easier to understand and efficiently propagate, and had the potential to index reality in a more visceral way than did logical propositions. They were useful tools for promoting logical techniques that would eventually lead to a transformation of the relationship between "abstract philosophy" and everyday consciousness. At the same time, insofar as metaphors were more ambiguous than logical propositions, they could also be dangerous if used carelessly. They would require careful annotation in order to prevent them from running amok and contributing to a state of linguistic chaos like the one that had existed during wartime. In an arresting use of a metaphor of his own, Tsurumi argued that to prevent this chaos from getting out of hand, philosophers had to call on the "policeman" of semiotic consciousness.

> Semiotic consciousness is the spirit of discerning the limited nature and effectiveness of the language one currently uses, and, when necessary, it is the policeman that interrupts philosophical discussions demanding a clarification of meaning. When harmful doctrines and empty theories run amok, semiotic consciousness demands the temporary cessation of ambiguous language, and ought to specify and recommend that the content of ongoing arguments be expressed in clearer language – factual propositions, logical propositions, gestural propositions, ethical propositions, or aesthetic propositions.[114]

Tsurumi's advocacy of logical analysis in education helps explain his early interest in C. K. Ogden's BASIC English (short for British American Scientific International Commercial English) and its basic Japanese counterpart, *Kiso nihongo* (基礎日本語), developed just three years after

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[113] Ibid, 255

[114] Ibid, 262

BASIC in 1933 by the scholar of English literature Doi Kôchi. Ogden devised BASIC English partially as a means of facilitating communication among native and non-native English speakers, but Tsurumi was more interested in how imposed word limits and simplified grammar forced language users to break down complex ideas into simpler units that retained a more obvious connection with perceptual experience.[115] BASIC English and Basic Japanese both represented ways of developing logical skills via education that might come in handy during a future crisis - when it was necessary to carefully dissect the statements of politicians in a chaotic linguistic environment.

American Propaganda, American Communication

In line with Tsurumi's focus on linguistic analysis and philosophy as a collection of everyday techniques that could be brought in line with scientific principles, *Science of Thought* displayed an early interest in the burgeoning new field of communications science in America. The idea of "communication" was invested with enormous intellectual expectations in America after the Second World War. In his history of the concept, John Durham Peters writes that postwar Anglo-American thinkers believed it was capable of unifying "the natural sciences (DNA as the great code), the liberal arts (language as communication), and the social sciences (communication as the basic social process)." Psychologists and cyberneticists promoted the idea that therapeutic communication held the key to resolving global and social conflicts.[116] Harold D. Lasswell's work, which grew out of his studies of propaganda use during World War I, was received in the context of such optimism. He tried to transform the study of politics into a science that confronted empirical reality and

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[115] Tsurumi Shunsuke, "Bêshikku eigo no haikei" *Shisô no kagaku*, (Aug. 1946)

[116] John Durham Peters, *Speaking into the Air: A History of the Idea of Communication*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999) 25-26

communicative behavior, but he was also criticized for trying to remake the discipline into a collection of therapeutic techniques of social control.[117]

In the November 1947 issue of *Science of Thought*, Inokuchi Ichirô introduced the loanword "Communication" (*Komyunikêshon* コミュニケーション) to Japanese audiences in a two-part summary and review of *Propaganda, Communication, and Public Opinion* (1946), co-edited by Lasswell, Bruce Lannes Smith, and Ralph D. Casey. Although neologisms existed to translate the English word communications into Japanese (通信、伝達), and there existed a government ministry with the English translation of its name "Ministry of Communications (逓信省), the article was notable for simply transcribing the word into the Japanese script, implying a break from earlier understandings of the word that associated it more with the development of communications infrastructure, like telegraph lines, rather than the communicative practices embedded in Lasswell's famous definition: "Who says what to whom in what channel with what effect."[118] Inokuchi introduced Lasswell's concept of communication research as a science of the "mutual bonds among the people," that attempts a methodological solution to the problem how to realize the "new construction of the world" (世界の新しい建設) after the war.[119]

Inokuchi was among a small number of specialists who were already familiar with the conceptual space carved out by Lasswell's work before 1945. Although beginning the story in 1947 aligns the origins of communications research with Japan's postwar democracy, like many such narratives that began during the Occupation, this translated term had a complicated prehistory, one

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[117] For criticism of Lasswell's political science as a therapeutic science of social control, see Robert Horowitz, "Scientific Propaganda" in *Essays on the Science of Politics*, edited by Herbert Strong, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston) 1962. Bernard Crick, *The American Science of Politics*, (Berkeley: University of California, 1959) Ch. 10.

[118] Definition from Harold D. Lasswell, "The Structure and Function of Communication in Society" in *The Communication of Ideas*, edited by Lyman Bryson, (New York: Harper and Row, 1948)

[119] Inokuchi Ichirô, "Komyunikêshon josetsu" *Shisô no kagaku*, (Feb. 1947), 391

that parallels the US development of communications studies out of propaganda studies after the First World War.[120] Since the 1920s, the Japanese government had been sponsoring studies of foreign propaganda research that emerged out of that conflict, acting on the assumption that the superior propaganda techniques of the US were an essential component of their march to victory in Europe.[121] A translation of Lasswell's book *Propaganda Technique in the World War* had been translated into Japanese in 1940 by Komatsu Takaaki, then head of the National Spiritual Mobilization Operations Division (国民精神総動員事業部), a section of Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro's cabinet created to coordinate propaganda activities after the Japanese army advanced into China in the wake of the Marco Polo incident in July, 1937.[122]

Inokuchi was linked to Komatsu's research network while teaching in the Japanese puppet-state of Manchukuo, where from 1943 until the end of the war, he was a professor of journalism at Kenkoku University.[123] He could read English and German, and he was already familiar with Lasswell's work from research on propaganda and public relations (弘報) at Kenkoku.[124] He returned to Japan in 1946 and may have found a copy of the recently published *Propaganda Technique in the World War* at the library in Hibiya run by GHQ's Civil Information and Educational Section (CIE).[125] The library was established on November 15th, 1945 to "supply Japanese public, editors, and writers with reference and background material on the war, international affairs, and American

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[120] This is similar to the history of public opinion surveys in Japan. The field of survey research traces its history to the Occupation era, but there are important links with pre-1945 propaganda research. See Satô Takumi, *Yoron to seron*, (Tokyo: Shinchôsha), 2008

[121] Baba Makoto, *Sensô to kôkoku* (Tokyo: Hakusuisha), 2010, 69

[122] Ibid, 84

[123] Tamura Norio, "Kenkoku daigaku jidai no Inokuchi Ichirô — Shinbungaku kara kôhôron e" *Tokyo keizai daigaku jinbun shizen kagaku ronshû.* (2009) 127

[124] Tamura Norio, "Rasueru to "Masukomi" yôgo no nihon tojô. *Komyunikêshon kagaku* 33 (2011), 154

[125] Ibid, 155

life in order to assist in carrying out the democratization of Japan in accordance with established policies of the Supreme Allied Commander."[126] In support of Occupation policies, the library not only lent out books, pamphlets and magazines; it also provided English lessons, organized concerts, and held film screenings.[127]

The CIE Library was located just a block away from *Science of Thought*'s office, and was frequented by members of the group. Its collection formed the basis of many of the early book reviews in the journal, which was in keeping with its stated intention to introduce new intellectual developments from England and the United States. This was a self-conscious shift away from an intellectual culture that the founders of the journal believed to have been dominated by German idealism since the turn of the twentieth century. Insofar as early articles in *Science of Thought* heavily relied on the CIE Library for material, it might seem that in its early years the journal, for better or worse, was simply a vehicle for the aims of the Occupation's educational outreach, disseminating information in Japanese pertaining to the CIE's mostly English collection of academic books. In fact, the reviews, sometimes written from an economistic Marxist perspective, were often quite critical of American thinkers like John Dewey. The closest the journal came to running into serious trouble with Occupation censors was when it tried to publish a summary of Niebuhr's critique of the Stailin in a review of *Children of Light, Children of Darkness* in 1946.[128] Though ironic in light of subsequent events in the Cold War, the article was deemed unacceptable due to the Soviet Union's status as a member of the Allied forces.

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[126] "General Order No. 183, 22 Sept. 1945" quoted in Ochi, Hiromi. "Democratic Bookshelf: American Libraries in Occupied Japan." In *Pressing the Fight: Print, Propaganda, and the Cold War* edited by Greg Barnhisel and Catherine Turner (Ameherst, MA: University of Massuchusetts Press, 2010).

[127] Tamura, "Rasueru" op cit.

[128] Takeda Kiyoko, "Nîbâ 'Hikari no kodomo to yami no kodomo' kaisetsu" *Shisô no kagaku*, (Dec. 1946).

Inokuchi's article on Lasswell receives most of the attention in institutional histories of

communications research in Japan, but it was in fact the *second* article in that issue of *Science of Thought*

that dealt with the loanword "communication." It followed Tsurumi Shunsuke's review article of the

pragmatist philosopher and semiotician Charles Morris's *Signs, Language and Behavior* (1946). The

review consisted mostly of definitions of a bewildering array of semiotic and behaviorist terminology

("appraisor," "preparatory-stimulus," "formative ascriptor," and the like). Tsurumi gave a brief

definition of "communication" as something that "becomes possible when mutual meanings are

evoked, not necessarily through language, via the production of signs."

Whereas Lasswell saw propaganda as necessary to guide collective action in both

democracies and despotic regimes, Morris believed that the need for propagandistic communication

could be overcome via education.[129] Like Tsurumi in *Reflections on Philosophy*, Morris believed in the

anti-totalitarian potential of an education in semiotics as a kind of vaccine against manipulative

propaganda.

> The totalitarian society will give no widespread attention to the semiotic in its educational
> plans for the total population, for knowledge of sign phenomena makes it less easy to
> manipulate by signs those who have this knowledge. But precisely because of this fact
> semiotic should have a prominent place in the educational system of a democratic society.[130]

Instead of obedience, this education would aim toward the creation of a "spontaneous and

responsible democratic citizen." In line with the broader attempt to re-imagine science after the war,

Morris argued this education could overcome the uneven development between science and the

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[129] "Every government on the globe, whether despotism or democracy, whether at war or at peace,
relies upon propaganda – more or less efficiently harmonized with strategy, diplomacy, and
economics – to accomplish its ends." Propaganda work would have to adapt to different
communities and regimes of varying political transparency however. Lasswell, Harold, et al.
Propaganda, Communication, Public Opinion. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1946. pp. 1-2. See
also Inokuchi, op cit. pp. 393-4.

[130] Charles W. Morris, *Signs, Language, and Behavior*, (New York: Prentice Hall, 1946), 244

humanities, connect science with everyday life, and resolve the problem of imposing "democracy" on an unwilling populace from the outside.

> An education which gave due place to the semiotic would destroy at its foundations the cleavage and opposition of science and the humanities. For the importance of accurate knowledge in the formation of preferences and decisions would in no way weaken the importance of forming preferences and decisions relevant to the insistent problems of personal and social life. And in work upon the common cultural heritage of its students such an education would help to recreate and transmit the common symbols required by a democratic society, while at the same time preparing the student for playing his own dynamic and constructive role in the extension of democratic processes. For in a democratic society a common language is not enough, and a rigid and inflexible language imposed from the top is not desirable.[131]

Morris reappeared in Tsurumi's work a few years later, in a multi-volume series on American intellectual history published in 1950 by the now formally organized "Institute for the Science of Thought." Tsurumi drew a sharp distinction between Lasswell and Morris as representatives of what he considered to be two opposed traditions in communications research: control-oriented propaganda studies versus pluralistic, pragmatic semiotics.

In *The History of American Thought* members of the Institute pored over historical materials in search of the economic and social foundations of American intellectual culture, characterized by widely held beliefs in self-reliance and progress. Contributors pointed to the legacy of Puritan self-reliance in New England (Abe Kôzô), the presence of the frontier in the American imagination (Hanada Kiyoteru), and the conditions of American capitalism developing outside aristocratic Europe (Tsuru Shigeto), to take a few examples. By the end of the series, a sedimented tradition of democratic sociality – a democratic mode of communication – emerges as one of the central concerns of American social science and the symbol of the United States' ascendant intellectual power in the postwar world.

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[131] Ibid, 246

Turning to contemporary thought in volume four, Tsurumi Shunsuke, in an odd turn of phrase, wrote that the 1930s effectively scooped up the "top athletes" (一流選手) in the intense methodological battles in European philosophy and deposited them in America. [132] He was mainly referring to members of the Vienna Circle, founded in Austria in 1922, who went into exile in the United States and Britain after Hitler rose to power. His account of how these European intellectuals were influenced by their experience of living in America could be read as a parable of the lessons Japanese intellectuals should learn from the American Occupation, in particular, to become more practical and to focus on everyday communication.

The Vienna Circle, which included thinkers such as Rudolph Carnap and Otto Neurath, who remained in England rather than relocate to America, was committed to the task of making philosophy more scientific by criticizing its metaphysical foundations. Their founding manifesto, "The Scientific Conception of the World," called for a reawakening of enlightenment ideals against a "theological" trend in philosophical thinking: "Many assert that metaphysical and theologizing thought is again on the increase today, not only in life but also in science…. But likewise the opposite spirit of enlightenment and *anti-metaphysical factual research* is growing stronger today, in that it is becoming conscious of its existence and task. In some circles the mode of thought grounded in experience and averse to speculation is stronger than ever, being strengthened precisely by the new opposition that has arisen." [133] The Circle initially positioned its critique of metaphysics as part of a wider political struggle in Vienna against unreason, which included such initiatives as John Dewey-

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[132] Tsurumi Shunsuke. "Kachi to ninshiki" in *Amerika shisôshi* 4 edited by Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai, (Tokyo: Nihon hyôronsha), 260

[133] Otto Neurath, et al, "Wissenschaftliche Weltauffassug: Der Wiener Kreis." In *The Emergence of Logical Empiricism* edited by Sahotra Sarkar (New York: Garland Publishing), 321

influenced educational reform, the democratization of universities, and the foundation of secular

"Free Schools" by Leftists. [134]

In any case, by the time the Circle relocated to America, Tsurumi believed that increased

political repression had directed the Circle's orientation toward problems in formal logic and

methodology that were far removed from "practical" (実践的) concerns. He argued that life in

America and contact with American philosophers shifted the concerns of these thinkers toward

problems of content (semantics) rather than form, and toward a position closer to critical realism.

Most important, after the project to create an *Encyclopedia of the Unified Sciences* moved to the

University of Chicago, the logical empiricists became involved in a multidisciplinary inquiry into

human culture, considered a "system of the means of communication (通信手段の体系)" centered

upon the semiotic sign. [135] They collaborated on their encyclopedic project with American

pragmatists John Dewey and Charles W. Morris, who was the faculty host of the Vienna Circle at

Chicago and a former teacher of Tsurumi's.

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[134] See for example the following passage from their manifesto: "That Vienna was specially suitable ground for this development is historically understandable. In the second half of the nineteenth century, liberalism was long the dominant political current. Its world of ideas stems from the enlightenment, from empiricism, utilitarianism and the free trade movement of England… Thanks to this spirit of enlightenment, Vienna has been leading in a scientifically oriented people's education. With the collaboration of Victor Adler and Friedrich Jodl, the society for popular education was founded and carried forth; 'popular university courses' and the 'people's college' were set up by the well-known historian Ludo Hartmann whose anti-metaphysical attitude and materialist conception of history expressed itself in all his actions. The same spirit also inspired the movement of the 'Free School' which was the forerunner of today's school reform." (p. 324) For more on the history of socialist educational reform in Vienna, see Oskar Achs and Eva Tesar's *Schule damals, Schule heute: Otto Glöckel und die Schulreform.* Vienna: Jugend und Volk. 1985

[135] Tsurumi, op. cit. p. 261. Tsurumi's attribution of a shift toward semiotics may have had something to do with the participation of his former teacher Charles Morris in the *Encylopedia* after 1938. Morris helped Carnap emigrate to the United States and hosted members of the Vienna Circle at the University of Chicago. His involvement with the Circle consisted of an attempt to reconcile Peircean semiotics with logical positivism. See for instance Morris, Charles. *Logical Positivism, Pragmatism and Scientific Empircism.* Paris: Hermann et Cie. 1937

According to Tsurumi, communications was a new field of enquiry that rested upon a bedrock of American tradition: "Communications research (通信（コミュニケイション）研究) is a field that has only recently taken its place among the existing academic disciplines. Communications research could practically be considered a unique product of America, one that appears to originate directly from the essence of American culture." [136] He went on to distinguish between Harold Lasswell's approach to communications and policy science and Charles W. Morris's pragmatic semiotics in terms of their susceptibility to government control. Tsurumi argued that Lasswell insisted on a distinction between cognition and values, while Morris held that a strict distinction was untenable, given the diversity of value-infused sign-systems that always already mediated cognition. [137] Tsurumi seemed to prefer the latter approach since it was less susceptible than Lasswell's framework to co-option by the "powerful government of the 30s to 50s."

Yet as the Cold War escalated, Morris' pluralism, along with the broader optimism invested in the term "communication," was vulnerable to accusations of political naiveté. A renewed engagement with social reality among members of the Vienna Circle and the Unity of Science movement was cut short by the "climate of fear" that swept through American academia in the 1950s, a moment that coincided with the Rockefeller Foundation's decision to end funding for both the Unity of Science project and *Science of Thought*'s linguistic research.[138]

Reorienting Thought

Before their survey of American intellectual history was published, *Science of Thought* had already taken steps toward trying to reorient the public toward communications-oriented reform, a

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[136] Ibid, 261

[137] Ibid, 268

[138] George A. Reisch, *How the Cold War Transformed Philosophy of Science,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 373

field they hoped to align with the development of democracy in postwar Japan. In 1948 the Institute rented an auditorium in Tokyo owned by the *Mainichi* newspaper for the first public lecture series on communications. The physicist and *Science of Thought* co-founder Watanabe Satoshi introduced the talks and may have played a key role in securing funding from Shiseido, a cosmetics company, and the Ministry of Communications.[139] He was the grandnephew of a former head of the ministry, Watanabe Chiaki, and a more distant relative of the president of Shiseidô, Fukuhara Shinzo.

Fukuhara had studied at Columbia University at the turn of the century, and his sons were students in America when they were repatriated on the Gripsholm along with the *Science of Thought* returnees.[140] He was a pioneer in introducing American-style marketing techniques to Japan in the teens and twenties, collaborating with the brilliant graphic designer Yamana Ayao to redefine the Shiseido brand. The elegant feminine ideal associated with Shiseido became problematic during the push for austerity and mobilization for war in the thirties. Yamana and other Shiseido designers participated in propaganda efforts during the war in connection with Lasswell translator Komatsu Takaaki's Spiritual Mobilization Division of the Konoe cabinet.[141]

The *Science of Thought* communication lectures were held under different circumstances. They were part and parcel of an age of "postwar enlightenment" - a moment of increased civic activity on the part of progressive intellectuals, many of whom offered public lectures on topics related to democracy. Though in line with the times, a lecture on "communication" occasioned certain difficulties. In his introductory remarks, the physicist Watanabe Satoshi immediately noted the English language origin of the term. He flatly asserted that there was no proper equivalent for the term in Japanese, which he said could designate everything from books to television to everyday

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[139] Tsurumi Shunsuke ed. *Genryû kara Mirai e* (Tokyo: Shiso no kagakusha, 2005), 270

[140] Tsurumi Shunsuke et al, *Nichi-bei Kôkansen*, 125

[141] For an account of Fukuhara and Yamana's wartime activities, see Baba Makoto. *Sensô to kôkoku*, (Tokyo: Hakusuisha, 2010).

conversation to thought control. Tsurumi Shunsuke later noted that the unfamiliarity of the term "communication" at the time of the lecture made it difficult to sell tickets to the event.[142]

Beginning with this translation difficulty, Watanabe drew an unfavorable contrast between Japan and the West from the standpoint of communication habits. He speculated that the absence of an equivalent term "indicates that in our Japanese society, communication, a mechanism that operates between and among our fellow human beings, is in a state of torpor." (不活溌の状態にある).[143] Words, actions, and feelings were in communicative disarray. At stake was the transformation of democracy from an abstract ideal into a living reality. "Even if we reform the constitution and pay lip service to democracy, unless we make this thing that exists as part of our everyday lives – in other words, mutual communication, understanding, respect, and persuasion – into the basic motif (基調) of everyday life, I believe we will not be able to realize a fortunate society."

Although Watanabe initially specified a very broad semantic field for the term "communication" – a breadth that attracted the *Science of Thought* members interested in the investigation of mass culture – he implicitly emphasized face-to-face interaction and personal communicative bonds. In another section, he argued that, without a change in habits, Japanese society would conform to the image of an unnamed commentator who remarked that, "Euro-American society is animalistic while Japanese society is vegetative." He noted that this image was true insofar as the Japanese people, like individual trees basking in sunlight, "lacked horizontal bonds" - a necessary condition for democracy. He then referred to another anonymous

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[142] Shisô no kagaku gojû-nen-shi no kai, *Shiso no kagaku "daijesuto"* (Tokyo: Shisô no kagaku-sha, 2009), 10

[143] Watanabe Satoshi. "Komyunikeishonn kôza: Kaikô no kotoba." *Shisô no kagaku* (Apr.1948), 12

commentator, this one foreign, who referred to the Japanese people as "liars" (嘘つき日本人) as prelude to an attack on empty formalities in language use:

> While we Japanese do not lie with the intention to deceive people, we often do end up deceiving them through our actions and words. I think this is deeply related to the fact that we have not forced ourselves to develop the social habits of stating, listening to, and understanding our opinions. The habit of uttering empty words, formal words, and words we don't really mean is deeply rooted in our lives. This is our tradition from long ago, and it still naturally exists now, in the world referred to as democratic Japan. Despite the saying we have that "eyes say as much as words," it is a fact that our manner, our attitude, and our words do not necessarily perform the function of transmitting our feelings. I think that as long as this is not reformed, we will be unable to make our society more close-knit and full of hope for the future.[144]

Watanabe then cited a line from a haiku by the 17th-century poet Matsuo Bashô that exemplified the negative Japanese attitude toward communication, "Say something/ And the lips go cold." [145] This mistakenly associated speaking with loss, sadness, and guilt. Watanabe retorts, "If thought (思想) were like the contents of a bucket of water, then ladling it out would cause it to diminish, but thoughts and feelings gush forth more and more when you try to make them visible and transmit them."

One might dismiss Watanabe's speech as an unabashed assertion of the inferiority of Japanese society and so-called traditional values vis-a-vis the rational West, or a symptom of the notion of negative particularism among early postwar theorizers of Japanese culture.[146] Yet through this binary comparison Watanabe was calling for a reorientation of values towards collaborative work, cooperation, and communicative sharing rather than individual achievement, a demand

[144] Ibid, p. 13

[145] The full poem is, "Say something / and the lips go cold / autumn wind" (物言えば　唇寒し 秋の風) He originally annotated it "Don't speak of other's shortcomings; don't brag about your strengths." See *Basho's Haiku* translated by Landis Barnhill (Albany: SUNY Press, 2004), 38

[146] For 1945-54 as a moment of negative particularism, see Aoki Tamotsu, *"Nihonjin bunkaron" no henyô.* (Tokyo: Chûkô bunko), 1999. Ch. 3

echoed in Hatano's lecture.[147] Their emphasis here is different from postwar thinkers like the literary

critic Sakaguchi Ango and the political theorist Maruyama Masao, who made use of this same binary

to attack Japan's traditionalism from a different angle, arguing that it was necessary to liberate the

egoistic individual from the domination of a collectivity imagined to have enforced total conformity

to the demands of the war effort.[148] In Watanabe's view, the individual was linked to the collective,

but at the level of communication, the individual "genius" was an isolated individual.

Watanabe juxtaposed the scientific aptitude of individuals with their communicative isolation,

"It is said that in Japan science, philosophy, and profound thought (深い思想) never progresses,

but that is not to say that there were no smart people, and even in mathematics, geniuses emerge.

Yet without discussing things with colleagues or transmitting teachings to disciples, these people

think alone. This is where a low level of learning originates. I think communication is deeply

connected to this."[149] The specific reference to mathematic genius was probably not accidental.

Popular new research on the history of mathematics had appeared during the war in the early 1940s

that, in line with the cultural nationalism of the times, highlighted the talent and tradition of

Japanese mathematicians active during the Tokugawa era.[150] Watanabe's brief acknowledgement of

mathematic genius is evidence that, rather than simply negating a chauvinistic view of Japanese

cultural superiority, Watanabe and other members of Science of Thought were attempting to effect a

reorientation of intellectual and reformist interest toward a subject that they considered neglected. In

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[147] Hatano Kanji, "Komyûnikêshon sôron" *Shisô no kagaku* (Apr. 1948), 19

[148] Sakaguchi Ango, "*Daraku-ron*" translated in Albert Ryue Ikoma, "Sakaguchi Ango: His Life and Work" (PhD diss., University of Hawaii, 1979)

[149] Watanabe, op cit., 13

[150] Hiromi Mizuno, *Science for the Empire: Scientific Nationalism in Modern Japan,* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 137

Hatano's lecture this also implied overturning the perception, common during "the old days of the omnipotence of the Japanese spirit," that the English language implied a "crude" way of thinking.[151]

Watanabe and Hatano were calling for a shift of interest away from subjects of "deep" intellectual speculation concerning the unity of human existence to the ostensibly "superficial" observation of communicative interaction in everyday life. Calls for this shift resonated across academic disciplines. In another article in *Science of Thought* published a few months after the communication lecture entitled "What Ought We Learn from American Psychology?" the sociologist Daidô Yasujirô compared the Japanese reception of the German Gestalt tradition in psychology with that of American behaviorism. He wondered at the tendency of Japanese scholars to gravitate toward German rather than American scholarship during the war, a tendency that existed in many other academic fields. He proposed that these scholars had secretly embraced a "sense of nostalgia towards the Orient" (東洋への郷愁) that made them receptive to the holistic, anti-structuralist, anti-Wundt approach of the Gestalt school. He asked rhetorically, "In attempting to restore humanity via totalistic methods, did we smuggle back in a kind of irrationalism?"[152]

Daidô asserted that, in contrast to Gestalt philosophy, behaviorism mechanistically viewed humans and animals in the same way. Rather than trying to restore humanity to a privileged place in psychological research, it "aimed to see the animal in the human being." He suggested that this approach may at first appear superficial, but it was nonetheless an important corrective. He concluded his comparison by saying, "Gestalt psychology taught us to view phenomena *realistically* (リアールに). We Orientals (われわれ東洋人), who had highly valued grasping truth behind a false reality, were easily able to familiarize ourselves with it. In contrast, American psychology will

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[151] Hatano Kanji, op cit., 15

[152] Daidô Yasujirô. "Amerika shinrigaku kara nani o manbu beki ka" *Shiso no kagaku*. 7.1948. p. 66

probably teach us to look at phenomena *objectively*. I have a feeling that learning how to do this

thoroughly will by no means be easy."[153]

One way to explain the conceptual importance of communication for this broader

reorientation is that it called for an intellectual shift toward "superficial" topics, and a behavioral

shift, directed at both intellectuals and non-intellectuals, toward communicative *techniques* that may

have seemed remote from culture but were logical and efficient. The founding statement of *Science of*

Thought asserted that it was not enough for intellectuals to exchange one set of nationalistic ideas

pertaining to the particularistic superiority of the "Japanese spirit" in exchange for a new set of

ostensibly democratic and internationalist ones. Such a change indicated a return to "Taisho

democracy" – which they saw as fragile, dysfunctional, and polarized between the elites and the

masses. Change after 1945 occurred in a way that was "self-negating," not only in the sense that

intellectuals associated with *Science of Thought* adopted a negative attitude toward perceived

particularities in their own society, but also in the sense that they always had in view the ultimate

objective of eliminating the gap between intellectuals and the masses, necessitating a reorientation of

intellectual interests away from metaphysical speculation and toward everyday behavior and

techniques of thought. Despite the descriptive nature of the term "communication" - it implied the

normative transformation of both intellectuals and masses, the subjects and objects of knowledge,

into communicators.

The Paradox of Communications Reform

The imported term "communication," whether derived from Lasswell or Dewey, brought

with it a good deal of specialized jargon. The difficulty of selling tickets to the inaugural lecture

because of the unfamiliarity of the term "communication" was only part of the problem. Tsurumi

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[153] Ibid, 67

Shunsuke and other contributors to *Science of Thought* also coined neologisms for "sender," "receiver,"

"interpretant," "response disposition," and other semiotic terms. Tsurumi expressed a retrospective

sense of embarrassment over the unreadability of these early articles, explaining them as due to his

lack of practice writing in Japanese after returning to Tokyo from Harvard during the war.[154]

Seemingly in response to this conundrum and in the context of a broader debate on language

reform during the Occupation, a number of articles appeared in late 1948 devoted to the

simplification of academic prose. The ethnologist Yanagita Kunio, who was not a member of the

group but was cited as a source in many of the early communication studies, seemed pessimistic

about the possibility of revising academic jargon by fiat. He warned the group that movements

spearheaded by intellectuals immersed in the written word would end up promoting ineffective

reform that lacked an organic connection to the lives and oral habits of ordinary people.[155]

In spite of Yanagita's pessimism, members revised their own semiotic jargon in an attempt

to make it as understandable as possible. For example, Tsurumi initially translated "interpretant" as

"*kaigitai*" (解義体) before settling on "*tokiguchi*" (解き口). [156] Like most of these revisions, this one

substituted a "Japanese" reading ("*toki*") of the relevant Chinese character compound for the

"Chinese" reading ("*kai*"). These changes reflected the influence of Yanagita, who argued in his

ethnographic work that the Japanese reading reflected oral culture while the Chinese reading

reflected written culture, whether imported from China or the West. To Yanagita's nativist

ethnographic observation was added the logical argument that new terms should minimize the

number of possible synonyms in order to facilitate free oral communication of academic subjects

among non-specialists, a task in line with Tosaka Jun's prewar call to "massify" science.

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[154] Tsurumi Shunsuke, *Kitai to kaisô*, vol. 1, (Tokyo: Shôbunsha, 1997), 146

[155] Yanagita Kunio, "Gakumon yôgo no kairyô" *Shiso no kagaku* (Nov. 1948), 29-31

[156] This comes from a comparison of Tsurumi's *Tetsugaku no hansei* to his entry on "Communication" in *Ningen kagaku no jiten*, edited by Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai, (Tokyo: Kawade Shobô, 1951).

The structure of the Japanese language itself appeared as an obstacle to this task in a way that was not amenable to attempts to substitute easy-to-understand words for abstruse jargon. This was evident in the work of Ôkubo Tadatoshi, a frequent contributor of articles on linguistics in early issues of *Science of Thought* and a key member of the linguistics group in the Association of Democratic Scientists. Ôkubo worked to popularize linguistics in his 1947 book *Linguistics for the Million* (*Hyakuman-nin no gengogaku*), a text aimed at general readers that was named after the British "Red Science" popularizer Lancelot Hogben's book *Mathematics for the Million* (*Hyakuman-nin no sûgaku*).

In 1948, Ôkubo published "The Psychology of Word Order" in *Science of Thought* and argued that the usual subject-object-verb word order of Japanese constituted "fetters on thought" that made logical communication more difficult than in English.[157] According to Ôkubo, this point had passed unnoticed by language reformers because they were biased towards the "standpoint of the speaker" instead of the "standpoint of the listener." Ôkubo grasped the essence of *Science of Thought*'s communications research as an attempt to shift attention away from the authoritative speaker toward the everyday listener.[158] From such a standpoint, the ambiguity that persisted in a Japanese sentence until the verb appeared at the end affected the entire communicative process, weakening the impression of argument and new information on listeners.[159]

In a sense, Ôkubo transposed the *Kôza-ha* argument regarding the nature of Japanese capitalism to linguistics. This argument, dominant among the Marxists in Minka, held that despite the external appearance of capitalist development, the mode of production in Japan was still characterized by a feudal core because the modernizers associated with the Meiji Restoration had

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[157] Okubo Tadatoshi, "Gojun no shinri." *Shisô no kagaku* (Jun. 1948), 32

[158] Ibid, 21

[159] Ibid, 27

failed to displace the large landowners from their exploitative position in the countryside. Capitalist elements were externally grafted by the state onto a predominantly feudal, rural core. Reform of the writing system, undertaken several times since the Meiji period, failed to remedy the unscientific structure of the Japanese language. The word order of Japanese did not correspond to the universal language of mathematics (1+1=2) in the same way that the history of the Japanese economy did not correspond to universal laws of capitalist development.

Tsurumi Shunsuke had a different view of the perceived ambiguity of the Japanese language, one that downplayed Japanese particularism and suggested a way around the dilemma of disseminating logical techniques without sacrificing readability. He drew upon the definition of ambiguity advanced by the American philosopher of the behavioral sciences Abraham Kaplan, who was in turn inspired by the British literary critic William Empson's *Seven Types of Ambiguity*. Kaplan translated Empson's definition of ambiguity into the language of semiotics, arguing that ambiguity was an irreducible feature of language insofar as, "one cannot speak… of *the* meaning of any symbol, but can only specify its range of responses and the clusters into which these tend to be groups."[160]

In a 1949 article titled "The Form of the Postwar Novel" published in Hanada Kiyoteru's journal *Sôgô bunka* (*Integrated Culture*), Tsurumi referred to Ôkubo's research with an acknowledgement that the word order of Japanese might be an inconvenience in scientific writing, but went on to argue that the same ambiguity could be exploited to encourage intellectual activity on the part of the reader of postwar fiction.

Citing the work of novelists like Shiina Rinzô, Noma Hiroshi, and Nakamura Shinichiro, Tsurumi characterized Japanese postwar literature as highly introspective, and he noted that it often drew on a philosophical "meta-language" (*Meta-gengo*) to describe the existential angst of characters

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[160] Abraham Kaplan Ernst Kris, "Esthetic Ambiguity." *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, (Mar. 1948) 416

in search of meaning in a world in which hitherto secure wartime moral values had been uprooted

by defeat, and in which values associated with postwar democracy were greeted with hesitant

skepticism. He cites a passage from Nakamura Shinichirô's *Beneath the Shadow of Death* (*Shi no kage no*

shita ni).

> Yet I first recalled a kind of metaphysical terror upon learning that things cease to exist.
> This occult sense of terror was the same as that which came into existence among the
> ancients for whom the word "to be spirited away" took root. A mother and child walking
> down the road are suddenly torn asunder into a world that exists on a more rarefied
> dimension.[161]

Tsurumi embraced the sensibility behind the earnest attempts among postwar writers to reflect

on the war, make sense of their conflicted feelings, and retain an independent, skeptical perspective

on the present. At the same time, he decried their use of philosophical jargon – including

"metaphysical, and "rarefied dimension" – because he believed it made this irreducibly *ambiguous*

experience unintelligible to a mass audience. Citing I. A. Richards' 1942 translation of Plato's

Republic into BASIC English, Tsurumi claimed that an extensive vocabulary was by no means

necessary for philosophical depth.[162] He argued that the perceived correlation between difficult

vocabulary and depth was a false notion propagated by a hierarchical educational system, one that

correlated academic progress with the number of Chinese characters memorized by pupils. Linking

the educational system with another hierarchical organization, Tsurumi wrote that the number of

Chinese characters packed into a single sentence reminded him of the official language of the

military - which tended to use impersonal-sounding Chinese character vocabulary when issuing

orders like "Forward march" (前進). With irony, Tsurumi wrote, "These writers, who sincerely

celebrate a certain liberation following the war and seek greater liberation in its aftermath, work still

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[161] Quoted in Tsurumi Shunsuke. "Sengo shôsetsu no katachi." *Tsrumi Shunsuke shohyô shûsei* Vol. 1 (Tokyo: Misuzu shobo, 2007), 132

[162] Ibid, 134

shackled to unfree words. This fact says a lot about the state of the postwar psyche."[163] Instead of mimicking philosophical writing, postwar authors ought to exploit the ambiguity of Japanese sentence structure in order to *surprise* readers and shock them into viewing the world of everyday experience in a new way.

> Novels have one big advantage over the language of typical philosophy. That is the power to surprise. Philosophy tries to give a new interpretation and teach a new way of interacting with the tired elements of a world one experiences every day. Yet in order for this to be achieved, the reader's spirit must first of all be startled and come to see that world with new eyes.[164]

Tsurumi cited as an example the 1948 novella *The Eternal Preface* (*Eien-naru joshô*) by the existentialist writer Shiina Rinzô. The novel is set in the ruins of postwar Tokyo. The protagonist Sunagawa Yasuta has just learned that he has three months to live as a result of lung cancer. In a series of flashbacks we learn about Yasuta's early obsession with death after his mother and father passed away in his childhood. Before the war, he flirted with leftist ideas after meeting an anarchist painter, but became disillusioned with the inability of these systems of thought to take death seriously. Death, after all, would exist even in a socialist utopia. He nihilistically enlists in the army, expecting to die. Upon his miraculous return, knowledge of his impending death from cancer fills him with a sense of freedom and he repeatedly sees a vision of young children playing in a grassy field. Despite his skepticism toward "the materialist view of history," Yasuta spends his last day full of optimism, joining in Communist-led May Day demonstrations, then dying surrounded by comrades (仲間). The motivation for his last-minute political commitment was never made explicit, though it is clearly a life-affirming gesture, one made possible by his newfound sense of freedom.[165]

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[163] Ibid, 133

[164] Ibid, 144

[165] Shiina Rinzô. *Eien naru joshô, Chôyakunin no kokuhatsu*, (Tokyo: Shinchôsha, 1981). See also Mark Williams. "Shiina Rinzō: Imaging Hope and Despair in Occupation Japan." *Bulletin of the School of*

With its praise of existentialist literature like *The Eternal Preface*, "The Form of the Postwar Novel" represented a stronger endorsement of linguistic ambiguity than Tsurumi's earlier *Reflection on Philosophy*. Postwar authors, Tsurumi argued, used literary ambiguity not to criticize and overcome modernity and rationality but to reformulate it in a way that was resistant to sloganeering. Rather than trying to establish philosophy as a semiotic policeman to be mobilized in case of emergency, Tsurumi ended his essay on literature with the hope that through a creative use of such ambiguity, literature could perhaps – if it could rid itself of elitist meta-language – supplant philosophy entirely, achieving the aims of philosophy more effectively than philosophy itself could. He compared this ambition with the postwar hope, held by "some materialist thinkers," that science might construct a classless society, usurping the place of both politics and ethics. He argued that both sorts of wild ambition, aspirations toward semiotic "genre shattering," were necessary for change. He asserted that, "… nothing new is born out of a pan-sectarian cooperation committee. Rather it's when the thumb, pinky, or ring finger strains to become the whole that healthy development of the entire hand can be expected."[166]

This turn toward ambiguity was even more evident in 1952, with the publication of the edited volume *Dewey Research: A Critique of the American Way of Thinking* – a multi-disciplinary critique of Dewey's pragmatism published by the Institute for the Science of Thought immediately after his death. Tsurumi Shunsuke contributed an article entitled "Communication," in which he argued that the recent suicide of the linguist and Russian interpreter Kan Sueharu (1917-1950) cast doubt on the optimism implicit in Dewey's concept of communication. In Tsurumi's interpretation, Dewey assumes that (1) the normal state of things is roughly describable in term of the symmetrical

[166] Ibid, 145

exchange of signs, and (2) we should adopt "perfect communication" as an ideal to be striven for in everyday life.

Kan Sueharu committed suicide after he was harshly interrogated in the National Diet about his role as interpreter in a Russian POW camp before his repatriation to Japan in 1949. The issue here was whether Tokuda Kyûichi, the secretary-general of the Japanese Communist Party, intervened to prevent the return of non-Communist prisoners to Japan, an accusation that was believed to hinge upon the precise wording of a message communicated to the Russian authorities and, with Kan interpreting, read aloud to the POWs. In his message, had Tokuda "demanded" that the Soviets repatriate only "well-prepared democrats" (understood by the Diet to mean "Communist"), or had he merely "hoped" for their conversion to his ideal of democracy? Kan approached the question as a linguist, arguing that his translation of the Russian word "nadeetsya" as "hope" (期待) was the most accurate choice, an assertion that the Communist Party newspaper *Akahata* published as proof of Tokuda's innocence. At the same time, Kan's testimony was skeptically received by the investigating Diet members, who prodded Kan to admit that his involvement with Tokuda went beyond merely providing an objective translation. The investigators eventually found their own Russian "expert" who testified that "nadeetsya" could also mean "demand" (要請). Kan committed suicide soon after his ordeal, leaving a note that described his powerlessness and disillusionment in the face of political demagoguery.[167]

Tsurumi, reviewing the Diet transcript and Kan's suicide note, concluded that Kan's testimony revealed a similar naiveté regarding communication to that of Dewey. In Tsurumi's eyes, Kan's disillusionment suggested that we should be aware that "discommunication" is often the normal state of things, with language users attempting to manipulate and use one another for political ends.

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[167] Barshay, op. cit.

Yet like the postwar author's use of literary ambiguity, "discommunication" offers opportunities for creative, or tactical, expression.

There was a marked difference between Tsurumi's "philosophical disaster prevention" in 1946 and his embrace of discommunication in 1952. Apart from the passing of time since the end of the war, this difference is understandable conisdering that Tsurumi left unresolved in *Reflection on Philosophy* the problem of clearly distinguishing between a preparatory "era of construction" and an "era of crisis." Tsurumi assumed that, with the war having just ended, his contemporary moment was one of construction. By the late 1940s and 50s, It was far more difficult to take for granted that distinction between past crisis and present construction. When Tsurumi published "The Form of the Postwar Novel" in 1949, the Occupation authorities, increasingly fearful of Communist influence in Asia, had already halted a General Strike in 1947 and put an end to labor disputes at Toho Film Studios in 1948. In 1949, the Japanese Communist Party was accused of terrorist activity in three widely publicized criminal episodes: the Shimoyama, Mitaka, and Matsuakawa incidents. The intensification of the Cold War dampened any hopes that one could remain aloof from the fluctuating political exigencies of the present in order to remain undistracted from the longer-term goal of preparation for a future moment of crisis. Tsurumi's eventual response was to shift away from trying to promote logical techniques "from the outside" - in other words, through the introduction and dissemination of his philosophical system and an artificial language – and more toward extracting and sharpening already-existing critical techniques dormant in everyday life in Japan. These were central goals of the project launched by the Institute for the Science of Thought to study "The Philosophy of Ordinary People."

Conclusion

Though many thinkers after the war derived inspiration from abroad in their attempts to articulate a new vision for postwar democracy, the focus on communication among the intellectuals affiliated with the Institute for the Science of Thought was unusual. For Tsurumi Shunsuke, exposure to the logical positivism of the Vienna Circle, Peircean semiotics, and the New Criticism of William Empson, I. A. Richards, and C. K. Ogden as a student at Harvard affected how he analytically approached the "atmosphere of linguistic confusion" he confronted upon returning to Japan after the outbreak of war with the United States in 1941. In addition, the notion that American success was connected to the ability of intellectuals to communicate across disciplines and political affiliations, and the need in the Institute for intellectuals from various disciplines to cooperate effectively helps explain why there were so many articles on communications, logic, and analytic philosophy in early issues of the journal. The American science of "communications" aligned this research with the scientific universalism promoted by dozens of other journals and intellectual associations with this period, and it suggested ways in which clear communication might fulfill the urgent task of narrowing the gap between intellectuals and the masses after the war. Through its lecture series, *Science of Thought* promoted the idea that the ability to communicate complex ideas clearly, logically, and constantly was a key to democratic subjectivity. Yet in the early fifties, the Kan Sueharu trial demonstrated to Tsurumi Shunsuke that it was naïve to think that being a good communicator was sufficient to realize democracy in the intensely "discommunicative" atmosphere of the Cold War. Tsurumi argued that intellectuals should not just criticize this discommunicative situation from the standpoint of logic; they should also take advantage of it to promote democracy as a creative project.

Chapter 3: The Philosophy of Ordinary People

> For example, Professor Kawai Eijiro is proposing a philosophy of liberalism. Yet suddenly constructing a philosophy named "liberalism" based on an economic, political, and cultural ideology that ignores the opposition between materialism and idealism is no different from speculating about the philosophy of the shoemaker or contriving the philosophy of the barber. Even if you manage to produce an idea by such means it will never become systemic thought (思想).
>   -Tosaka Jun, *On the Japanese Ideology*, 1935

> It would be interesting to compare the *technique* of common sense - i.e., of the philosophy of the man in the street - with the technique of the most advanced modern thought.
>   -Antonio Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks*, 1929-1935

> For us, philosophy is not the ideological, conceptual being of metaphysical investigation; it is something that ceaselessly manifests itself in the real behavior of each person; the real being that belongs to the world of experience. In other words it is the object of "scientific" research. It is for this reason that we call the discipline we pursue the "science of thought."
>   -Kawashima Takeyoshi, *My Philosophy* (Vol. 2), 1950

The intellectual history of the first half of the twentieth century can be recounted as a series of varying responses to the perceived emergence of the masses as a catalyst for political, cultural, and social change. Some observers projected hope for a utopian future onto this collective subject, pointing to events like the Russian Revolution as evidence of the masses' active, emancipatory role in historical events. Others blamed the passivity of the masses for contributing to the rise of fascism and the decline of intellectual values associated with the Enlightenment and democracy. Alongside these polemical reactions, there existed genuine curiosity as to who or what the term "mass" either designated or blocked from view. This was especially true during moments of intense ideological fragmentation, such as 1950s Cold War Japan, when journalists and intellectuals strove to transcend polarized political arguments *on behalf of* the masses through an appeal to documentary and ethnographic evidence of the masses themselves.[168]

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[168] For the importance of documentary and reportage in politically turbulent 1950s Japan, see Toba Koji, *1950-nendai*, (Tokyo: Kawade Shobo, 2010). On different approaches to the masses and mass culture as something either discovered or produced, see Marilyn Ivy, "Formations of Mass Culture,"

Ideological polarization helps explain why the founders of *Science of Thought* at times tried to reject the word "mass" (transliterated マス) in favor of other terms like "common men" or "ordinary people" (hitobito).[169] They believed the word had already become too loaded with pre-conceptions that obscured the actual lives of the people it was supposed to represent, yet their work occupies a similar conceptual space as that of thinkers who tried to investigate the daily life of the masses before, during, and shortly after World War Two. *Science of Thought* tried to set aside the question of whether or not the ultimate triumph of the masses was something to be welcomed or feared in favor of preserving and encouraging what John Dewey called a "scientific attitude" vis-à-vis an emerging, subjectively alien object of inquiry. At the same time, the young intellectuals associated with *Science of Thought* were not disinterested observers. They claimed that their research was a part of building a *real* culture of democracy in Occupied Japan, yet they also believed that this was best achieved by making visible the thoughts of ordinary people rather than through intellectual arguments in favor of one philosophical system or another.

Besides Dewey, early reference points for the project on the "philosophy of ordinary people" included the work of ethnographers who promoted the application or adaptation of qualitative ethnographic methods to the study of contemporary society (Yanagita Kunio, Bronislaw Malinowski, and Clyde Kluckhohn) as well as early attempts statistically to quantify and categorize "value-

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in *Postwar Japan as History*, edited by Andrew Gordon, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 239-240

[169] Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai, *Shushi to katsudô*, (Tokyo: Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai, 1952). Besides these two, there were many other terms that coexisted alongside "mass" (大衆) yet seemed to overlap with its semantic range, including folk (常民), nation (民族), populace (民主), and common people (庶民). Simon Avenell argues that the profusion of terms used to refer to "the people" or "the masses" during this period replicated the more general disorder of the early postwar moment – "a core of certainty surrounded by a pliant exterior." Simon Avenell, *Making Japanese Citizens*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 23

patterns" and "personality types" (Charles W. Morris, Eduard Spranger, and Gordon Allport).[170] Technological developments also played an enabling role. In 1950 Tsurumi Shunsuke enthused over the possibilities opened up by the portable (yet still quite bulky) tape recorder for the study of the "logic of the everyday."[171]

The application of empirical methods to this domain of inquiry and debate was fraught with difficulties. In the thirties, Tosaka Jun had argued that the "massification of the sciences" (科学の大衆化) was itself a prerequisite for a science of the masses.[172] From the turn of the twentieth century, the investigation of the masses coincided with and contributed to epistemological quandaries across the sciences that occasioned a search for new ways of organizing intellectual activity. This search tended to impinge upon (1) the existing division of intellectual labor among the academic disciplines, (2) the divisions among existing intellectuals and between intellectual-subjects and mass-objects, and (3) the division between scientific and political activity.

These tendencies were all more or less present in research conducted around the world that approached the masses through the application of documentary or ethnographic methods to the study of contemporary society. Examples range from Japan (Kon Wajirô, Ishimoda Shô) to Germany (Siegfried Kracauer and the Frankfurt School), Britain (Mass Observation), and the United States (Robert Park, Margaret Mead). Mead was an evangelist for interdisciplinary studies of national character in the US and abroad. *Science of Thought* openly endeavored to overcome divisions among quantitative sociology, qualitative anthropology, and speculative philosophy through an investigation of the thought of ordinary people.

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[170] Kenkyûbu. "Hitobito no tetsugaku ni tsuite no chûkan hôkoku." *Shisô no kagaku.* (Feb. 1948), 59

[171] Tsurumi Shunsuke, "Nichijô no ronri," *Shisô* (July 1951), 69

[172] See the discussion in chapter five of Tosaku Jun, "Kagaku-ron" in *Tosaku Jun Zenshû*, volume 1, (Tokyo: Keisô shobô, 1979)

In regard to relations between intellectuals and the people, the ethnographic results of a similar, temporally overlapping experiment to study the everyday lives of the British working class, Mass Observation (1937-1949), prompted critics to wonder whether its name designated "observation *of* the mass or *by* the mass."[173] The founders of *Science of Thought* aspired to have it both ways, asserting that the purpose of the journal was to propagate "the methods of logical empiricism in thought and practice" on the one hand, and to invite non-specialist readers to actively participate in the interest of the "gradual evolution of the thought that this journal represents."[174] This was a difficult balancing act. The journal's contributors were alternately criticized for lacking academic rigor – a critic remarked that they had a lot to learn from Alfred Kinsey in this regard – or for sounding too much like stuffy professors from an earlier age when they conducted interviews.

Debates over the intellectual and political legacies of these group experiments to study the masses often seem to reproduce the varied and ambivalent responses that had been directed toward the masses themselves. In the United States, mid-century interdisciplinary projects to study contemporary society often displaced political and class conflicts onto questions of socialization, psychological adjustment, or, especially in Japan's case, modernization. At the same time, in deliberations over funding decisions, the Rockefeller Foundation struggled over whether to categorize the Institute for the Science of Thought as an organization devoted to social research or a front for a radical social and political movement.[175] A similar reaction, summed up in the question

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[173] Nick Hubble, *Mass Observation and Everyday Life* (London: Palgrave, 2006), 2

[174] Shisô no kagaku, "Sôkan no shushi," *Shisô no kagaku*, (May 1946), 1

[175] A report on an exchange between Charles B. Fahs (CBF) at the Rockefeller Foundation and Lt. Col. Donald Nugent (N) of SCAP provides evidence of this hesitation. "CBF next asked about the Science of Thought group. N said he had inquired about this through intelligence after CBF's inquiry in Tokyo. The report was that it was "permeated to dominated." This is on a three-point scale of Communist influence; one, infiltrated; two, permeated; three dominated. CBF asked whether this applied to all the members of the group. N said that he thought that it did not. CBF asked whether it would be preferable to handle a project through another institution. N thought it would be…" Report on meeting between Charles Fahs and Lt. Col. Donald Nugent, December 1,

"social research or social movement?" existed among critics attempting to define the work of Mass Observation, a collaborative project founded by the anthropologist Tom Harrison and the poet Charles Madge in 1937 that produced ethnographies of the contemporary British working class.[176]

In turning the ethnographic gaze inward, these thinkers tried to grasp a particular historical trajectory associated with the nation-state as well as an emergent global condition that seemed to be on the verge of dislodging tradition from its secure, visible place. Charles Madge asserted that Mass Observation surveyed the public reaction to the abdication of Edward VII in order to get at "repressed elements" in the British psyche that only come to the surface during major upheavals and contradicted the stereotyped portrayal of the "man on the street" in the press.[177] The Marxist historian Ishimoda Shô, a contemporary of *Science of Thought* who was interested in investigating and documenting the lives of ordinary people, famously titled one of his works *The Discovery of History and the Nation* (民族), thereby emphasizing his belief that the multitude that *really* constituted the ethnic nation had been suppressed in the official historical record.[178]

Yet the weight of historical tradition seemed to vary from place to place. The reception of Ruth Benedict's *Chrysanthemum and the Sword* showed that the new alien quality ascribed to an emergent mass - a quality that made it stand out as an object of intellectual curiosity - was commonly overlaid with the assumption that, in the case of Japan, this opacity might have to do with the non-Western, semi-feudal character of the Japanese nation and its attendant culture rather than its participation in a global conjuncture characterized by capitalist unevenness. The tendency to link the

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1950, Rockefeller Foundation Collection, Record Group 1.2, Series 609, Box 45, Folder 499.

[176] Penny Summerfield, "Mass Observation: Social Research or Social Movement?" *Journal of Contemporary History*, (Jul. 1985)

[177] Charles Madge, "An Anthropology of Ourselves," Letter to *New Statesman and Nation*. (2 January, 1937), 12

[178] For more on Ishimoda and the ethnic nation, see Curtis Gayle, *Marxist History and Postwar Japanese Nationalism*, (London: Routledge, 2003)

investigation of the masses with the excavation of feudal remainders and national particularities was strongly evident after World War Two, when theories linking the rise of fascist militarism in Japan to its backward, incompletely modern condition gained widespread acceptance.[179] By associating the investigation of the life of the masses with the search for the lingering presence of the feudal past, intellectuals associated with *Science of Thought* obscured certain commonalities their project shared with movements abroad. They interpreted war and defeat as evidence of Japan's difference from the West, turning their gaze back toward feudalism and transhistorical cultural characteristics in order to explain the present.

Three critical features of the Institute's early studies of "the philosophy of ordinary people" and popular culture come into view that broadly parallel the work of intellectuals in America and Europe. First, the project attempted to overcome the gap between intellectuals and the masses insofar as it treated the thought of the "ordinary people" as objects of study that were as worthy of critical exegesis as the thought of philosophers and the work of literary aesthetes. The leveling impulse behind this choice of topic, which members associated with the creation of a democratic culture, undergirded their repeated assertions of the *philosophical*, as opposed to simply the ethnographic or documentary, significance of their work.[180] As Tsurumi put it in his essay "The Logic of the Everyday," the project was not to be a dumbing-down of philosophy for mass consumption, but a kind of "popularization" of philosophy that recognized the difficulty and complexity of everyday life. At its most optimistic, the collection of data was itself meant as a consciousness-raising exercise, one that made people who did not identify as intellectuals aware of

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[179] See for example the assessment of "late developer" theories in Harry Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), xi-xiv

[180] This project bore some similarities with Pierre Bourdieu's idea of doing "Fieldwork in Philosophy" in the sixties, yet Bourdieu was less concerned at this time with making his work accessible to a non-academic audience. See the interview in Pierre Bourdieu, *In Other Words*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 3-33

their right to intervene in philosophical debates on their own terms. They also hoped to spark the interest of "philosophical youth" who were uninterested in the pedestrian facts of everyday life by using the language of philosophy to talk about the views and behavior of ordinary people. The perceived impact of the "average American" on the development of pragmatism, "almost the official philosophy of America" was a key reference point for some of them.

Second, members of the Institute for the Science of Thought intentionally conducted research on contemporary society to counter more popular sources of information and imagery on the everyday life of the masses. The project to study the "philosophy of ordinary people" was partly intended as an enlightening corrective to distorted, anachronistic, or moralistic images of the masses in popular circulation.

Finally, the stance of the scientific investigator became increasingly difficult to maintain due to a combination of increasing political polarization and methodological tensions that arose in the early fifties, tilting the balance between social research and social movement toward the activist side of the scale. While studies of mass society in the US often ended up subsuming political conflicts under the category of psychology or socialization, political events during the 1950s moved to center stage in Science of Thought's studies of occupational groups. Discomfort with studying people as objects of research led some members, Tsurumi Kazuko in particular, to move toward more direct forms of collaboration with non-intellectuals in the "circle movement."

Despite this change of course, the "Philosophy of Ordinary People" was a project important for the questions it raised about the implicit philosophy of non-intellectuals and the popular literary and media products they consumed, topics generally neglected by other intellectuals in Japan before the advent of media and cultural studies in the 1980s and 1990s. The project shared important parallels with synchronous attempts to investigate the life of the masses in Europe. Yet in part due to uncertainty over the feudal or modern nature of mass society in Japan, the group expressed a

more acute concern over the separation between intellectuals and their imagined public, placing

particular emphasis on the need to simultaneously popularize philosophical thinking and

intellectualize popular culture. Their task was to scramble traditional social distinctions they

believed would impede the growth of a democratic culture.

The Reception of *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* in Japan: Opacity versus Otherness

In 1949 the journal *Minzokugaku kenkyû* (*Ethnography Research*) published a special issue on the

bestselling 1948 Japanese translation of cultural anthropologist Ruth Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum*

and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture.[181] Benedict had passed away that year, and the journal invited

the moral philosopher Watsuji Tetsurô, the folklorist and ethnographer Yanagita Kunio, as well as

two members of the newly formed Institute for the Science of Thought, social psychologist Minami

Hiroshi and legal scholar Kawashima Takeyoshi, to write reviews of her book, a study

commissioned by the US government during the war in anticipation of the occupation of Japan.

Benedict never set foot in the country, relying on written materials and interviews with first and

second-generation immigrants and prisoners of war in the US. On the basis of this evidence, she

produced an analysis of Japanese culture that focused on what she perceived as fundamental ethical

relationships of obligation and indebtedness in a hierarchically structured "culture of shame."[182] The

mixed reception of Benedict's work in Japan was indicative of a conflict among Japanese

intellectuals over their relationship to the masses and the problem of "feudal remnants" in Japan.

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[181] The translation by Matsuji Hasegawa was first published in 1948. By 1952 it had gone through 8 editions. Bennett, John and Nagai, Michio, "The Japanese Critique of the Methodology of Benedict's 'Chrysanthemum and the Sword.'" *American Anthropologist*, (Aug. 1953), 404. *Minzokugaku kenkyû: Kiku to katana tokushû*, (May, 1949)

[182] For more on the background to and reception of Benedict's work on Japan, see Douglas C. Lummis, "Ruth Benedict's Obituary for Japanese Culture," in *Reading Benedict / Reading Mead*, edited by Dolores E. Janiewski and Lois W. Banner, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004). Ryang, Sonia, "Chrysanthemum's Strange Life: Ruth Benedict in Postwar Japan," *China Review*, (Spring 2002). Michiba Chikanobu, *Senryô to heiwa: "Sengo" to iu keiken* (Tokyo: Seidosha, 2005).

The reviews were for the most part harshly critical of Benedict's work. Echoing many of the points aired by Tsurumi Kazuko, who wrote the first review of the book in 1947, contributors attacked *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* for (1) promoting an overly homogenous, conformist view of Japanese culture that failed to distinguish regional and socioeconomic differences, and (2) failing to account for the fact that the more "traditional" ethical values and relationships noted by Benedict were in a state of flux owing to rapid historical changes that had been underway since the late nineteenth century.[183] Watsuji Tetsurô, whose positive analyses of Japanese culture were influenced by Heidegger, argued that Benedict mistook the ethical views of the militarist and fascist cliques during the war for the entirety of the Japanese people across time. This led him to conclude that the book should have been subtitled "Patterns of Japanese Soldiers" rather than "Patterns of Japanese Culture."[184]

The two associates of the Institute for the Science of Thought, Kawashima Takeyoshi and Minami Hiroshi, were somewhat more appreciative. Minami criticized Benedict for her lack of attention to class and historical change, but he praised her for elucidating certain "everyday" social tendencies that escape the notice of the Japanese.[185] Kawashima, while echoing the substantive complaints of the other reviewers, was full of admiration for Benedict's emphasis on qualitative over statistics-centered research, even though his own survey research on Japanese villages had a quantitative element.[186] He argued that it was in fact the heterogeneity of Japan's social structure, composed of both modern and feudal elements, which accounted for the insightfulness of the methodology employed in *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. While other reviewers criticized

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[183] Bennett and Nagai, op. cit., 406-409.

[184] Watsuji Tetsurô, "Kagaku-teki kachi ni tai-suru gimon," *Minzokugaku kenkyû*, (May 1949), 285.

[185] Minami Hiroshi, "Shakai shinrigaku no tachiba kara," *Minzokugaku kenkyû*, (May 1949), 273

[186] For an example of Kawashima's survey research, see Kawashima, "'On' no ishiki no jittai." *Chûô Kôron*, (Mar. 1951)

Benedict's "patterns of culture" methodology for producing results that lacked empirical-grounding, Kawashima praised her generalizing work as an essential preliminary step toward more fine-grained analyses of Japanese society. He approved of her critique of the direct application of American quantitative social scientific methods to the study of Japan.

> American studies of societies have not often been planned to study the premises on which civilized cultures are built. Most studies assume that these premises are self-evident. Sociologists and psychologists are preoccupied with the 'scatter' of opinion and behavior, and the stock technique is statistical. They subject to statistical analysis masses of census material, great numbers of answers to questionnaires or to interviewers' questions, psychological measurements and the like, and attempt to derive the independence or interdependence of certain factors. In the field of public opinion, the valuable technique of polling the country by using a scientifically selected sample of the population has been highly perfected in the United States…
>
> Americans can poll Americans and understand the findings, but they do this because of a prior step which is so obvious that no one mentions it: they know and take for granted the conduct of life in the United States. The results of polling tell more about what we already know. In trying to understand another country, systematic qualitative study of the habits and assumptions of its people is essential before a poll can serve to good advantage.[187]

Kawashima pushed Benedict's argument about studying an ostensibly "alien" culture further, asserting that "by no means is this methodology essential and useful only for Americans studying our culture... The same thing must be said for us Japanese scholars even when the cultural object of research is our own." This was because, while America was an "archetypal modern civil society" (典型的な近代市民社会) that had achieved the uniformity in its fundamental thought, behavior, and relationship patterns necessary for American-style quantitative social scientific analysis, "our social structure is a 'hierarchy' (Eng. in original) composed of various heterogeneous elements. At the very least, many of our actions and ways of thinking have up to now been determined, in the last instance, by a structural moment referred to as feudal 'hierarchy,' and the various concrete forms of this

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[187] Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2005), 17-18. Cited in Kawashima Takeyoshi. "Hyôka to hihan," *Minzokugaku kenkyû* (Apr. 1949), 264.

'hierarchy' are of essential importance to us."[188] By taking the "conduct of life" for granted in the

same way as American sociologists and psychologists, Japanese social scientists had failed adequately

to expose and critique the heterogeneous, incompletely modern aspect of everyday life.

Kawashima himself claimed to have been unaware of the fully heterogeneous nature of

Japan's social structure until he traveled to the puppet state of Manchukuo in 1941. Then an

assistant professor at the University of Tokyo faculty of law, he went there in April of that year to

assist in the writing of a new law governing colonial farming. At the time, the Japanese-controlled

government was gathering information on the "customary law" of various ethnic groups in

Manchukuo.[189] In the process he became aware of the huge gap between customary practices and

the official legal code. He also noticed certain similarities between village practices in Manchukuo

and rural Japan, and this recognition in turn made him more cognizant of the systematic differences

between official law and customary practice in the Japanese countryside.

> Things akin to native religious forms of Japan existed there. For example, that something
> facing this direction on the compass is auspicious, or that there are sacred stones or boulders
> or trees. Although a rope is not tied around them, these sacred stones or trees are
> customarily worshiped. Also things like frogs and worms having spirits, and foxes deceiving
> people – these beliefs exist broadly among the Japanese people, especially in rural villages,
> but they appeared in a clearer form in Manchuria. In this way, things came to the surface
> that one would have overlooked in Japan. With entirely new eyes, I became aware of things
> I had not noticed until then, and I was able to reassess Japan.[190]

Generalizing from the similarities between Manchukuo and rural Japan, Kawashima in effect

transformed Benedict's argument about the subjective position of the American social scientist vis-à-

vis a foreign culture into an objective statement: the homogenous structure of modern American

civil society formed a stark contrast with the modern and feudal dual-structure of Japan. The

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[188] Kawashima, op. cit. 265

[189] Kawashima Takeyoshi, *Aru hôgakusha no kiseki*. (Tokyo: Yûhikaku. 1978), p. 144

[190] Ibid., 148.

analysis of the latter required a qualitative, structural grasp of the culture before quantitative social

scientific methods could be employed. At the same time, he also argued that Benedict's qualitative

structural approach was appropriate for Japanese social scientists who studied European and

American cultures, objects of research assumed to be subjectively alien to them.[191] Thus in

Kawashima's view, Japanese social scientists were *doubly* estranged – both from their own

incompletely modern culture, and from the foreign cultures they tried to study or learn from. Put

another way, they were ignorant of the masses both in the sense that their quantitative, opinion-

survey research on the masses lagged behind that of the United States, and in the sense that they

lacked a common sense connection with the masses that would enable that kind of research in the

first place. This dilemma was the key to explaining Benedict's advantage over most Japanese social

scientists– unlike them she took nothing in Japanese culture for granted.

Kawashima's praise of the methodology of *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* hinted at a more

general difficulty facing Japanese, or more broadly "non-Western," intellectuals confronted with the

assumptions of European or American social theory.[192] Yet such a reading should not foreclose a

discussion of how his dilemma, his sense of double estrangement from the US and Japan, might

have resonated with his contemporaries in Europe, such as British intellectuals who wanted to turn

the ethnographic gaze onto their own society (Mass Observation) or German thinkers who criticized

the assumptions of positivist sociology while supporting empirical, quantitative social scientific

methods (the Frankfurt School).

Kawashima and Benedict's assumption that Western social scientists took for granted a

homogenous "conduct of life" in their own cultures did not fit every case. The fact that thinkers in

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[191] Kawashima. "Hyôka to hihan," 265

[192] For example Kawashima's double-estrangement could also be interpreted as typical of the
obsession with "negative distinctiveness" associated with the Marxist *Kôza-ha* derived postwar
modernist social science. See the analysis of Benedict's reception in Japan in Andrew Barshay. *The
Social Sciences in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press. 2004), 63

Europe wanted to apply ethnographic methods to the study of their own society suggested that common sense, the assumed jumping off point for social scientific research, had become fragmented and opaque. More broadly, Benedict's assumption about the perceived transparency of domestic common sense did not apply to observers in Europe, the United States, and Japan who were attuned to the emergence of a new, sometimes mysterious, "mass society" over the course of the first half of the twentieth century that repeatedly redefined the limits of common sense. It was an awareness of this blurring of common sense that later led Tsurumi Shunsuke to assert that philosophy should become a "pseudo-science" that embraced an intermediary position between the everyday life and science.

When Kawashima emphasized the heterogeneous, incompletely modern condition of Japan and Manchukuo, he was asserting the non-West's *otherness* vis-à-vis Western social science. Yet insofar as it indicated an unknown variable, this otherness could coincide with and blend into the *opacity* of an emergent, partly autonomous everyday condition associated with mass society, and in some cases fascism, in both Japan and Europe. The latter interpretation becomes clearer if one considers the importance Kawashima, as chairman of the Institute of the Science of Thought, accorded to the nexus between thought and action for the masses (taishû) as an emergent subject of history. Without denying that Kawashima's typical focus on feudal remnants in rural Japan and Manchukuo bolstered arguments about non-Western heterogeneity, it is impossible to disentangle that search for difference from an awareness, in no way limited to Japan or the postwar, that rapid change was rendering modern society opaque and transforming it into a potential object of ethnographic research. The sense of double-estrangement experienced by intellectuals associated with the Institute added a sense of urgency to the task of investigating the masses.

Science of Thought **and Mass Observation**

In his review, Kawashima made no attempt to criticize the academic division of labor

observed by Benedict – cultural anthropology as a qualitative discipline that attempts to elucidate the

common sense of alien, non-Western societies, while sociology as a quantitative discipline that takes

the common sense of Western societies as its initial starting point, relying upon hard data to criticize

the commonsensical assumptions that had earlier provided it with material for a research hypothesis.

Yet at the time he was already engaged in an intellectual experiment that challenged such disciplinary

assumptions, not least of those that divided qualitative, speculative philosophy from the empirical

study of the masses. In 1949 Kawashima became the first chairman and Minami Hiroshi the first

executive director of the Institute Science of Thought, newly organized to coordinate group research

projects associated with the journal *Science of Thought* and facilitate the publication of their work in

book form as well as in general circulation periodicals like *Chûô kôron*.[193] In his manifesto for the

group, the unknown mental landscape of the masses was of foremost concern. He wrote:

> We consider our problem to be thought (思想) that supports and determines the behavior of
> historical creation (歴史創造の行動) and must in turn manifest itself in such activity… It
> goes without saying that thought in this sense is not merely limited to the thought found in
> texts written by professional thinkers (思想家). Rather, it is in the heads, and it both
> determines *in reality* and manifests itself as the actions of the many people who directly or
> indirectly participate in the creation of history – and this means in the present age first and
> foremost the masses (大衆). It follows that it is not something fixed on a sheet of paper, but
> is ceaselessly fluctuating and developing in the midst of real relationships.[194]

Kawashima's founding statement noted that grasping the ceaselessly fluctuating object that

was thought, presented numerous methodological difficulties. It was thus necessary to enlist the

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[193] Minami Hiroshi was the first secretary and the board consisted of all the founders of the journal
Science of Thought (Tsuru Shigeto, Taketani Mitsuo, Watanabe Satoshi, Takeda Kiyoko, Tsurumi
Kazuko, Maruyama Masao, and Tsurumi Shunsuke) plus three others: the behavioral psychologist
Miyagi Otoya, the mathematician Hirano Tomoharu, and the logical empiricist Ichii Saburô,
"Shadan hôjin shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai sôritsu ni sai-shite," *Shisô no kagaku*, (Apr. 1950), 4

[194] Ibid., 3. (emph. in original)

cooperation of scholars in every field of research who had an interest in the "thought of ordinary people" (人々の思想). Cooperation was also needed from scholars who could assist in tackling general and fundamental problems in math, logic, statistics, and other sciences. Kawashima concluded, "Through the cooperation of scholars on such a broad scale, we hope to achieve academic results unachievable through isolated methods."[195] As a point of contrast, Minami Hiroshi noted in his review of *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* that the flaws in Benedict's work (ahistoricity, over-generalization) revealed the limits of cultural anthropology working in isolation to analyze people in modern society.[196] *Science of Thought* embraced the ideal of interdisciplinarity, championed at the time by American organizations like the Rockefeller Foundation and Harvard's Department of Social Relations.

Yet anthropology remained an important reference point for both Kawashima and another key member of the Institute, Tsurumi Shunsuke. Kawashima was impressed with Benedict for drawing attention to details that Japanese scholars took for granted, and Tsurumi was inspired by the work of the folklorist Yanagita Kunio and the anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski, who encouraged the application of ethnographic techniques to modern European society. Malinowski lent his support to the British Mass Observation project in 1937, which called for the application of methods "hitherto identified with 'folk-lore'" to the contemporary British psyche. Mass Observation strove in fact to produce an "Anthropology of Ourselves" by observing the working classes at work, home, and during their leisure time.[197] Although there is no evidence of a direct connection of influence between *Science of Thought* and Mass Observation, their missions clearly overlapped, and one could posit an indirect link between the two in the inspiration both derived

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[195] Ibid., 4

[196] Minami, op cit. 274

[197] Charles Madge, op cit., 12. Also see Nick Hubble. *Mass Observation and Everyday Life*. London: Palgrave. 2006.

from Malinowskian ethnography and, especially in the case of Tsurumi Shunsuke, the semiotic New Criticism of I. A. Richards, who had been Charles Madge's mentor at Cambridge.

After Tsurumi returned from the United States, he was drafted and sent to Java in 1943 as a non-combat recruit. There he read C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards's *The Meaning of Meaning* while observing language use in the Navy. Tsurumi made sense of communication in the hierarchical structure of the Navy by drawing upon Ogden's idea that widespread "verbal superstition" endowed certain words with a manipulative power independent of their understood meaning (or lack of meaning). Ogden associated word magic with primitive peoples, but argued that the "widening gulf between the public and the scientific thought of the age" had exacerbated the tendency toward verbal superstition in the twentieth century.[198] Bronislaw Malinowski's supplementary essay to Ogden and Richards's text ("The Problem of Meaning in Primitive Languages") further inspired Tsurumi with its ethnographic observations of language-use and its emphasis on primitive language as essentially pragmatic: "a mode of action and not an instrument of reflection."[199]

In the Jakarta Library he discovered Malinowski's *Myth in Primitive Psychology*, a text that ends with the call for the cross-pollination of a "science of myth" across primitive and the "living higher cultures," of China, India, Japan, and "last but not least" Britain.[200] Malinowski also demanded that the anthropologist "relinquish his comfortable position in the long chair on the veranda of the missionary compound, Government station, or planter's bungalow" and "go out into the villages, and see the natives at work…"[201] a demand analogous to Science of Thought's pursuit of the philosophy of the "man on the street." Tsurumi claimed that these texts by Ogden and Richards

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[198] I.A. Richards and C. K. Ogden. *The Meaning of Meaning.* P. 29

[199] Malinowski. Bronislaw. "The Problem of Meaning in Primitive Languages." In *The Meaning of Meaning* by Ogden and Richards, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1927), 312

[200] Malinowski, Bronislaw, *Magic, Science, Religion and Other Essays*, (New York: Free Press. 1948), 121

[201] Ibid., 123

and Malinowski were the main inspiration for his first article in *Science of Thought* "On the Talismanic Use of Words," which drew a direct link between wartime propaganda and the new enthusiasm for democracy by emphasizing the pragmatic character of slogans as a means to win favor with the ruling authorities.[202]

As with Kawashima's praise of Benedict, Tsurumi's juxtaposition of primitive myths and propaganda slogans was made by possible by an awareness of the opaque, indecipherable quality of routine semiotic behavior in mass society. Due to their respective experiences in Manchukuo and America, both Kawashima and Tsurumi viewed Japan through a comparative optic that de-familiarized this behavior, rendering it an appealing object of ethnographic investigation. At stake in this investigation was more than an increase of knowledge about society. The thought of ordinary people also contained the key to overcoming the division between intellectuals and the masses.

In Search of Japan's Pragmatism

The Institute's first interdisciplinary investigation of the life of the masses was its project entitled "The Philosophy of Ordinary People" (ひとびとの哲学), a title chosen in contrast to the usual emphasis in academia on the "Philosophy of Philosophers."[203] Introducing the critical impetus

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[202] Tsurumi Shunsuke, *Kitai to kaisô,* vol. 1 (Tokyo: Shôbunsha, 1997), 141

[203] For the contrast with the "philosophy of philosophers" see Kenkyûbu. "Hitobito no tetsugaku ni tsuite no chûkan hôkoku." *Shisô no kagaku.* (Feb. 1948), p. 59

More literally, the name of the project might be translated as "The Philosophy of Persons" or "The Philosophy of Each Person." Given the number of Japanese words that can be rendered in English as "people," the translation "Philosophy of Ordinary People" is not unproblematic. The word "hitobito" (a repetition of the word "person") chosen could simply refer to a plurality of people. It was generally not used to translate the word "masses" or the "people" of "people's republic" from European languages – the ostensibly more academic-sounding words "taishû" or "jinmin," both rendered in Chinese characters, were preferred over "hitobito."

The dictionary *Nihon kokugo dai-jiten* notes that the "hitobito" was never used in the pre-modern times to indicate groups that included people of high status. It usually referred to groups of servants or retainers in classical literature.

behind the "Philosophy of Ordinary People" project to an English readership in 1951, Tsurumi

portrayed the intellectual culture of Japan in starkly negative terms, drawing upon imagery that

associated postwar "philosophical youth" with obscurantism, elitism, and fanaticism. He wrote that

the neologism coined to translate the term "philosophy" during the Meiji period literally meant

"exquisite science." This attitude, symbolized by the youthful devotees of the philosophy of the

Kyoto School, who "clothe their wills, testaments, and love-letters in [its] philosophic terminology,"

was a "caricature of the role of philosophy in the contemporary world." Perhaps conscious of his

own morose youth before the war, he wrote of these young intellectuals that "Many became so

engrossed with philosophic problems that, unable to free themselves from this entanglement, they

chose death. Modern Japan (1867-) will be known as a society with the highest rate of "philosophic

suicides" in the history of the human race."[204]

Pragmatism represented an alternative to this sort of Japanese philosophy.. In the forties

and fifties both American and Japanese historians assumed that pragmatist thought, at least in its

origins, had an essential connection with the commonsense attitude of ordinary people in a way that

contrasted with philosophers in Japan and continental Europe. Philosophers like Charles Sanders

Peirce, William James, and other members of the Metaphysical Club at Harvard were merely

responsible for systematizing and labeling it as a recognizable "ism" at the turn of the twentieth

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In one of the books published as part of the project, *Yume to omokage*, Kawashima Takeyoshi glosses "hitobito" as "common men" and "plain folks." Amano Masako also argues that the name is derived from a translation of John Dewey's term "common man." Quoted in Tsurumi Shunsuke ed. *Genryû kara mirai e*, (Tokyo: Shisô no kagakusha, 2005), 217

The phrase "common man" was occasionally transcribed into Japanese texts (Komon man) to refer to the subject (shutai) of pragmatism (as opposed to the working class in Marxism, or "dasein" in existentialism). See for example R. S., "Interigencha to tetsugaku," *Tetugaku hyôron* 3, no. 1 (1948): 33-34.

[204] Shunsuke Tsurumi. "An Experiment in Common Man's Philosophy," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* (Dec. 1951), 246

century.[205] For figures like Lewis Mumford and the historian Henry Steele Commager, to debate the

merits of pragmatism was to put "American culture" as a whole on trial.

Yet the specific verdict was beside the point for many young critics in Japan. In comparison

with his depiction of prewar Japanese intellectuals as aloof or inclined to "philosophical suicide," the

perceived link of pragmatism to the lives of ordinary Americans was more important to them than

its solutions to specific epistemological or social problems. As a result of this emphasis on

pragmatism's organic origins, it was futile to expect Japan's philosophical environment to change by

translating the collected works of Dewey into Japanese or disseminating his simplified views to

school children. This was an overdetermined argument against "imported thought" (輸入思想) that

seemed to parallel the critique of the "rationed democracy" of the Occupation, which was imposed

from the top down.

A contemporary advertisement for the Institute's *My Philosophy* series exemplified an

alternative approach by promising an equally organic philosophy for Japan that would replace the

elite *kyôyô* tradition of the past:

> The Philosophy of Ordinary People Series. A new must-read educational book (*Bildungsbuch* 教養書) for everyone that answers the question, "How should I live?" by teaching, with the facts, how people have lived brilliant lives. The people of America created an American philosophy (pragmatism). This was above all else a living philosophy born out of everyday life. This book is philosophy created by the Japanese, born out of the lives of the people of Japan.[206]

Science of Thought thus tried to rectify the failure of Japanese intellectuals to articulate a popular

Japanese analogue to pragmatism by conducting philosophical investigations of the lives of non-

philosophers.

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[205] David A. Hollinger, "The Problem of Pragmatism in American History," *Jounral of American History* (Jun., 1980), 88.

[206] Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai, *Yume to omokage* (Tokyo: Chûô Kôronsha. 1950), Back page ad.

At the same time, this task was not only relevant to Japan's intellectual situation. Tsurumi Shunsuke strongly emphasized that the "revolutionary spirit" of the Metaphysical Club in America owed a great deal to the participation of non-philosophers: "They were a mathematician, physicist, evolutionist, physiologist, and three lawyers. But although not philosophers, they got together to discuss philosophic problems. Hence was started one of the most prolific movements in contemporary thought."[207] Yet during the twentieth century, the "Pragmatist Movement" had degenerated to the degree that pragmatism was becoming a specialized discourse of little interest to people outside philosophy departments. It was necessary to "go back to *Ur-pragmatism*" through a direct appeal to the thought of "people at large."

> Shortcomings of the Pragmatic Movement in the twentieth century teach us that it is ineffectual to reform philosophy with the formula, "Bring philosophy into close union with action." However frequent the pronouncement of the formula, it will not get results, as long as it is applied by "philosophers." "Philosophers" are naturally drawn together by their common interest to preserve the status-quo, and they are, therefore, the last people to stand for a complete change of the situation… "Philosophy" must go, but philosophical problems will remain as part of human destiny… When philosophers are banished, we must amalgamate the memoranda of sick persons, children, men, women, farmers, mechanics, anthropologists, biologists physicists, and engineers, and, with the sum total of all their wisdom, try to solve the philosophic problems for our age. When such a time arrives, philosophy will become an "open room" where anybody may come in, talk as long as he likes, and leave when he is tired of being in philosophic atmosphere. This is just a room, a common property, with no host or hostess in it.[208]

The metaphor of an "open room" could also have been applied to the ideal toward which Tsurumi and the founders of *Science of Thought* strove when they solicited the participation of non-intellectuals in a collaborative "thought movement" of their own, inspired in part by an interpretation of the Metaphysical Club as an interdisciplinary movement to transform philosophy.

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[207] Shunsuke Tsurumi, op. cit., 247

[208] Ibid., 248-249

At the same time, Tsurumi's metaphorical language soon shifted from an open room to the terrain outside, among people who are currently immersed in daily life:

> At the present stage of thought, we must work for the *evacuation* of philosophic problems form their domicile and try to disperse them as far apart as possible among the *amateurs* of "philosophy." Get them to believe that they are the real bearers of philosophy and that, aside from them, philosophy cannot subsist. Get them to think about philosophic problems in the context of their business, farming, and engineering so that they may add some new twist to the traditional method of handling the same problems. When this *evacuation* is complete, we may again bring together these philosophic problems, compare our memoranda, and improve our respective solutions.[209]

In short, the pressing task of intellectuals was not to work for progress through the advancement of knowledge but to assist with this task of dispersion, taking advantage of philosophy's position as a "pseudo-science" that constituted a "link between science and everyday life."[210]

The Institute's methods for accomplishing this task were appropriately eclectic, eventually including interviews with celebrities, philosophical interpretations of popular novels, and studies of occupational groups with anonymous informants. They made free use of methodologies originally developed to make the study of society more scientific, adapting them for their own popularizing aims. The earliest progress report, written by Tsurumi Shunsuke in 1948, indicated that the project would begin with an attempt to quantify and categorize the conscious and unconscious views of ordinary people (一般人) and associate their ideas with a set of "philosophical-types." (哲学型) The group embarked on an investigation that Tsurumi argued had been unfairly neglected by "thinkers and philosophers belonging to reformist (革新的な) circles who devoted their energy to criticism of the works of a small number of philosophers from the past." He acknowledged that such criticism was necessary, and yet:

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[209] Ibid., 249

[210] Ibid., 250

If the work of philosophers is intended to change the world, then, as a weapon for change, I think grasping and criticizing the philosophical thought of the masses in general (一般大衆) is more effective than criticizing and interpreting the philosophy of a small number of philosophers. Especially when you think about the case in our country, where the philosophical thought of this minority is cut off from the philosophical thought of the ordinary person, the necessity of researching the latter is much more urgent than in the other civilized countries (他の文明諸国).[211]

At the beginning of the project in 1948, psychologists, sociologists, and philosophers associated with *Science of Thought* designed a simple questionnaire to fulfill Tsurumi's aim of unearthing the thought of non-philosophers and relating that thought to philosophy. Their methodological approach was inspired by the personality-type tests devised by the German and American psychologists Eduard Spranger and Gordon Allport. Allport was a professor in Harvard's department of social relations and a leading proponent of interdisciplinarity across the social and behavioral sciences after World War Two. He advocated a rapprochement between empirical psychological research and philosophy, arguing that empirical psychology could help "reduce discord among our philosophers of man" and that psychologists ought to be made more aware that of the fact that "whether he knows it or not, every psychologist gravitates towards an ontological position."[212] His hope that empirical research might help resolve longstanding philosophical debates would have resonated with members of Science of Thought, who hoped to get past the postwar factional debate over the "3 –isms": "Marxism, pragmatism, or existentialism?"

The Institute's project was even more ambitious than Allport's vision for the behavioral sciences. Not merely empirical supplement to philosophy, the project would assist in transforming the relationship between philosophy and the public. The collection of data would itself contribute to the democratization of philosophical discourse by making "ordinary people" aware of their right

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[211] Kenkyûbu., op. cit., 57

[212] Quoted in Andrezj Jastrzebski, "Gordon W. Allport's Concept of the Human Person: On a Possible Dialogue between Philsophy and Psychology," *The Pluralist* (February 2011), 80

to engage in a debate with professionals. It would also ideally attract the interest of intellectuals,

especially young intellectuals, who were thought to prefer philosophical speculation to the neglect of

empirical, ethnographic research.

In order for this reconciliation between intellectuals and ordinary people to work, the

questions had to be answerable by people who had no specialized training in philosophy. As the

progress report put it:

> In trying to draw out the philosophical thought of ordinary people (人々), if we ask
> theoretical questions like 'Do you believe in idealism or materialism?' we will be unable to
> obtain an answer. We only start getting responses when we put out questions that allow the
> respondents to apply knowledge they already have.[213]

For example, respondents would be asked to mark down "I believe," "I don't believe," or "I don't

know," to questions such as:

> - A benevolent god is in control of the world.
> - Things like mountains, rivers, and clouds do not really exist. They are merely illusions.
> - The world operates according to laws taught by science, and laws other than those of
> science are not true.
> - Even if all humans died, the sky and the ocean would be blue.[214]

Other questions dealt with views of the Meiji Emperor, the Japanese Communist Party leader

Nosaka Sanzô, General MacArthur, Buddha, and Jesus. Still others dealt with Japan's war

responsibility and the respondent's view of happiness. The latter question assigned the respondent a

"value system" that roughly corresponded to Spranger's six "value attitudes:" theoretical, economic,

aesthetic, social, political, or religious.[215]

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[213] Kenkyûbu. "Hitobito no tetsugaku ni tsuite no chûkan hôkoku (1)," 60

[214] Ibid., 65

[215] Eduard Spranger, *Types of Men*, translation by P. J. W. Pigors (New York: G. E. Stechert Company, 1928)

Answers to the questions would elicit an "opinion constellation" corresponding to a typology of metaphysical, societal, existential, ethical, and historical viewpoints "temporarily borrowed" from the "history of traditional philosophy" to aid in categorization and comparison of "the philosophy of ordinary people" to "the philosophy of philosophers."[216] Examples from various typological categories included moral relativism, historical determinism, critical realism, and optimistic or pessimistic views of human nature.

The survey shared some surface features and intellectual antecedents with Theodor Adorno's study of the authoritarian personality in the United States, the results of which were not published until 1950. One set of five questions dealt with attitudes toward the pre-1945 Imperial Rescript on Education - a pledge of loyalty to emperor and nation that schoolchildren recited countless times at school events and were required to study and memorize. Various answers supportive of the Rescript corresponded to ethical authoritarianism. At the same time, opposition to the Rescript combined with the response "General MacArthur" to a question that asked respondents which person on a list of famous people they most respected *also* corresponded to the authoritarian-type.[217] This showed that the continued salience of the question of democratic subjectivity that Tsurumi raised in his 1946 article on talismanic words: did the Occupation simply substitute an authoritarianism oriented toward the Emperor for one centered on the US in the person of MacArthur?

Over eighty percent of respondents in the survey's initial test-run were categorized as holding some authoritarian ethical views. Nonetheless, in contrast to the *Authoritarian Personality*, Science of Thought's project aimed more at popularizing philosophy and excavating elements of a usable intellectual tradition than criticizing and explaining the lingering authoritarian views of the

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[216] Ibid., 59

[217] Kenkyûbu, op. cit., 65-66

majority (a subject already broached elsewhere by Tsurumi Shunsuke, Maruyama Masao, Kawashima Takeyoshi, and many others). The report emphasized that most of the respondents in the initial test of the survey had an eclectic mix of individualist, utilitarian, relativist, and authoritarian views.[218] Whatever the case, the aloof attitude of philosophers and intellectuals toward the thought of the masses was more problematic in this context than the lingering authoritarianism of the majority.

Aside from developing a way to assess the current philosophical views of the non-intellectuals, the progress report argued that it was also important to indirectly examine the "mold" (イガタ) and "materials" (素材) of their thought. The "mold" referred to compulsory ideological education, expressed in school textbooks in use until the end of the war, and the "materials" were "the things most often encountered and interacted with every day." They were accessible through a content analysis of the things the "average person" (平均人) listened to and read: "movies, popular songs, popular novels" and Japanese oral performances like "naniwabushi, rakugo, and manzai."[219]

This notion was developed further in a 1950 collection of articles on popular culture and the mass media, *Dreams and Images* (*Yume to omokage*). The articles here emphasized that different kinds of popular media were embedded in a network of inter-textual borrowing. The language and pacing of mass-market novels drew from both newspaper headlines and oral storytelling genres like *kôdan*. These novels were then adapted into popular movies that were in turn vehicles for popular songs.

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[218] Kenkyûbu, "Hitobito no tetsugaku ni tuite no chûkan hôkoku (2)," *Shisô no kagaku*, (Mar. 1948), 48

[219] Kenkyûbu. "Hitobito no tetsugaku ni tsuite no chûkan hôkoku (1)," *Shisô no kagaku*. (Feb. 1948), 63-64. Referring to an article by the industrial psychologist Kaneko Hiroshi published in the same issue as the report, Tsurumi acknowledged that popular literature might not be a good indicator of the philosophical thought of the masses and might instead be, as Kaneko wrote, "a mental tumor." Nonetheless Tsurumi believed that as raw material that could be employed in a number of ways, popular novels were important. See Kaneko Hiroshi, "Taishû bungei no shisôsei," *Shisô no kagaku* (Feb. 1948).

In this way, the group tried to refine its critique of the estrangement of intellectuals from the masses as an analysis of the gap between two mostly self-contained communication systems.

They argued that this gap would never be overcome unless intellectuals made an attempt to take popular media as seriously as literature and philosophical thought. Tsurumi argued that, "it could be said that popular novels more often grappled with the question 'how should one live?' and in that sense are probably more philosophical than 'pure literature.'"[220] Nonetheless, in his introduction to an essay on the popular novels of writers like Sasaki Kuni and Yoshikawa Eiji, he complained that despite the mass-market popularity of these works, critics had largely neglected them. He complained that adherents of "pure literature" (純文学) considered these texts too vulgar to warrant analysis, and Marxists, who were ostensibly interested in reaching out to the (proletarian) masses, quickly dismissed the works as reactionary without expending the effort necessary to understand their popular appeal. He argued that orthodox Marxists substituted one normative concept of literature for another, leaving the elitist attitude toward these popular works unchanged. Instead, what was needed was a more descriptive approach to literature as a communicative practice that could illuminate its connections with other popular forms of entertainment.

The typological questionnaire created for the "Philosophy of Ordinary People" project was to act as an aid to this descriptive analysis. In this case, researchers would try to guess how authors or even the fictional characters that populated novels might answer the the philosophical survey questions. Tsurumi used the questionnaire to evaluate the implicit philosophical viewpoint expressed in the works of a popular author of comedic "dime novels," Sasaki Kuni, filling it out on the basis of recurring details in his many published works.[221] He summarized his typological findings as follows:

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[220] Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai, *Yume to omokagae* (Tokyo: Chûô Kôronsha, 1950), 63

[221] Tsurumi Shunsuke, "Sasaki Kuni no shôsetsu ni arawareta tetsugaku shisô," *Shisô no kagaku*, (Feb. 1948)

> Sasaki's novels emphasize the role of communication and reconciliation in social affairs, are radical in regard to petty details and bow to the authorities in all the major issues of society, are incredulous of supernatural power and idealize common man, see only the brighter side of life, adopt the way of thinking that is logical and positivistic, take a relativistic and indeterministic view in regard to value problems, believe strongly in contingency as a force in human history, are quite desirous of the application of scientific knowledge to personal life, are all for long-range planning in life, and teach the Japanese people many techniques and devices that would help in building a normal family life. The analysis of Sasaki's novels serves as a lesson that Pragmatism ferments quite naturally in the living conditions of petty bourgeois life in the big cities of financial capitalist society, even when it is not instigated by the readings of James, Dewey, and Peirce.[222]

This analysis laid bare Tsurumi's critique of the intellectual status quo in Japan. Intellectuals were too busy burying their heads in the works of James, Dewey, and Peirce to notice Sasaki's homegrown variant of pragmatism and its social basis. Yet Tsurumi's "discovery" of pragmatism in Japan was problematic from the standpoint of critics who questioned the Institute's methodology and found the researchers' attitude toward non-philosophers and popular literature patronizing.

"Popularizing" Philosophy

An article sharply critical of Tsurumi's approach to literature appeared in the *Tôkyô shinbun* newspaper in 1948. It noted that *Science of Thought* was one of many voices demanding that the chasm between popular literature (大衆文学) and pure literature (純文学) be filled. The author agreed that it was strange that popular novels were not considered worthy of literary criticism, and he found *Science of Thought*'s "satirical remarks about the lethargy of literary critics" interesting. At the same time, he was skeptical of their methodology. The difference between popular novels and oral entertainment was too ambiguous, and he predicted that Tsurumi's analytical technique of subjecting literature to a "scholastic achievement test" would not yield much fruit.[223]

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[222] Shunsuke Tsurumi. "An Experiment in Common Man's Philosophy," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* (Dec. 1951), 262

[223] Article excerpted and reprinted in *Shisô no kagaku* (May 1949), 684

Criticism did not only originate from outside the group. From the beginning, members of the Institute raised doubts about the accuracy of the typological labels in the philosophy questionnaire. They criticized the fact that they were all drawn from the history of European philosophy, and were thus unsuitable for categorizing Buddhist and Confucian-derived popular beliefs that Kawashima, in his review of Benedict, associated with Japan's heterogeneous feudal and modern condition. [224]

Despite these criticisms, the progress report suggested that, unlike specialized opinion research, the act of collecting data might have been more important than the accuracy of the final results. Tsurumi, who embraced philosophy as "pseudo-science," had suggested in his work on the talismanic effect of words like "democracy" that the practical effects of labels could be more important in everyday life than their descriptive accuracy. The typology employed in the "philosophy of ordinary people" was part of the group's effort to spark the interest of intellectuals uninterested in discussions of "concrete facts,"yet enthusiastic about the Kyoto School or the existentialism of Sartre. In his second report, Tsurumi lamented the lack of interest in "the individual facts and values that form the main constituents of everyday life" displayed by young students "charmed by philosophy," joking that such students could care less about the pencil they were writing with unless someone decided to call it "being in-its-particularity." To overcome this "pathological" tendency among the youth, intellectuals had to find a way of anchoring the abstraction loved by students in the "concrete facts and values of everyday life."[225] It was necessary in his eyes to wean young intellectuals off of their obsession with abstract debate and get them to start looking at the everyday

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[224] Ibid., 62-63

[225] Kenkyûbu, "Hitobito no tetsugaku ni tuite no chûkan hôkoku (2)," 43.

life of people unlike them, even if that meant anchoring the language of philosophy in simple questions as a "hook."[226]

Tsurumi emphasized the pedagogical possibilities implicit in this approach to philosophy. The survey could be used to teach philosophy to students by having them imagine famous thinkers filling it out – in effect, training them to imagine a philosopher's take on contemporary issues. Conversely, "Newspapers are very important materials from which applied problems of philosophy should be drawn. Students should be taught to read daily papers carefully so as to be able to pick philosophic positions taken by their own contemporaries – officials, laborers, farmers, movie-stars, Russians, generals."[227] By linking philosophical types to actions and way of life, it would be possible to ask questions like: "Imagine that Platonists, Thomists, and Deweyists are among the middle-classes in postwar Tokyo. How do you think they would live?" Tsurumi further speculated about the group's research contributing ideas for novels, modern philosophical dialogues, and plays. Thus despite the employment of quantitative techniques, "The Philosophy of Ordinary People" project was not intended only to be an objective "excavation" of Japan's popular philosophy, but also an attempt to create, through trial-and-error, a new democratic culture that blurred the line between intellectuals and the masses.

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[226] Turning philosophers toward the experiential lifeworlds of others led them to a domain of inquiry much closer to the social sciences and education. It is worth noting that in the years leading up to and after World War II the influence of Dewey and Mead was probably greater in departments of education, anthropology, psychology, sociology, and political science (particularly C. Wright Mills) than in philosophy departments. An example from psychology is the fact that Dewey's early 1896 essay, "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology," was, in 1942, named the most influential essay in that field published over the past fifty years by a panel of seventy psychologists commissioned by the prestigous *Psychology Review*. The seeming "eclipse of pragmatism" in philosophy after World War Two has many causes, but it is partly due to the fact that two of the most prominent pragmatists encouraged many of their students to go into social science. The trajectory from philosophy to social science was also followed by two central members of Science of Thought, Minami Hiroshi (from philosophy to psychology) and Tsurumi Kazuko (from philosophy to sociology)

[227] Shunsuke Tsurumi. "An Experiment in Common Man's Philosophy," 250

The test run of their philosophical survey aspired to contribute to this blurring, though its "one-size-fits-all" approach to questions and survey technique ran into problems. The survey involved 225 respondents in categories ranging from college economics professors to labor union members, department store clerks, three homeless people living in Ueno Park, four legal prostitutes, and a single "woman of the night" (illegal prostitute) in a tunnel near Ueno Station. Although the group separated the data by occupational group, everyone, regardless of class, was to contribute to an overall portrait of "The Philosophy of Ordinary People." The survey was also intended as a kind of test run for the overall project. Some participants of the group retrospectively criticized the whole project for having an overly vague, empty conception of who qualified as an "ordinary person."[228]

The questionnaire was mailed to most of the subjects and the results were matched with types listed on a separate answer key. Tsurumi noted that a few attempts to administer the survey to the itinerant population (放浪人口) failed, running into what fellow team-member Kobayashi Hideo[229] called "aphasic limitations" (失語症制約).[230] As a result they adopted a free interview style based upon the written questionnaire. The results of this tactical change impressed Tsurumi, not so much due to the contents of the answers (which suggested that homeless people "had escaped into a naïve mental world detached from reality"), but because the interviewees seemed to have carefully thought through these questions.

> Though they pick up cigarettes off the street, beg for food, and engage in prostitution, six out of the seven people gave us truly articulate answers. They gave us sincere, non-cursory responses, as though they were taking an object out of a bag, having already thought over

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[228] Ichii Saburô quoted in "Shisô no kagaku no nijû-nen," *Shisô no kagaku*, (May 1966), 124

[229] Kobayashi Hideo (小林英夫, 1903-1978) was a linguist affiliated with Science of Thought who translated Saussure's *Cours de linguistique général* into Japanese in 1928. No relation to the famous literary critic Kobayashi Hideo (小林秀雄, 1902-1983).

[230] Kenkyûbu, "Hitobito no tetsugaku ni tuite no chûkan hôkoku (1)," 61-62

the problem a number of times before and reached a certain conclusion. Without a doubt, philosophy is of interest to everyone.[231]

At the opposite end of the spectrum, the Institute attempted to popularize philosophy and anchor its abstractions through interviews with successful individuals and media celebrities. Published in 1950 and intended as a prefatory work to "The Philosophy of Ordinary People," the two-volume *My Philosophy* (私の哲学) seemed to occupy a space somewhere between journalistic coverage of celebrities and "round-table discussions" of political and intellectual topics aimed at educated readers in general magazines like *Chûô kôron*.

Though Kawashima's preface to *My Philosophy* emphasized the importance of the thought of "common men," (民衆 glossed in English as "common men") the focus was on uncommonly successful individuals based in Tokyo.[232] The first volume focused more on establishment figures: politicians, businessmen, literary authors, and scientists, all men born in the nineteenth century who were well known in their respective fields before the war.[233] Examples ranged from Tokuda Kyûichi (1894-1953), chairman of the Japanese Communist Party, to Ikeda Shigeaki (1867-1950), former Finance Minister and head of the Bank of Japan, and Suzuki Daisetsu (1870-1966), a renowned scholar of religion whose introductions to Buddhism were popular around the world. Each chapter contained a text of an interview or an essay written by the individual along with a photograph. The interview questions and essay topics were for the most part loosely based on the philosophical questionnaire, although they made no attempt to quantify the results or assign philosophical types to these non-anonymous subjects. The interviewers ("scientists of thought") also explored the relations between an individual's creed and his personal biography.

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[231] Ibid, 62

[232] Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai, *Watakushi no tetsugaku,* vol. 1 (Tokyo: Chûô kôronsha 1950), 2

[233] One exception was the up and coming artist Okamoto Tarô, introduced as a representative "young Japanese person raised abroad."

The second volume had the same format as the first, but it included women and focused more on figures involved in the "formation of mass culture." The preface explained that this was meant in one of two senses: either the individuals were involved in popular culture through "mass communications" (print, radio, or film), or they were involved in it through their political or social activism (the labor movement, progressive educational movements, etc.).[234] The fact that some of the mass media figures were quite famous; the radio performer Tokugawa Musei, the popular writer Yoshikawa Eiji, or the director (and Kurosawa Akira mentor) Yamamoto Kajirô undoubtedly helped bolster the book's mass-market appeal. In a situation not unlike their early reviews of difficult-to-obtain American academic texts, the personal networks of *Science of Thought* associates played a key role in securing these interviews.

In the editor's introduction to the two volumes, Tsurumi tried to justify the choice of prominent individuals chosen for the study. First, the personal philosophies collected here were important insofar as they contained beliefs that circulated widely. Their trajectories might then represent successful experiments in living, a crystallization of the best of "practical philosophy," some of which was worth preserving for future generations. This was not certain however. Tsurumi wrote that, "The creeds of these representative figures, in direct exchange with the thought of the unnamed masses (大衆), who are emerging as the true heroes of this series, will either be confirmed and form part of a new tradition, or be rejected and thrown out of the stream that constitutes the philosophy of ordinary people."[235] Besides signifying a commitment to pluralism, the diversity of viewpoints was thus in part justified as a result of uncertainty regarding the outcome of a future increasingly determined by the thoughts and actions of the masses.

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[234] Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai, *Watakushi no tetsugaku,* vol. 2 (Tokyo: Chuo kôrôn, 1950), 5.

[235] Watakushi no tetsugaku, vol. 1, 7

Rather than a selection of exemplary lives to emulate, the individuals examined in the series were to be "models" for the democratization of philosophy in a different sense. By voicing untrained opinions to philosophical questions, they were to give readers the confidence to do the same.

> We would be overjoyed if readers of this book came to think that, besides philosophers, active members of society (社会人・行動人) actually have the solemn right to voice an opinion on philosophical problems, and, going even further, that the true bearers of philosophy are not the characters in these two volumes but each person for him or herself (人々各自), and that the formation of a philosophy for a new age should not be left to a small group of scholars.[236]

Perhaps in line with this confidence-boosting objective, some of the interviews displayed the naïveté of the interviewee regarding academic matters. This was true of the interview with the popular film and radio star Takehisa Chieko. The group fortuitously managed to secure an interview with the actress owing to the fact that she was living in America before the war and happened to return home on the same repatriation ship, the U. S. S. Gripsholm, as *Science of Thought* founders Takeda Kiyoko, Tsuru Shigeto, and the Tsurumi siblings.[237] Tsurumi Shunsuke opened the interview by announcing that the questions would deal with "problems of thought" and "problems of communication." Takehisa soon after pleaded, "As much as you can, please just use ordinary (普通な) Japanese and not academic words, since ordinary Japanese is all I know. (laughing)"[238]

Perhaps as a result of this miscommunication-prone interviewing experience and the criticism directed toward the group's typological approach to philosophy and literature, Tsurumi proposed delving deeper into the analysis of "ordinary speech" in 1951. In his article "The Logic of the Everyday," he distinguished sharply between two senses in which the "popularization of

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[236] Watakushi no tetsugaku, vol. 2, 11-12

[237] Tsurumi Shunsuke ed. *Genryû kara mirai e,* 38

[238] Ibid. 70-71

philosophy" could be understood. He contrasted the "quotidianization of logic" (論理の日常化) with the "the logic of the everyday" (日常論理). The former was an attempt to simplify the study of formal logic for everyday use *by* the masses, while the latter was not a simplification of formal logic at all, but a distinct domain of empirical analysis that would make use of methods derived from quantitative linguistics, the psychology of thinking, and symbolic logic. The logic of the everyday was a "difficult" field of study consisting of the detailed annotation, contextualization, and psychological analysis of transcribed speech.

The creation of this new field was facilitated by advancements in recording technology:

> Machine civilization has created a perfect tool for this work, the portable tape recorder, by means of which it possible to record, preserve, and play back people's conversations in the same impersonal way as a camera. By means of this product of modern civilization, it has become possible to take up questions never before problematized by the study of logic.[239]

Tape-recorders were prohibitively expensive for most researchers at the time, but the Institute used the grant from the Rockefeller Foundation to purchase a tape recorder and begin carrying out their research project on "The Effect of the Japanese Language on Thought." They described their method of dealing with "the common man's colloquial speech" in the sociological section of their research proposal to the foundation. It is worth quoting in its entirety as an exposition of their project on the "Philosophy of Ordinary People":

> We drew up a handbook of "strategic" questions (covering strategic points in drawing out people's philosophy) which we drive at concrete individuals. By using this handbook of stereotyped questions, we hold a series of long interviews with farmers in a village not far away from Tokyo. As answers are given, we shoot "tactical" questions which are improvised to throw light upon the characteristic features of the particular man's philosophy. These tactical questions then improvised are entered in the notebook together with the answers given. Thus, we have compiled several documents of philosophic dialogues with Japanese farmers, in a form somewhat akin to the philosophic dialogues of Diderot's "D'Alembert's Dream", etc. In this way, we try to preserve stereotyped rigidity and flexibility, objectivity and capriciousness both of which are required in drawing out living philosophy. We then try

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[239] Tsurumi Shunsuke, "Nichijô no ronri," *Shisô* (July 1951), 69

to give an annotation of these documents, interpreting the scara and marks left in the person's expressions and trying on the basis of these scara and marks to get at a fairly objective characterization of each man's personal philosophy. This task of annotation meets with a number of difficulties, among which the problem of ambiguity is one. And we feel that, here, we need knowledge of some kind of universal scheme of characterizing ambiguity. Finally on the basis of these annotated documents of people's own expressions of their personal convictions, we try to segregate certain forms of basic logical assertions and to interpret them over against the forms of the like instances drawn from the more public language of primary school textbooks.[240]

The "village not far away from Tokyo" referred to in this passage was Tsurukawa-mura, a small village incorporated into Machida city in 1958. Kawashima Takeyoshi led an attitude survey there in the summer of 1950. The results were first published in the article "The Actual Condition of '*On*' Awareness" in the magazine *Chûô kôron* in 1951. It was one of the first in a series of articles on the "The Philosophy of Common People" (庶民の哲学) in that magazine attributed to the Institute of the Science of Thought. The concept of *on* (恩) which could be translated as "moral indebtedness," was central to Ruth Benedict's analysis of Japanese morality in *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. The article was in part an attempt to test Benedict's claim about its pervasiveness in everyday speech through empirical methods.[241] Kawashima surveyed villagers about their sense of indebtedness (*on*) toward their parents, teachers, and the emperor.

He concluded that while the findings corroborated Benedict's argument about the importance of *on* in face-to-face social relations, the responses diverged from the "public language of primary school textbooks" in significant ways, particularly since few villagers claimed to feel a sense of indebtedness toward the emperor.[242] The search for a divergence or, to use Tsurumi's term,

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[240] Institute of Science of Thought, Letter to Charles B. Fahs. Oct. 27th, 1950, Rockefeller Foundation Collection. Record Group 1.2, Series 609, Box 45, Folder 499.

[241] Kawashima Takeyoshi. "'On' no ishiki no jittai." *Chûô Kôron*. 3.1951. p. 119. For background on the article, Kawashima Takeyoshi. *Chosakushû*. Vol 1. Tokyo: Iwanami shoten. 1982. p. 397

[242] Kawashima. "'On' no ishiki no jittai." p. 129

"discommunication" between official ideology (the "mold" of thought) and everyday practice was a recurring theme in their articles published in the "Philosophy of Ordinary People" series.

Political Polarization and the Inertia of Everyday Life

The difficulty of "drawing out living philosophy" on the basis of interviews and surveys was apparent in several of the articles in the "Philosophy of the Common Man" series published published in *Chûô kôron* from 1951 to 1952 and later collected in the book *Modern Man's Mode of Life* (現代人の生態) in 1953. In addition to methodological and communication difficulties, this was due to the turbulent political context of the studies, during the Korean War and around the time of the signing of the US-Japan Security Treaty in connection with the San Francisco Peace Conference in 1951. Both events were over-determined by Cold War tensions, which only exacerbated mutual suspicion and polarization along ideological lines. "The Philosophy of Ordinary People" project, a product of the heady optimism of the early Occupation years, could seem oddly out of place, interested as it was in overcoming divisions and building a broad consensus at a time when many intellectuals feared a relapse into fascism was imminent.

The articles began to appear on the pages of *Chûô kôron* amidst a profusion of fiery essays about Japan's involvement in the Korean War and the peace movement, although the Institute's articles were not political in an immediately apparent sense. They tried to correct media stereotypes about workers in different occupations, depict their way of viewing the world, and promote interest in understanding the lives of others. Yet the project soon became entwined with ongoing political events. References to issues connected to current events appeared in the articles with increasing frequency over the course of the series, sometimes due to the choices of the interviewers (i.e. asking politicians and nurses their thoughts about remilitarizing Japan), and other times because the interviewees regarded the researchers as "intellectual-types" with a political agenda.

The latter was true for the article "The Philosophy of the Constable," published during a period of rising political tension between the government and oppositional groups sympathetic to the Japanese Communist Party. The head writer of the article was Hironaka Toshio, a student of Kawashima who used a pseudonym (Honda Takakazu) because of the politically sensitive subject matter.[243] It appeared just three months before the Left accused the police of brutality during a 1952 May Day demonstration in front of the Imperial Palace.

Though Left-wing critics believed the police had become a politically biased reactionary organization, Hironaka wrote that the people he interviewed had been socialized into not airing their political opinions at work. Their reticence may have been aggravated by the fact that many of the policemen they attempted to interview suspected the Science of Thought researchers of being Communist agitators.[244] He was given the following response when he asked one policeman his views of the emperor:

> Policeman: "If I say something about that, it'll come out as something a policeman said and there'll be trouble, so I won't say anything."
>
> Interviewer: "But unless you say something, ordinary people will have no idea what kind of people policemen are, and I think that's no good."
>
> Policeman: "That won't be the case. They should be able to understand us well enough based on the things published in newspapers. Aren't there lots of things published about that? Things like *bidan*."[245]

Bidan (or "tales of heroism") was a genre of moralistic storytelling that celebrated good deeds performed by the police or, before 1945, soldiers that appeared in newspapers, popular magazines,

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[243] Hironaka explains his use of pseudonyms in Hironaka Toshio, *Kokka e no kanshin to ningen e no kanshin*, (Tokyo: Nihon hyôronsha, 1991), 21

[244] Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai, "Junsa no tetsugaku," *Chûô Kôron*, (Feb. 1952), 142

[245] Ibid, p. 151

radio, and film.[246] Hironaka commented on this reference to *bidan* in the interview in an attempt to pre-empt attacks on the article as biased toward criticism of the police, explaining that he left reporting on the heroic, virtuous side of police work to the writers of popular *bidan*. In effect he accused the popular media of a one-sided representation of reality. The Science of Thought collective imagined its work on the "philosophy of ordinary people" as a corrective to romanticized accounts of the "common man" in the press and popular media.

A few months later, in "The Philosophy of the Fireman," poet and Institute member Sekine Hiroshi framed this critical impulse in relation to popular superstitions and images circulated by the popular media. He noted that people were usually uninterested in the lives of their local firemen. This attitude led to ignorance and the spread of harmful "superstitions" (迷信) about them – the belief that they were lazy or demanded exorbitant fees in return for putting out fires. According to Sekine, people knew more about the fictionalized exploits of Tokugawa-era firefighting day laborers ("tobi") than firemen in their own community.[247]

> Through films, plays, and *kôdan* (professional oral storytelling) or novels… we know a lot about the ancestors of firemen. Perhaps there is some reason why, despite the affinity we feel toward these figures, we lack common sense (常識) concerning firemen of the present day? In other words, perhaps this is because, although old-fashioned firemen are archetypal commoners, and thus they form a basic theme for the "philosophy of common people," today the tradition of firemen is no longer preserved in any form, and this tradition is now no more than an empty shell? (形骸)[248]

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[246] For *bidan* circulated during the invasion of China, see Louise Young, *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 106

[247] Sekine gives two examples of stories that formed the popular image of Tokugawa-era firemen, *Kaga tobi* and *Me-gumi no kenka* (*MÉ-Company Brawl*). These were both Kabuki plays written during the late 19th century, a moment when several professions were undergoing rapid change in connection with reforms associated with the Meiji Restoration. See Wills, Steven. "Fires and Fights: Urban Conflagration, Governance, and Society in Edo-Tokyo, 1657-1890," Ph. D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 2010, 269-70

[248] Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai. "Shôbôshi no tetsugaku." *Chûô Kôron*. 8.1952. p. 114

Here, the particular images and stereotypes associated with firemen may be linked to a particular historical or cultural context, but the lack of interest or first-hand knowledge about their lives spoke to a broader condition other thinkers associated with the demands of everyday life in mass capitalist society. Sociologists Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann attempted a phenomenological description of this condition when they asserted that everyday life was dominated by incipient anonymity and "recipe knowledge of the workings of human relationships." This knowledge allows one to call upon the expertise of others when a problem, such as a fire or a broken telephone, appears in the course of everyday life, but it provides little incentive for understanding their lives. They wrote that, in the midst of complex social interdependency, "my knowledge of my own occupation and its world is very rich and specific, while I have only very sketchy knowledge of the occupational worlds of others."[249]

For Science of Thought, peeling away the shell of tradition aimed less at a naturalistic or phenomenological description of everyday life than at overcoming its inertia, replacing stereotypes and lack of interest with a kind of empathetic understanding of the lives of others and the political and ethical dilemmas they faced.   For example, at the time of the article, firefighters in Tokyo still used watchtowers to spot conflagrations in their districts. The US Occupation authorities proposed to modernize this surveillance system but ended up leaving it mostly intact. The article contained an anonymous account of the shared experience of psychological stress experienced by firefighters on watch-duty. They were punished if they caused a delay responding to a fire, if they called a false alarm, or if another nearby company spotted smoke and rushed to the site first.[250] The interval

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[249] Berger, Peter L. and Luckmann, Thomas. *The Social Construction of Reality*. New York: Anchor Books. 1966. pp. 57-8

[250] The anonymous account is not from an interview conducted by Science of Thought. It is from a text entitled *Secret Record of On-Duty Fire Fighting Experiences* edited by the Tokyo Fire Department (at the time still a part of the police forces (警視庁)). Keishichô shôbôbu, *Shôbô jitsumu taiken hiroku*, (Tokyo: Teitô shôbô kyôkai), 1945.

between on-time and late detection was "paper-thin," occurring in the time it took for "the fire chief

to slam down his telephone receiver." The article concluded with the assumption that, despite the

stress, passersby gazed up at the watchtowers and thought, "looks cool in the summer, and no

mosquitoes" – thoughts that fed into a stereotype of firefighters' laziness and clashed with the actual

experience of being on watch-duty.[251]

Similarly, the stated aim of the article on policemen was to show that they were "humans,

just like civilians, placed in a position to exercise *authority*." The article focused on the way the

individual low-ranking constables were dominated by a "familial community" of officers that

controlled their life after work, preventing them from organizing into unions and keeping them in a

state of political apathy. One example of such control was the practice of police officers asking their

superior's permission before settling on a marriage partner, a convention that Hironaka argued

persisted after the formal abolition of the practice during the postwar reorganization of the police

forces.[252]

But no one was portrayed as a pure victim of professional circumstances. The bulk of most

of these essays was taken up with the task of establishing a basic understanding, or what Kawashima

interpreting Benedict might have called a "qualitative structural grasp," of the occupational world

under discussion. This allowed the reader to see the unresolved political and ethical dilemmas

confronting members of these occupations in postwar society. The task of making these dilemmas

explicit, often through the interviewer's questioning, was part of the evacuation of philosophical

problems. Sekine argued that the mobilization of firemen for crowd-control duty during the 1952

May Day protests created a situation in which the humanitarian mission of the profession could

come into conflict with its mobilization for political purposes. Although the firemen Sekine

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[251] Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai, op. cit., 120

[252] Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai, "Junsa no tetsugaku," 143

interviewed claimed they were sent to the scene of the protests in Hibiya to extinguish the fires of burning cars and not to "suppress rioting," the ambulances and fire trucks were pelted by rocks thrown by demonstrators, injuring ten firemen.[253] He directly posed the question of political ideology to a fire chief:

> We received no notable answers besides, "this has become a problem, and so some kind of provision will be discussed." Nonetheless I pushed further, and to my question as to whether he had any desire to take on a role like that of the National Police Reserves[254], he responded, "We want to be in a neutral space ideologically (思想的). We want to be in a position like the Red Cross." There were times when he answered realistically saying, "And of course it would [also] mean that firemen would get injured, and that is not agreeable to us." There were also times when he severed ties on the spot with the dilemmas of fire fighting humanism, saying things like "firefighting is firefighting, but in that situation we would act as Japanese (日本人として行動する)." [255]

After noting the ambivalence of the fire chief toward the peace movement, the article concluded by favorably contrasting the man-on-the-street virtues of firemen with implicitly reactionary policemen, pointing to incidents like a burglar going to a fire station rather than a police station to confess, and an interview with a fireman whose parents forbade him to enter the police force.

Yet the article on the police argued that if given the freedom to do so, constables might organize unions and reform their professional community. Other articles in the series, while similarly critical of the social structure in which the jobs and professions were embedded in, tried to uncover emancipatory potential in the implicit philosophical views of the practitioners. Kawashima Takeyoshi argued in "The Philosophy of Geisha" that, despite their feudal appearance, geisha had a

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[253] Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai, "Shôbôshi no tetsugaku," 122

[254] The National Police Reserves (警察予備隊), precursor to the Japanese Defense Forces, was established in 1950 as a counter-insurgency force independent of the police that reported directly to the Prime Minister. Although they were not mobilized during the May Day protests, demonstrators pointed to the creation of the Reserves as evidence of the escalating "remilitarization of Japan."

[255] Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai, op. cit., 122

modern and materialist mindset. This explained their dislike of government officials, who retained a

feudal "bushidô-like" mentality.   Suggesting that geisha were a kind of vanishing mediator,

Kawashima wrote, "Japan's sovereign government will have been democratized when government

officials are loved as "human beings" in the world of geisha. Yet paradoxically, in such a democratic

society geisha (or at least geisha of the current type) will probably have already ceased to exist."[256]

In an article on Diet Representatives, predictable results to standard questions like, "Are you

in favor of the remilitarization of Japan?" "Who is your favorite living Japanese politician?" and

"What are your hobbies?" were overshadowed by documentary descriptions of meeting forty

individual representatives in their offices, which included multiple attempts to talk back to the

researchers and comment on the inadequacy of the survey questions. Typical entries went like this:

> Kaishintô Party:
> Okada Tadashi (b. 1913, Kumamoto, occupation: agriculture)
> Read through the form and said with a wry smile, "This is practically an achievement test,
> eh?" Then, taking the form nonchalantly, "Ok, ok, I'll do it." Attitude: friendly, seemingly
> serious. Surrounding situation: two other diet members. One secretary…[257]
>
> Communist Party:
> Inokuchi Masao (b. 1895, Hyogo, occupation: agriculture)
> Attitude: friendly, silent. [On the question of remilitarization] "Right now, remilitarization is
> impossible either way, if sovereignty really returns to the people then a liberation army…"
> In the end he added the footnote, "We are not representatives of the ruling stratum so the
> questions on the survey don't really apply as is. Please take that into consideration."[258]

Okada's comment that the thought survey was an "achievement test" echoed the *Tokyo shinbun*'s

criticism of the Institute's approach to literature – that they were subjecting works to a "scholastic

proficiency test."

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[256] Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai, "Geisha no tetsugaku," *Chûô Kôron*, (Feb. 1951), 156

[257] Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai, "Kono daigishi o miyo!" *Chûô Kôron*, (Apr. 1952), 172

[258] Ibid., 173

Instances of Diet members backing out of their agreement to participate in the survey were described in voyeuristic detail. This included LDP member Ikeda Hayato, who would become Prime Minister eight years later in the aftermath of the ANPO protests in 1960. First the secretary tried to do the survey in Ikeda's place but the (unnamed) researcher was adamant that Ikeda do it himself. In a waiting room, they overheard Ikeda saying something to the effect of "I meant to turn down the *Chûô kôron* survey, but…" An aide then emerged and conversed with the researcher.

"He may have promised [to do the survey], but Mr. Ikeda is adamant that he refused."

"I see, perhaps it is because he is busy? Then did he says his refusal is due to a lack of time today, or does it have to do with the survey itself?"

"The questions are probably bothersome to him."

"But he has not seen them…"

Then apologizing, "That's truly strange, to refuse without looking at them… Please tell this to your editor. I am very sorry."[259]

These capsule accounts, combined with the title "Watch Your Representative!" suggested that reading the article was itself an act of surveillance directed toward unrepresentative representatives. Like the article on the policeman, it evoked the sense that Science of Thought researchers were on the outside looking in, with little hope of getting a clear picture of the common philosophy that informed and motivated the behavior of people in these closed networks. In addition, after the success of more naturalistic documentary accounts of everyday life in the early fifties associated with the "life writing" and "circle" movements, some critics argued that the growing obsession with "abstract" political issues like remilitarization was getting in the way of understanding pressing

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[259] Ibid., 175

"bread-and-butter" issues that concerned the everyday life of a majority still suffering the economic aftereffects of war.[260]

Conclusion: Crisis and Rebirth

In June of 1952, Tsurumi Shunsuke, having moved from Tokyo to take up an academic position in Kyoto, wrote a dispirited letter to Tsuru Shigeto. Tsuru was about ten years older than Tsurumi and had occasionally acted as a mentor to him from the time the two met in Harvard in the late thirties. Tsuru brought his experience with the journal *Science and Society* to the founding of *Science of Thought* in 1946, yet his day-to-day involvement with the group was limited by the fact that he became vice-chairman of the government's Economic Stabilization Board in 1947. Tsuru who was at the forefront of the effort to promote scientific planning in the Japanese economy, seemed to be drifting in a different direction from *Science of Thought*, members of which had begun to question the value of scientific theorizing in the course of their work. Tsurumi wrote:

Dear Tsuru Shigeto,

I know you have strong opinions in opposition to matters concerning *Science of Thought*, and with that in mind I offer this letter to you.

I also feel disillusioned with the main topic *Science of Thought* has been pursuing. From May of last year to the beginning of this year, I wasn't able to do any work. I think there are conflicts in terms of the point of production of thought (思想), and I have become unable to push my ideas forward on the same track as before. For this reason, I feel uncomfortable about *Science of Thought* and with myself.

I think we've reached an impasse for the time being in our attempt to break down the framework of philosophy. Until we are able to insert our lives within that of the masses (民衆) of Japan, one cannot expect that it'll be possible to enunciate philosophy in the words of

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[260] See for example Usui Yoshimi's review of *Echo School*, "Yamabiko gakkô kara nani o manabu ka," *Tenbô*, (Nov 1951), 94-95.

the masses. For that reason, right now I think it's best to break our pens and make preparations for another day.

Unless we become a different kind of person, an ordinary working person (生活者), I don't think we can bring this project to the point in which it'll be possible to break down philosophy's framework. This effort is now at a dead end, and it's also our most important work…[261]

Tsurumi's sense that he was trapped by his subjective position vis-à-vis the masses was compounded by financial difficulties. The Rockefeller Foundation had characterized the group as a Communist Front and refused to support its project on the effect of the Japanese "emperor system" (天皇制) on the lives of ordinary people.[262] Sales of the journal were sluggish, and at the time of Tsurumi's letter, it had not been published for over a year.

In order to overcome this problem he suggested in the letter that the group try publishing the journal in English and building connections with scholars abroad, "not only with America, but with India, Australia, and Indonesia." He suggested the abstracts be written in Malay. They should also try to get their articles published abroad, "as much as possible in magazines with a market, so as to even slightly help the Institute's finances." The journal would continue to be published in Japanese because it was essential to the continued existence of the Institute, but unless they switched to a less professional mimeographed format, Tsurumi believed it would collapse under the weight of red ink.[263]

Tsurumi wished to abolish the journal in its current form but not without holding up the possibility of its rebirth:

[261] Tsurumi Shunsuke, Letter to Tsuru Shigeto, 15 June 1952, Tsuru Shigeto Collection, Economics Research Library, Hitotsubashi University, Tokyo, 1-2

[262] Charles B. Fahs, Letter to Yanaihara Tadao, Nov. 19, 1952, Rockefeller Foundation Collection. Record Group 1.2, Series 609, Box 45, Folder 499.

[263] Tsurumi Shunsuke, op. cit., 5

In this way, after reaching a certain point I would like to cease publication of *Science of Thought*. At such a time, I will want to work to reincarnate it into an association able to make assertions from within the lived sensibility of the masses (民衆の生活感情のなかから). I think I want to belong to the same current as the work of Ishimoda Shô and Noma Hiroshi, but also to set about doing something that will help insert empiricist (実証主義) methods more securely into their work.[264]

Ishimoda was a Marxist medieval historian and Noma was a novelist. What the two shared in common was a commitment to participating in small study and writing groups called "circles" that brought intellectuals and workers together to collaborate toward the production of historical and artistic works. [265]

The journal *Science of Thought* ceased publication, if temporarily, after the release of its twenty-third issue in April 1950, the only issue published in mimeographed form. In an open letter published in that issue Tsurumi argued that the journal was a victim of its own success. Many of the thinkers the journal worked to introduce to Japanese audiences had been by now translated by major publishing companies. In addition, Tsurumi asserted that, "The perspective we elaborated for researching Japan has been deftly adopted by the big commercial magazines." As a result, the group's work had been indirectly transmitted to a larger audience; while at the same time the wide dissemination of the journal's perspective caused it to be increasingly overshadowed by better-financed competitors. The letter ended by renewing the call for an end to divisions among intellectuals and between intellectuals and the public, and by making a virtue out of the journal's own increasingly marginalized position in the intellectual scene.

In Japanese academia, the divisions between universities, departments, and courses still exist today, and each professor drags two or three disciples into hiding deep into a hole of specialization, guarding their positions. Even after defeat, there is no sign of mutual cooperation or enjoying fair competition before a judge. Under these conditions, *Science of*

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[264] Ibid., 5-6

[265] For an example of Ishimoda's involvement in the circle movement, see Curtis Gayle, *Women's History in Postwar Japan*, (London: Routledge, 2010).

> *Thought* is naturally marginal. Yet people in a fix without such a hole, or people expelled from such a hole, or people with a splendid hole yet who do not find the act of simply protecting that hole a virtue – these are the people who designate the task of *Science of Thought*.[266]

The journal ceased publication, but it reappeared after three years in 1953 with a new title, *Me* (*Sprouts*). The re-launched journal expressed a new sense of solidarity with eclectic movements outside the mainstream Left, devoting less space to book reviews of Anglo-American academic texts and more to articles on anti-establishment educational experiments like the "life-writing movement." Rather than trying to empirically analyze the life and mental world of the worker, the group promoted the work of small associations that they saw as part of a nation-wide, grass-roots "circle movement." Circles provided a platform for workers to produce their own documentary accounts of daily life. Along with the shifting political climate during the fifties, methodological and financial difficulties alluded to in Tsurumi's letter nudged the group toward closer involvement with this burgeoning movement. As Tsurumi Kazuko put it, rather than studying the masses "from the outside" using a social scientific methodological apparatus, members should study groups they were truly committed to and could become equal members of.

Okamoto Tarô, one of the few early members of the Institute who was an artist rather than a scholar, argued during a criticism session held by the group that it was impossible to observe "ordinary people" like "guinea pigs," and time would be better spent on collaborative activities that would make intellectuals into better "humanists." Science of Thought and Tsurumi Kazuko's participation in circles was oriented toward subjective transformation that might answer Okamoto's criticism. Methodological concerns over distortions caused by the researcher's viewpoint "on the outside" thus overlapped with political and ethical concerns encountered by the group in the course of their research.

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[266] Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai, "Tsûshin," *Shisô no kagaku* , (April, 1950)

The "Philosophy of Ordinary People" project, which raised the problem of understanding the thought of the masses, was only the beginning of *Science of Thought*'s methodological odyssey to come to grips with the relationship between observers and observed. Its significance lay in the experiment in redefining the scope of philosophy in postwar Japan. Insistute members used their empirical work as an opportunity to further criticize traditional intellectuals who considered popular culture too vulgar to be worthy of serious analysis. The empirical results were of less lasting importance than the project's focus on breaking down the distinction between elite and popular culture by treating ordinary people as if they were philosophers. Although their approaches and politics changed during the fifties, *Science of Thought*'s interest in somehow exploding rigid social and intellectual distinctions in the interest of strengthening a culture of democracy remained consistent throughout.

Chapter 4: Long-term Revolution
Life-Writing, Circles, and the People's Republic of China

> The people have been gradually conquered by the bourgeois class, penetrated by their thoughts and now want only to resemble them. If you long for a people's art, begin by creating a people!
>   - Romain Rolland, *Le Théâtre du people*, 1903

> Friends around the country who read this book,

> If becoming ever closer, we could have an exchange about these matters through the mail, wouldn't our studies become more and more pleasant? I think it would be good if, not just the friends I mentioned, but all the children of Japan came to exchange letters.
>   - Muchaku Seikyô, *Yamabiko gakkô*, 1951

Near the start of the turbulent fifties, called the "season of politics" by contemporary observers, a grass-roots educational movement based in the rural countryside emerged into the media spotlight. In 1951 Muchaku Seikyô's *Yamabiko gakkô* (*Echo School*), an edited collection of compositions written by middle-school students in impoverished Yamagata prefecture, became a runaway bestseller. A year later, the film director Imai Tadashi, working outside the studio system after being blacklisted during the anti-Communist Red Purge of 1950, made a movie adaptation of the book featuring non-professional actors, which became one of the top films of 1952. In a media landscape marked by market segmentation among elite journals, popular magazines, and women's magazines appealing to varying socioeconomic audiences, *Yamabiko gakkô* was a true crossover hit: heated roundtable discussions appeared in intellectual journals like *Tenbô* and *Ningen*: Muchaku Seikyô's diary was published in the women's magazine *Fujin kôron*: and articles with photographs from the film filled pages in the tabloid magazine *Heibon*.[267] The book found supporters among

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[267] For a summary of the contemporary reception of *Yamabiko gakkô* among intellectuals and educators in the 1950s, see Sugawara Minoru, "*Yamabiko gakkô* no seiritsu to sono hankyô," *Okayama daigakuin kyôikugaku kenkyû-ka kenkyû shûroku* 138 (2008), 70-72

Leftist critics of the centrally administered Japanese educational system even as it received a prize from the heart of that system, the Ministry of Education.

Progressive intellectuals hailed the collection of essays on rural life as evidence of democracy-in-action in the countryside, a place so often associated with backwardness, feudal customs, and poverty. Yet the depiction of the countryside in the book did not directly challenge this widely shared image. The essays, writing assignments for a middle school social science class, focused on social problems encountered in everyday life and sought solutions to them through cooperation with the community of students in the class. They provided evidence for critics that "superstitious beliefs" and "feudal attitudes" were common in the countryside, and almost everyone remarked that the text was a testament to the continued existence of the brutal economic inequality between town and country. Rather, it was the fact that essays of this sort could be produced by middle-school students that seemed to expand the boundaries of the possible for critics who continued to search for ways of making Japan more democratic. The determination with which the middle-school student-authors uncovered social problems in their community through careful observation, and their faith and willingness to work toward solutions to these problems through cooperation with their classmates, prompted many reviewers to exclaim that reading the text completely overturned their preconceived ideas about the daunting barriers to democratic change in the countryside.

The book's influence went far beyond the subject of children's education. Tsurumi Shunsuke later called the book and the experiment in education that produced it the "prelude to the circle movement" of the fifties. Around the time of its publication in the early fifties, a nationwide movement to form small voluntary associations called circles (*saakuru*) within workplaces and communities throughout Japan was gathering steam. Some of these circles studied *Yamabiko gakkô* and adopted its pedagogical methods to collectively produce critical documentary accounts of

everyday life. Collections of some of these writings were published as mass-market paperbacks, but most were printed in small quantities as mimeographed copies that were distributed within the circle and then circulated in the workplace and community. They became material for discussion during "review sessions" held by the circle, in which members debated possible solutions to the everyday problems addressed in the writings. Here they often connected local problems to larger issues facing the working class and the Japanese nation as a whole. Observers of the movement believed that this cycle of observing, writing, and discussing might produce citizens capable of realizing the promise of postwar democracy. Many intellectuals were moved to participate in circles during the early fifties with the expectation that they had much to learn from them.

Although the scale of these circles was small, the revolutionary expectations projected upon them were not. Encouraged by the success of the Chinese revolution, Takeuchi Yoshimi, a China scholar and cultural critic who became head of the Institute of the Science of Thought in 1953, believed that circles and the educational movement that produced *Yamabiko gakkô* were a part of a "long-term revolution" that would eventually transform Japanese society from the bottom up. Embracing this optimism, intellectuals like Tsurumi Kazuko renounced their earlier commitment to producing sociological studies of villages and workplaces and began participating in, facilitating, and advocating on behalf of circles.

The promise of a socialist revolution led by the Japanese Communist Party was historically entwined with these revolutionary expectations. The word "circle" was first used in the 1930s by Kurahara Korehito, a leading theoretician of the proletarian art movement in the Japan Communist Party (JCP), who defined them as "support organs for spreading the political and organizational influence of the fundamental proletarian organizations (parties and unions) among workers and for

mobilizing them under the leadership of these organs."[268] In the interest of expanding its influence

and raising the class-consciousness of workers, the Party facilitated the formation of circles in

workplaces throughout Japan after the war.

The activities of the JCP in the fifties caused the circle movement eventually to become

associated with Leftist extremism and violence. In January of 1950 the Party split over the question

of whether or not to engage in Maoist-style armed struggle in the countryside in solidarity with the

recently established People's Republics in China and North Korea. Arguing that Japan was on the

verge of relapsing into militarism as part of the US-Japan Cold War alliance, supporters of armed

struggle gained control of the Party in 1951. In 1952 the Party officially labeled *Yamabiko gakkô* and

other publications that came out of the circle movement, "creative forms of the struggle for peace"

waged by the masses on the national "cultural front" (文化戦線) against American imperialism

during the Korean War.[269] To leaders of this faction, the "cultural activities" of the circles were a

part of a mass campaign that also included student volunteer "mountain village mobilization troops"

(sanson kôsakutai) armed with Molotov cocktails who engaged in guerrilla warfare in the countryside.

Their stated objective was to turn the Korean War into an international struggle against American

imperialism in Asia.[270] By 1955, when the Party changed course again and repudiated the supporters

of rural revolution as "extreme Left-wing adventurists," its image had already been tarnished.

Owing to the association of this period of intense circle activity with Leftist violence and radicalism,

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[268] Kurahara Korehito quoted in Andrew Avenell, *Making Japanese Citizens,* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 45

[269] Communist Party publication, "Tômen no bunka tôsô to bunka sensen tôitsu no tame no waga tô no ninmu,"quoted in Michiba Chikanobu, "Shimo-maruko bunka shûdan to sono jidai" *Gendai shisô*, (Dec. 2007), 40

[270] For more on the JCP's armed struggle, see Kenji Hasegawa, "Student Soldiers" *Stanford Journal of Asian Affairs* (Winter, 2006).

many participants later disavowed their participation in the movement, and the view spread that circles during this productive period were simply a means of transmitting JCP propaganda.[271]

Yet recent scholarship resists the reduction of the diversity of activities and texts that came out of this period to political directives and propaganda efforts – even if some within the JCP tried to interpret them as such. Besides *Yamabiko gakkô*, the larger circle movement included memoirs written by children, whether of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima (*Genbaku no ko*), growing up near American military bases (*Kichi no ko*), or returning from China to Japan after the war (*Kaette kita kodomotachi*). It was linked to efforts in popular history education movements *(Kokumin no rekishigaku*), popular science education for adults (*Kokumin no kagaku*), amateur painting (*Atarashii e no kai*) and drama movements, and collections of poems written by bank employees (*Ginkôin no shishû*) and workers in weapons factories (*Nanbu bungaku*). Circles devoted to documenting and discussing problems in everyday life included textile workers (Take no ko kai*, Seikatsu kiroku no kai) and housewives (Seikatsu o tsuzuru kai). [272] Intellectuals who participated in these different movements held different views of democratic subjectivity and of the Chinese Revolution. They included the authors Noma Hiroshi and Abe Kōbō, the historian Ishimoda Shô, the playwright Kinoshita Junji, and many others. This chaotic but dynamic activity evoked the initial flourishing of publishing after the war, when hundreds of new intellectual associations and journals sprang up in the name of democracy and science – although now the active participants included many more people without a secondary school education.

Rather than intending solely to wage a struggle against militarism and US imperialism, many participants saw the movement as an opportunity to realize the revolutionary promises of "postwar

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[271] Michiba Chikanobu, op. cit., 39

[272] For a partial list, see Michiba Chikanobu, op cit., 40.

democracy"— a term that meant different things to different people. [273] For some, democracy promised new opportunities for creative self-expression. For others, it promised an egalitarian society in which workers could take pride in their work and no longer be subservient to their bosses. Others thought democracy promised an opportunity for anyone to become an intellectual. Still others imagined it promised a sense of solidarity and mutual understanding among people from different classes and walks of life. What these diverse interpretations shared was the idea that realizing the promise of democracy was connected to a new kind of subjectivity, one that might be fashioned through active participation in a circle.

Finally, many believed democratic subjectivity also went hand-in-hand with achieving greater material prosperity. The circle movement reached its peak before the rapid economic growth of the late fifties and sixties, and problems connected with poverty loom large in *Yamabiko gakkô* and the essays and poems written in worker circles. The achievement of prosperity did not have to conflict with the realization of other promises associated with democracy. Personal qualities necessary for organizing strikes for higher wages might be cultivated in a circle. In addition, some of the more optimistic narratives produced by circle members suggested that, despite the time they spent on circle-related activities, participation in it made them into more productive workers who were able to balance the work-related demands necessary for personal advancement and the needs for solidarity with their fellows. The fact that these two demands came into conflict during the high-growth period was one reason for the decline of the circle in the late fifties and sixties. Some observers of this decline voiced the anxiety that growing economic prosperity might threaten democracy by turning people into passive consumers.

Members of the Institute for the Science of Thought, Tsurumi Kazuko in particular, participated in the debates surrounding *Yamabiko gakkô* and in the circle movement. Like many

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[273] Ibid, 41

intellectuals on the Left after 1949, Tsurumi's encounter was mediated by her fascination with "New China" as a model of grass-roots modernization. She participated in writing circles in Tokyo and the factory-town of Yokkaichi inspired by the example of *Yamabiko gakkô*. There she tried to discover a theory of circle-organizing that could be transposed to other areas of Japan and enable more effective intellectual interventions in the realm of mass culture. Her initial experience in Yokkaichi suggested to her that circles could transform its members into active subjects who effectively balanced the needs of the group with that of the individual. She believed that this grass-roots process of subjective transformation would realize the promise of postwar democracy by reconnecting intellectuals with the masses and empowering marginalized workers and women. Yet as the fifties wore on, the onset of economic high-growth and the weakening of the militant labor movement neutralized the oppositional stance of most circles, while many became absorbed in company culture as apolitical leisure groups. The rise and fall of circle radicalism revealed anxieties about the advent of white-collar hegemony with the era of high economic growth.

Yamabiko gakkô and the Fifties

Yamabiko gakkô's success renewed interest in the life-writing movement (生活綴方運動) of the 1920s and 1930s, an educational movement that eschewed textbooks and rote memorization in favor of encouraging students to write detailed accounts of their daily life. Although it began as an innovative technique for teaching writing skills, progressive postwar educators like Muchaku Seikyô transposed this pedagogy to social studies class. He encouraged students to investigate and write about life in their local community. He emphasized describing things "as they were" in unadorned language (ari no mama ni). Their essays and poems were sprinkled with phrases and words from the local Yamagata dialect, marked by annotations in "standard Japanese," an unusual expression of regional authenticity.

In their essays, the children uncovered structural poverty and pervasive debt in their community, problems that appeared insurmountable by the traditional values of "hard work" and "endurance." In the most praised and commented-upon essay in the collection, Eguchi Kôichi wrote about becoming an orphan forced to take responsibility for his small tobacco farming household after the death of his widowed mother. He implied that her deteriorating physical condition was related to worries about providing for her poor family. She continued to voice her concerns to Kôichi on her deathbed:

> After being admitted to the clinic, even as she seemed like she might die right now, she asked things like "Did you gather firewood?" "Did you pickle the radishes?" "Did you wash the greens?" in a fever. All the while thinking, "This is it for my mom," I couldn't do anything to comfort her, and, with thoughts of housework filling my head, I went home without hardly talking to her at all.[274]

After she died, he remembered his mother as a tireless worker who – despite her aspiration to self-reliance – accumulated mountains of debt. After recounting his expenses and revenues in detail, Kôichi wrote that he realized it was all but impossible to pay back the debts the household had accumulated, even if he stopped attending school entirely.

He recounted that one day in December his teacher, Muchaku, visited him at home and tersely told him to draw up a schedule that listed the farm work he had to do and the time it took to complete each task. This way he would be able to tell how many times he would need to miss class each month. Muchaku also told him to come by the school to see his classmates. He had not attended class for a month and a half, and they were worried about him after the death of his mother. The teacher said that Kôichi ought to drop by to "thank them for their concern."[275]

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[274] Eguchi Kôichi, "Haha no shi to sono go" *Yamabiko gakkô*, edited by Muchaku Seikyô, (Tokyo: Seidôsha, 1951), 4

[275] Ibid, 16

Kôichi drew up a work schedule and realized he would only be able to attend school for one or two days that month. He brought the schedule with him to school the next day. Without explaining anything to Kôichi, the teacher took the schedule and gave it to three of his classmates, saying, "Look at this." The intentions of Muchaku and the class soon became clear. His classmates would come together to help Kôichi with his daily tasks so that he could continue to attend middle school. As Kôichi's eyes filled up with tears of joy, one of the students added that they would draw up a plan so they would know how many students were necessary for each task.[276]

Though they described hardships of village life in detail, in the end Muchaku, Kôichi, and the other children authors of *Yamabiko gakkô* were hopeful that, together, they could surmount their problems through mutual cooperation, planning, and study.   In a foreword to the book, the children's author Tsubota Jôji contrasted this hopefulness with another popular collection of writings by university students, *Listen to the Voices of the Sea*, published in 1949 by an association at the University of Tokyo (Wadatsumikai), which became central to the peace movement in 1950.[277] Theirs was a collection of letters, diary entries, and poems, many addressed to family members, written by students who died during the war when their studies were interrupted by military service. The children of *Yamabiko gakkô*, for whom the possibility of attending college was remote, did not just differ from these students socioeconomically. Tsubota acknowledged that while both books were tearjerkers, *Listen to the Voices of the Sea* came from the "depths of Japan's winter" while the children of *Yamabiko gakkô*, despite the frigid climate in Yamagata, represented the coming spring.[278] This was crystallized in an optimistic slogan he attributed to Muchaku:

[276] Ibid, 17

[277] On the Wadatsumikai, see Franziska Seraphim, *War Memory and Social Politics in Japan*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), ch. 5

[278] Tsubota Jôji, "Suisen no kotoba," in *Yamabiko gakkô*, edited by Muchaku Seikyô, (Tokyo: Seidôsha, 1951), 1

Let's go, always pooling our strength together
Let's go, never slinking in the shadows
Let's act, making good things better
Let's become people who love work
Let's become people who ponder "why?" no matter what
Let's always search for a better way of doing things[279]

The children of *Yamabiko gakkô* supported each other, remained optimistic about change and progress, and yet they were realistic about the obstacles that stood in their way. One reason this depiction touched a nerve among intellectuals was that it allowed them to imagine an inversion of the ever-problematic relationship between enlightener and enlightened in postwar Japan. The book emerged from a public school, considered the grounds for postwar enlightenment and the formation of democratic subjectivity during the US Occupation. Yet in this case adolescent students were empowered to become teachers, educating adult readers about how poverty affected their daily lives and inspiring them with their determination against seemingly hopeless odds to overcome it.

Tsurumi Shunsuke believed that the essence of the life-writing pedagogy employed by Muchaku lay in its commitment to equality, not merely as an end to be sought after, but as a quality that characterized the day-to-day teaching process itself. Surveying the influence of the movement over the course of the fifties, he wrote:

> I think the principle of egalitarianism-as-teaching-method actually first appeared in such a striking form in Muchaku Seikyô's own work. Muchaku Seikyô's policy is, even in the middle of speaking, to admit, "Oh, I made a mistake," ("先生が間違った") and apologize to students. This is a highly original policy that was nearly inconceivable before the war. By apologizing, the teacher returns to a standpoint of equality. Humans are equal in their original state. But people say things like, we have to be educated, or we have to engage in politics, and then they create an unequal framework in order to achieve some provisional objective. Yet at the same time, that provisional inequality ought to be quickly broken down and eliminated once the work is over and the immediate objective is achieved. This is Muchaku Seikyô's method, and by means of it people have gradually uncovered a way of eliminating dictatorial consciousness (指導者意識). This discovery has not only been

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[279] Ibid, 2

influential for education, it has also influenced all sorts of domains of thought more generally, and you could say that the philosophy of the circle movement developed over the past several years had its origins here.[280]

Tsurumi summed up the core question that the life-writing educators grappled with, How do you prevent 'dictatorial consciousness' from emerging while still running a small group efficiently?" In this form of teaching, Tsurumi found an answer to this question, believed to be of great importance to intellectuals and activists committed to democratic egalitarianism.

Interest in developing an egalitarian pedagogy was connected with a shift in the attitude of intellectuals from the late forties to the early fifties. The view of democracy that Left-leaning intellectuals held when the war ended and the US Occupation commenced began to seem naïve. Many intellectuals associated with early postwar progressive associations had criticized Nishida Kitarô, whose philosophy appeared symptomatic of the decadent prewar culture of *kyôyô* or *bildung*. For the Institute for the Science of Thought, this critique called for a change in both the form of philosophy, from jargon-filled to easy-to-understand, and its content, from "aloof cosmopolitanism" and "abstract" theorizing to something more related to everyday life. At the same time, groups like Science of Thought, who contrasted Nishida's jargon with what they perceived as Anglo-American models of philosophical clarity and practicality, were open to the accusation that they were trying to impose a foreign (American) philosophical framework on the masses. This became a more pressing issue as anti-American nationalism was embraced by much of the Left around the time of the Korean War.[281]

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[280] Kuno Osamu, Tsurumi Shunsuke, Fujita Shôzô, *Sengo nihon no shisô*, (Tokyo: Chûô kôronsha, 1959), 116

[281] On the growth of anti-American sentiment, particularly on the Left and in the labor movement, in Japan during the Korean War, see Mari Yamamoto, *Grassroots Pacifism in Post-War Japan,* (London: Routledge, 2004), chapter 2.

The Institute responded to growing criticism of the "postwar enlightenment" by embracing the life-writing movement and circles that tried to adapt its pedagogical and investigative methods for adults. Whereas enthusiasm for the publication of Nishida's Collected works in 1947 exposed anxiety about the lingering gap between high-brow intellectual and popular culture, the "*Yamabiko gakkô* boom" of the early 1950's seemed to point toward a new way of overcoming that gap – by engaging with the masses in a way that used more egalitarian methods to achieve an egalitarian result.

In 1953, when the Institute of the Science of Thought re-launched its journal, it focused on the circles where documentary and artistic productions based upon everyday experience were produced. Members of the Institute did not only observe the circles; they adopted their tactics in an attempt to expand participation in the group, connect to readers, and enlist volunteers in research. They began opening branch offices (支部) and reading groups throughout Japan hosting voluntary "circles" devoted to specific topics of collaborative research published in the journal. These included groups devoted to semiotics and analytic philosophy (記号の会), the philosophy of ordinary people (ひとびとの哲学の会), research on personal advice (身の上相談研究会), and tenkô (ideological conversion). There local branches existed in the large cities of Kyoto, Osaka, and Nagoya as well as in provincial cities and towns like Okazaki, Marugame, and Karuizawa. The network eventually stretched from Kagoshima at the southern tip of Kyushu to Kushiro in the north of Hokkaidô.[282]

Some early reviews of *Yamabiko gakkô* skeptically raised the question of the students' subjective involvement – to what degree was the students' writing an authentic product of their own initiative and observations as opposed to their teacher Muchaku Seikyô's guidance and instruction?

[282] A partial list of regional Science of Thought circles is provided in Michiba Chikanobu, "*Shisô no kagaku sôsakuin* kara mieru sâkuru no ugoki," in *Yomu hito, kaku hito, henshû-suru hito*, Kinen shinpojiumu o kiroku suru kai ed, (Tokyo: Shisô no kagakusha, 2010), 139

In a commentary on the text, Kokubun Ichitarô, a leader of the Life Writing Movement, defended

him and other educators against the suspicion that they were secretly "brainwashing" (洗脳)

students. Similar criticism was directed at participation in adult worker circles, many of which were

organized by militant labor unions. In part, suspicion of brainwashing reflected the climate of

paranoia that existed during a time when conspiracies attributed to the Japanese Communist Party

and the CIA attracted popular attention in Japan.[283] Much as participants in the 1930s "cultural

front" were targeted after World War II in the US, workplace circles in Japan were seen as sites of

pro-Communist indoctrination.[284]

As time went on, the debate over brainwashing receded, and in its place there emerged the

contentious issue of whether life-writing was susceptible to being co-opted by a "post-ideological"

politics of high-economic growth. Tsurumi's question about efficiently running a small group in a

non-dictatorial fashion was also of interest to corporate managers. Aside from the *Yamabiko gakkô*

craze, the 1950s saw a series of clashes between management and pro-socialist trade unions.

Corporate executives tried to coax workers into company unions or defanged trade unions that

cooperated with management in order to raise productivity in return for incremental wage increases

and improved working conditions, a strategy that bore fruit in the 1960s.[285]

Writing with the benefit of hindsight, it appeared that life-writing's emphasis on eliminating

structural poverty might have been susceptible to co-optation by the practitioners of an anti-politics

[283] Government officials suspected three major criminal incidents involving railroads in 1949 (the Mitaka, Shimoyama, and Matsukawa Incidents) of being Communist conspiracies. Matsumoto Seichô began investigating conspiracies he attributed to the US Occupation after the Teigin Bank robbery and cyanide-poisoning incident in 1948. His articles were collected and published in Matsumoto Seichô, *Nihon no kuroi kiri*, (Tokyo: Bungei Shunjû Shinsha, 1960).

[284] On the fate and afterlife of the American cultural front, see Michael Denning, *The Cultural Front,* (New York: Verso, 1997)

[285] This was one of the causes of what Andrew Gordon refers to as the "triumph of management culture." See Andrew Gordon, "Contests for the Workplace," in *Postwar Japan as History*, edited by Andrew Gordon, (Berkeley: University of Califronia Press, 1993), 392-3

of growth. The author and literary critic Usui Yoshimi exclaimed that upon reading *Yamabiko gakkô*

he was most moved by the students' ability to "uncover the fundamental problem of present Japan

as their own problem" and their determination to "continue their studies in the interest of solving

that problem." The problem Usui was referring to was structural poverty: "This is poverty not from

laziness or failure, but poverty that means one cannot eat no matter how much one works." [286] The

students uncovered the intractability of this problem and the importance of changing daily habits in

the community, not through reading Marx, Dewey, or *Science of Thought* but through their own

detailed observations of daily life in a community imagined to be worlds away from intellectual

debates in metropolitan Tokyo. Although there were antiwar – and some critics argued, pro-

communist – messages in *Yamabiko gakkô*, in comparison with the problem of eliminating poverty in

the countryside, overtly political debates concerning the remilitarization of Japan or its alignment

during the Cold War could seem like secondary issues.

Was *Yamabiko gakkô* thus a repudiation of "abstract" debates that had concerned the

postwar Left, or were geopolitical issues and structural inequality interrelated? In 1953, Shimizu

Ikutarô, one of the major intellectual voices of the opposition to the San Francisco Treaty, used

Yamabiko gakkô's methods to make the connection between Japan's "semi-colonial" situation and

economic hardship explicit, editing a collection of observational essays by school children living in

the vicinity of American military bases in Japan.[287] Yet drawing attention to the connection between

geopolitics and poverty could backfire for intellectuals who tried to appeal to the average worker,

since despite local variation economic growth accelerated as a result of the increased exports of

armaments to the US during the Korean War.[288]

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[286] Usui Yoshimi, "Yamabiko gakkô no mondaiten," *Kyôiku*, (Nov, 1951)

[287] Shimizu Ikutarô, Miyahara Seiichi, and Ueda Shôzaburô, *Kichi no ko*, (Tokyo:Kôbunsha, 1953)

[288] Mari Yamamoto notes this dilemma in *Grassroots Pacifism in Postwar Japan*, (London: Routledge, 2004), 45

Yamabiko gakkô intersected with long-running debates about mass culture that took on added urgency in the 1950s, a decade when political crises unfolded alongside the rapid expansion of the entertainment industry and mass journalism. Sociologist Katô Hidetoshi wrote that the fifties were not only the "season of politics" but also the "season of the tabloid." The choice of weekly tabloids multiplied along with their skyrocketing circulation.[289] Repetition of content within this crowded marketplace ushered an unfamiliar word into the general lexicon, "boom," (ブーム) a term that could connote a fad or fashion (sometimes artificially concocted) that suddenly "exploded" onto the pages of multiple tabloids.[290] The "*Yamabiko gakkô* boom" was one of the first of these phenomena given this name, occurring after the "plastic surgery boom" in 1951 and before the "pachinko boom" in 1953.[291]

Yet in his early review, Usui Yoshimi tried to draw a sharp distinction between what he considered a mass media culture of fads and distraction and the grass-roots writing of *Yamabiko gakkô*. He wrote that the students in Yamagata had uncovered the problem of structural poverty despite the fact that, "newspapers, radio, movies, novels, and sports" had been "mobilized to turn the eyes of Japan's countrymen away from this present reality."[292] A similar distinction pervaded early commentary on the circle movement in workplaces. Local union circles provided an opportunity for workers to engage in "cultural activities" (文化活動); including choir groups, plays, and book and film clubs. Intellectuals heatedly debated whether or not these groups constituted an

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[289] Kato Hidetoshi, "Shûkanshi bûmu," *Sankei shinbun*, (Dec. 1st, 1970)

[290] According to the *Modan jiten*, a dictionary of loanwords from 1930, the word was occasionally used before the war to refer to a sudden increase in demand or improvement in the economy, as in the English phrase "boom and bust cycle." The common journalistic connotation of "fad" is however a distinctly postwar phenomenon. See the entry for the word in Shôgakkan Kokugo Jiten Henshûbu ed., *Nihon kokugo daijiten*, (Tokyo: Shôgakkan, 2006).

[291] A list of postwar booms appears in Tsurumi Shunsuke, *Atarashii kaikoku*, (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 2008), 346-347

[292] Usui, op. cit.

autonomous refuge from the narcotizing influence of popular culture. Supporters lauded the circles'
amateurism and political authenticity, while critics argued that the participants were simply
motivated by a desire to someday become professional producers of popular culture, thereby
escaping from the monotony of a life of labor.

Tsurumi Shunsuke, writing from the retrospective vantage point of Japan's economically
ascendant "Golden Sixties," argued that the popularity of *Yamabiko gakkô* in 1951 and 1952 signaled
that white-collar workers, who expressed some solidarity with radical working class movements
during the Occupation, had already given up on the idea of revolution. The *Yamabiko gakkô* boom
in 1951 and the massive defeat of the Japanese Communist Party in the 1952 national election
marked the moment when the hopes of the public, "switched over from a future revolutionary
movement to the dream of holding a position as a minor executive in a small company until
retirement."[293]

Tsurumi's retrospective linear account of the path from *Yamabiko gakkô* to white-collar
hegemony obscured the connections between interest in the book and the revolutionary imagination
that existed during the fifties.[294] Tsurumi tended to stress the indigenous origins of the life-writing
movement, and both it and the circle movement were often associated with ethnic nationalism and
autonomy from foreign models. Yet this interpretation of the life-writing and circle movements as
indigenous was mediated by the concurrent perception that a successful indigenous revolution was
underway in the newly established People's Republic of China. A sign of this international context
was visible on the cover of an early edition of *Yamabiko gakkô*, illustrated by Mita Genjirô. Mita
helped found the "New Painting Association" (新しい画の会) in 1951, an artistic counterpart to

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[293] In 1952, the JCP lost all 35 of its seats in the Diet after a series of scandals. Tsurumi, op. cit., 366
[294] On the fifties as a forgotten moment of popular revolutionary consciousness, see the articles in
the Dec. 2007 special issue of *Gendai shisô* on the circle movement.

the life-writing educational movement, and in 1954 he became the chairman of the politically radical Japanese Art Association. In order to promote "democratization from the bottom-up" during the fifties this association began promoting artwork by non-professional workers and children in their annual exhibition, the Nippon Independent. Woodcut prints from revolutionary China were an important influence on both amateur and professional artists like Mita during this period, an influence visible on the cover he designed for *Yamabiko gakkô*.[295]

Figure 4.1, Wang Qi, *Listening to a Lecture*, 1943

Figure 4.2, Mita Genjirô, *Yamabiko gakkô* (expanded edition), 1951

The influence of China during this period was subterranean in comparison with the influence of the United States in the preceding one (1945-1949). It was not feasible to substitute China for the United States as a model to be emulated. Emphasizing the *indigenous spontaneity* of the Chinese revolution connoted a break from ready-made models of social and political development.

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[295] For more on amateur printmaking in the fifties see Justin Jesty, "Hanga to hanga undo," *Gendai shisô*, (Dec. 2007).

This was visible for example in Tsurumi Kazuko and Tsurumi Shunsuke's critique of "imported thought" (輸入思想) and "heterological" thinking that posited a floating intellectual vantage point from which different models of development (European, American, and Soviet) could be compared and applied to Japan. The Chinese influence also appeared in the rhetoric of "self reconstruction" (jiko kaizô) and "thought reform" (shisô kaizô) employed by Tsurumi and other participants in the life-writing and circle movements. In the US, Chinese thought reform was discussed in the context of a sensationalist and Orientalist discourse on coercive "brainwashing" in the 1950s.[296] Tsurumi, Takeuchi, and Minami tended to view thought reform campaigns in a more positive light, detecting in them a concern with effecting change from the bottom-up which dovetailed with the life-writing and circle movements in Japan.

Minami Hiroshi in Beijing

Defeat in World War II transformed Japan's relationship with the rest of the world. It brought about the dismantling of a continental empire and tied the nation's fortune to the United States via military occupation and alliance. 1945 signaled a shift away from Asia and toward the United States. The attention, both negative and positive, lavished upon the US-Japan relationship may appear to be symptomatic of a kind of collective forgetting of Asia and the legacy of Japanese imperialism. A binary obsession with the United States, or in leftist contexts the Soviet Union, tended to replace Japan's triangular relationship with Asia and the West. The early *Science of Thought* was no exception to this rule, and its articles on the United States far outweighed those concerning Japan's relationship to its former colonies in Asia. Yet in the early 1950s, after the establishment of the PRC, China seemed poised to displace the United States as a site of hope for democracy, modernity, and the peaceful overcoming of tradition. Enthusiasm about worker circles and grass-

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[296] Aminda Smith, *Reeducating the People*, (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 2006), 15-16

roots democracy during this period was inseparable from imagining the ongoing social revolution in China and its "spirit of self-criticism."

These developments partly coincided with the re-launch of the Institute for the Science of Thought's journal under a different title and publisher. In 1950 the journal *Science of Thought* went on hiatus because of financial difficulties. In the early fifties, the Institute focused on book projects and publishing studies of the "Philosophy of Ordinary People" in the large-circulation general magazine *Chûô kôron*. In 1953, the group found a publisher, Kenminsha, willing to publish the journal under a different, less academic-sounding title *Me* (or *Sprouts*). In line with its new "grass-roots" title, the Institute renewed its efforts to forge connections with non-academic groups, while its former emphasis on translating and reviewing Anglo-American social scientific and pragmatist writings faded into the background.

As with the journal's earlier publisher Senkusha, descended from Tsurumi Yûsuke's wartime research organ The Pacific Association, Kenminsha's history was intertwined with Japan's transition from wartime to postwar regime. Navy Minister Yonai Mitsumasa ordered its creation in 1945 as an organization to assist repatriated veterans and government officials from former colonies and occupied territories after fighting ceased. US Occupation officials severed the organization's links with the now defunct Imperial Navy, and it was reorganized as a private corporation that continued to provide financial assistance and employment to returnees. The head of the company, former naval accounting officer Takahashi Hajime, became a member of the peace and anti-nuclear movements after the war, and in 1952, amidst worries that Japan was heading toward rearmament with the formation of a national security force, he published the pacifist essay *How to Think About the Militarization Problem* through Kenminsha. In this way, Takahashi came into contact with Tsurumi Shunsuke and Tsurumi Kazuko, who convinced him to publish a journal for the Institute of the

Science of Thought after showing him a few issues of the discontinued Senkusha version.[297] The first issue in 1953 included an article on applying the "life-writing" technique of *Yamabiko gakkô* to adult circle associations, and a report from China by the social psychologist Minami Hiroshi, who had returned from a controversial trip to Beijing.

Originating from the naval bureaucracy, the publisher Kenminsha (健民社) was named after a slogan propagated by Wang Jingwei, head of the Japanese-supported collaborationist government in wartime China: "Build up the people (kenmin, or jianmin in Chinese), build up the nation, and build up Asia."[298] The publisher's association with China's "Benedict Arnold" might have seemed ironic given the contents of the first issue of *Me*, which featured on its inside cover a photo of Science of Thought member and US-educated social psychologist Minami Hiroshi delivering remarks at the 1952 Beijing Peace Conference in the People's Republic of China, a photo that signaled the new interest in developments underway in Asia.

Minami's visit occurred barely a year after the PRC had been excluded from the San Francisco Peace Treaty which officially ended the US Occupation. His visa-less visit to China after attending the UNESCO-sponsored International Conference of Psychology in Paris was controversial, prompting discussions in the Diet over the legality of Minami's actions and a flurry of newspaper articles on his homecoming at Haneda Airport in Tokyo, where he was greeted by "bouquets, red flags, and anti-war banners wielded by 150 students and other parties interested in China."[299]

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[297] Takahashi Hajime quoted in Katô Hidetoshi, et al., "Shisô no kagaku no nijû-nen," in *Yomu hito, kaku hito, henshû-suru hito*, Kinen shinpojiumu o kiroku suru kai ed, (Tokyo: Shisô no kagakusha, 2010), 155-156

[298] Ibid., 155

[299] For media coverage, see for example "'Heiwa o mamoru tame shusseki,' Minami kyôju Pekin

1952年10月2日北京平和会議開会式当日の日本代表団の挨拶
（壇上にて挨拶するは日本代表 南　博 氏）

Figure 4.3, Minami Hiroshi at the Beijing Peace Conference, published in *Me*, Jan. 1953

The article accompanying the photo, titled simply "Beijing," was the transcription of a speech Minami had given at the Institute on his experience in China. The speech suggested that the idealistic hopes directed toward America before McCarthyism and the 1950 Red Purge in Japan might find a congenial home in China. After visiting engineering departments at Qinghua University, Minami was impressed by the "projects to transform nature," that "fused learning with production" in a way that was reminiscent of the New Deal's TVA project, executed on an even larger national, rather than regional, scale.[300]

For Science of Thought, TVA was a symbol of America's success at combining democracy with egalitarian economics, owing in part to the exposure of books such as David Lillienthal's *TVA: Democracy on the March* in journals like *Science of Thought*.[301] Minami's comparison was symptomatic of

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kaigi no inshô kataru," *Asahi Shimbun,* (Oct. 19, 1952), 7. A discussion of Minami in the Diet appears in Diet record. See the discussion with Hoashi Kei, [007/010] 16, Shû-gaimu-iinkai, no. 17, (July 21, 1953).

[300] Ibid., 5

[301] Science of Thought founder Tsuru Shigeto was one of the main proponents of TVA in early postwar Japan. See for example Tsuru Shigeto, "TVA to sono shidôsha," *Sekai,* (Jul. 1947). Lilienthal translator Kawashima Yoshirô also contributed an article to the journal *Science of Thought* in 1948 that called TVA "an experiment for a utopian society." Kawashima Yoshirô, "Risô shakai no

a tendency among progressives in the early fifties to substitute America for China as the fount of

their hope for a modern, democratic future. This shift was encouraged by former American

supporters of the New Deal like Edgar Snow, whose *Red Star Over China* became one of the primary

sources of information on China during a period when, with the exception of exceptional visitors

like Minami, travel to the country was restricted.[302] Whether or not they supported Communism,

Americans like Pearl Buck, Agnes Smedley, and Jack Belden encouraged enthusiasm for homegrown

"coolie democracy" in China, phenomena which were imagined to transcend the political aims of

the intellectuals associated with the Communist party leadership.[303] The writings of Mao, the latest

example of "imported thought" (輸入思想) to join the ranks of Marx and Dewey, were only

interesting insofar as they revealed details of what appeared to be a trial-and-error, indigenous

attempt at village revolution.[304]

Minami was in a unique position to make the comparison between Mao's China and

Roosevelt's America since he was one of the few Japanese intellectuals with experience in both

countries. After graduating from the Kyoto University department of philosophy, he entered

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jikken," *Shisô no kagaku* (Mar. 1948).

[302] *Red Star Over China* was originally published in English in 1937 and translated into Japanese in 1952, but Snow's writings had been introduced to Japanese audiences earlier. Tsurumi Kazuko wrote an article about his view of China in 1948: Tsurumi Kazuko, "Edogaa sunô no chûgokuron," in *Ajia no shin chûgoku-kan*, edited by Hirano Yoshitarô, (Tokyo: Chôryûsha, 1948). For more on Snow's reception and restricted sources of first-hand information about the PRC in postwar Japan, see Baba Kimihiko, *Sengo nihonjin no chûgokuzô*, (Tokyo: Shinyôsha, 2010)

[303] See Richard So, "Coolie Democracy: US-China Political and Literary Exchange, 1925-1955," (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2010)

[304] This is not to argue that Mao was not widely read and discussed at the time. A faction of the Japanese Communist Party made the disastrous attempt to directly apply Mao's theory of revolution to the countryside, yet I would argue that the more influential interpretation, the one that broadly appealed to thinkers outside this faction, was that Mao's (and Dewey's) focus on an indigenous path to modernization represented the folly of building an ideal modern society on the basis of an already-given model (whether Chinese, American, or European). For more on the reception of Mao, see Victor Koschmann, *Revolution and Subjectivity*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 224-229

graduate school in psychology at Cornell University in 1940, a decision that he later recalled was motivated by a desire to bridge the gap between philosophy and the empirical sciences. Unlike many of his associates at Science of Thought, he refused to return to Japan when war broke out in 1941, choosing instead to finish his requirement for the Ph. D. in 1943. As an "enemy alien" he was barred from leaving the US until 1947. During that time, he coauthored a technical paper with his advisor Karl Dallenbach, "The Effect of Activity upon Learning and Retention in the Cockroach." When he was able to return to Japan in 1947, he quickly became an authority on American social scientific methods and on American society more generally.

Minami was acutely conscious of polarized views of the People's Republic. In the last section of the article subtitled – in a possible reference to the title of the journal – "Sprouts of the East," he asserted that he was not being asked to conduct any propaganda work on behalf of China.

> Among the things I have said, one thing that I think bears repeated emphasis is that, when I saw various things in China, the attitude of the people there was not something like, "return to Japan and praise China," or "just look at the good points and do propaganda for China," or, "just show them the good things, but the inconvenient things will put us in a fix," but rather to show anything. Then they went further and requested criticism. They don't say that everything the Chinese government is doing is good or correct. Their revolution is in its third year; until 49 they were fighting a civil war. Since construction has just begun, there must be places where it is inadequate, mistaken, or has gone too far, so they want foreign friends to take a look at these bad points and point them out.[305]

Minami then cited an example of visiting a nursery "with extremely good equipment," but expressing his concern that inadequate records were being kept of the results of this "new collective education" of children. Without empirical records it would not be possible to compare this child-rearing method with other methods or "create a system that could be applied elsewhere." When he

[305] Minami, op. cit., 12

told officials about this, they "listened happily and demanded I write down my observations."[306]

Minami concluded that,

> Rather than something like great architecture, I felt that *the spirit of self-criticism* that seeks evaluation from elsewhere was thoroughgoing, and because of that feeling, I think that China's future has great prospects.[307]

If "workmanlike-ism" (ワリキリ主義), a practical attitude that ignored factional differences in the interest of cooperation and empirical observation, was a central component of Science of Thought's early praise of America, then a thoroughgoing "spirit of self-criticism" summed up the appeal of China. These two qualities were far from mutually exclusive, but the emphasis differed. The can-do quality ascribed to America was juxtaposed to what was seen as the narcissism of petty differences that divided Japanese scholars from one another and from the public during the prewar heyday of self-cultivation (*kyōyō*). The appeal of the second was in part a response to what was perceived on the Left as the haughtiness of Cold War America as "leader of the free world" and also, by association, Japanese intellectuals who attempted to "enlighten" the public about democracy and freedom since the beginning of the Occupation. It was in part a return to subjective self-reflection prompted by criticism that intellectuals had treated the masses as objects of exhortation or social scientific analysis, thus ignoring the continued existence of cultural barriers that inhibited attempts to universalize intellectual production among people of different social backgrounds.[308]

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[306] Ibid.

[307] Ibid, emphasis added.

[308] In this interpretation of the shift, I drew upon Pierre Bourdieu's formulation of the implicit, contentious aim of intellectuals since the Dreyfus Affair to universalize access to their privileged perspective on the social order. See Pierre Bourdieu, "Fourth Lecture. Universal Corporatism: The Role of Intellectuals in the Modern World" *Poetics Today*, (Winter, 1991), 655-669.

Tsurumi Kazuko in Nakatsugawa

The same year of Minami's visit, *Science of Thought* founder Tsurumi Kazuko engaged in her own self-criticism in connection with her new involvement in the life-writing and circle movements. In a speech delievered in the town of Nakatsuagawa in rural Gifu Prefecture, she criticized her earlier social scientific work and committed herself to more direct forms of engagement with workers and non-intellectuals.

This marked another change of course in a varied intellectual career. At the end of the thirties, Tsurumi Kazuko accompanied her brother Shunsuke to the United States. While he studied with pragmatists and logical empiricists at Harvard, she studied philosophy at Vassar College and then Columbia University, writing a B.A. thesis critical of John Dewey under the supervision of the Marxian humanist Vernon Venable.[309] After returning to Japan with her brother and future *Science of Thought* colleagues Tsuru Shigeto and Takeda Kiyoko in 1941, she worked for her father's wartime research organ the Pacific Association, for which she contributed articles to the edited volume *Research on the American National Character* that discussed American weaknesses, including "the lack of rational judgment" and naive "faith in the homogeneity of the masses," which Tsurumi derived from the critical writings of John Dewey.[310] During this time, Tsurumi made contacts with many of the thinkers who would collaborate in founding *Science of Thought* after the war, including the political historian Maruyama Masao and the physicist Taketani Mitsuo.

After founding *Science of Thought,* she wrote reviews for the journal and participated in the group's effort to study the "Philosophy of Ordinary People," but her brother Tsurumi Shunsuke claimed that she directed most of her energy to the Association of Democratic Scientists, a popular

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[309] One of Tsurumi's first published works after World War Two ended was a review of Vernon Venable, *Human Nature: The Marxian View*, (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1945).

[310] See Tsurumi Kazuko, "Dyuî no amerika kokuminsei hihan no issokumen," In *Amerika kokuinsei no kenkyû*, edited by Tsurumi Yûsuke, (Tokyo: Taiheiyô kyôkai, 1944),

front organization with closer links to the Communist Party and the militant labor movement than *Science of Thought* or the Institute. By the early fifties, she had become frustrated by her inability to "connect with the labor movement."[311]

After coming in contact with *Yamabiko gakkô* and the Life-writing Movement, she repudiated her earlier sociological approach to studying the lives of ordinary people. For Tsurumi, the book provided an ideal model for the way progressive intellectuals ought to interact with and learn from the groups they hoped to influence during the period of transition to democracy. Her association with the Life-writing Movement began in August of 1952, when Tsurumi delivered a speech at the first National Composition Education Conference (作文教育全国会議) in rural Nakatsugawa, Gifu-prefecture. Her impressions were published in an essay "Learning from Life-Writing Education" in the literary magazine *Tosho* in October of that same year.[312] The essay opened on a note of harsh self-criticism, with Tsurumi describing the present as "unbearable" due to feeling that, "everything I have done, thought, and wrote up until now sickens me, and I have been terribly mistaken somewhere fundamental..."[313] She explained her mistake with reference to what her brother Tsurumi Shunsuke called the "heterological" way of thinking among Japanese intellectuals, which she explained as follows:

> When scholars emphasize that "the Japanese people" need to be "enlightened," "modernized," or "democratized", they are not conscious of themselves as members of "the Japanese people." He thus pointed out that the fact they have been engaged in a discussion in which they themselves are out of the bounds of "enlightenment," "modernization," and "democratization," is the fundamental weakness of Japanese thought since the Meiji period.

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[311] Tsurumi Kazuko, "Tsurumi Kazuko joshi, " *Fujin kôron* (date missing)

[312] Wada Yû, "1950-nendai ni okeru Tsurumi Kazuko no seikatsu kiroku-ron," *Keiô gijuku daigaku daigakuin shakaigaku kenkyûka kiyô* no. 56 (2003), 137-160

[313] Tsurumi Kazuko, "Seikatsu kiroku ni manabu," *Tsurumi Kazuko mandara*, vol. 2, (Tokyo: Fujiwara shobo, 1998), 322

In other words, when Japanese scholars talk about "Japan" or the "Japanese" it as if they were speaking of a *group that did not include them.*[314]

She explained that intellectuals derived this heterological habit from a pattern in Japan's modern history, whereby "bureaucrats stood apart from the people, and in a place substantially above them, and commanded Japan's 'industrialization.'"

Tsurumi wrote that the first time she felt this general observation about Japanese intellectuals applied to her own work was after reading Muchaku Seikyô's *Yamabiko gakkô* and Kokubun Ichitarô's account of the life-writing movement, *Atarashii tsuzurikata kyôshitsu* (*A New Writing Classroom*). She claimed to have been surprised to learn that there existed a movement spreading "from the grass-roots" that adopted a way of thinking that was radically different from the heterological, "bureaucratic-style" of the past.

This was in part a repudiation of Tsurumi's own work in connection with the Institute for the Science of Thought's project to study the "Philosophy of Ordinary People." Two years before, she accompanied the legal sociologist Kawashima Takeyoshi during his attitude survey of villagers in Tsurugawa. This kind of field-survey research compared now unfavorably with the work of life-writing educators. She wrote:

> The results of 'objective' 'field surveys' undertaken by third-party scholars are either black or white, whereas the life-writing education that treats daily life in the same rural villages or big cities is light in the midst of darkness. This is not to deny the value of the scholar's 'field-surveys'… Yet I think that if we suppose that, both the scholar doing the survey and the surveyed village undergo no change at all through the act of surveying, then there is something depressing about that.[315]

According to Tsurumi, life-writing was a way of handling problems that concerned a group one actually was, or became, a member of. Yet the precise nature of belonging or not-belonging to

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[314] Ibid, 323 (emph. in original)

[315] Ibid, 324

a group was ambiguous. In her text, the shift from heterological intellectuals who speak about enlightening "the Japanese people" to life-writing educators was accompanied by a shift in scale, from the nation to the classroom. Was it ever possible to speak about "the Japanese people" as a group (集団) one belonged to at the level of lived experience? While the question of national belonging was left unresolved, the emphasis in Tsurumi's essay and the life-writing movement as a whole was squarely upon the small groups of classrooms and circles.

Self-Reconstruction and China

In her speech Tsurumi said the conversational and cooperative approach characteristic of the life-writing classroom would develop into an educational method that "effected the mutual self-reconstruction (自己改造) of both teachers and students." [316] This phrase was also used in reference to the reform of intellectuals in the People's Republic of China. For example, Minami referred to the idea of "human reconstruction" or "human reform" in his account of his visit to Beijing, describing it as the official objective of non-coercive, slow-moving campaigns to eliminate social and class differences, including the fact that professors wore Western-style suits.[317] Takeuchi Yoshimi, a scholar and translator of Chinese literature who participated in the Insistute for the Science of Thought with Tsurumi, published an article entitled "The Self-Reconstruction of the Chinese Intellectual" a month before Tsurumi visited educators in Nakatsugawa.[318] Tsurumi, in a book she wrote on Pearl Buck, later used the phrase in a similar context to describe the activities of Chinese authors during the civil war.

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[316] Ibid, 323

[317] Minami op cit., 10.

[318] Takeuchi Yoshimi, "Chûgoku chishikijin no jiko kaizô," *Kaizô* (Jul. 1951). Another article is Yamaguchi Ichirô, "Chûgoku chishiki bunshi no jiko kaizô," *Risô*, (Aug. 1950).

The circulation of a term like "self-reconstruction" shows that the intellectual reception of *Yamabiko gakkô* and life-writing was entwined with the perception of reforms and thought campaigns underway in "New China." It was thought that the apparent success of what was perceived as a bottom-up village revolution in China and Tao Xingzhi's "Commoner Education Movement" boded well for the life-writing movement in Japan. In 1953, Takeuchi Yoshimi juxtaposed the life-writing educational movement with progressive education in China, writing that both were part of a "long-term revolutionary project" that was predicated on the creation of a "new human type."[319] More broadly, the recurring contrast in Takeuchi's work between the spontaneity (自発性) of the Chinese revolution and the superficial "honor student culture" (優等生文化) of Japan could easily be used to describe the antagonistic relationship between grass-roots life-writing educators, who stressed cooperation, and the hierarchical authority embodied by the Ministry of Education.

The similarity of local educational movements in China and Japan that focused on the countryside and grass-roots modernization was taken as evidence of their grounding in universal values of equality, autonomy, and reason. The methods of these movements formed a contrast with the efforts to "import" modern thought from abroad and force a top-down model of enlightenment on the people.[320]

Takeuchi explained that self-reconstruction was a means of overcoming intellectual divisions in the aftermath of World War Two and the Chinese Civil War between "earlier liberated regions" (旧解放区) that had been under Communist-control (centered at Yan'an) and "newly liberated

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[319] Takeuchi Yoshimi, "Seiji, ningen, kyôiku," *Chûô kôron*, (Nov. 1953), 243-245

[320] In scholarship on modern China, this standpoint, which emphasized autonomous development and organic modernity in the countryside over European and American models, has been described as a form of "anti-elitist elitism." Hung-yok Ip, "Mao, Mao Zedong Thought, and Communist Intellectuals," in *Mao: A Critical Introduction*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 170

regions" (新解放区) that had been controlled first by the Japanese and then nationalists (centered

upon Beijing and Tianjin).[321] He explained its methods as follows

> Circles called "small study groups" were organized in every university, school, bureau, and workplace. First, a group plan of study is first discussed within the circle, and then, besides individually reading through texts of Marxist-Leninist or Mao Zedong thought in succession, round-table discussions, group study, or criticism sessions called "collective debates" (集体討論会) are held, and collective meetings that involve the whole office or school take place.

> Simply put, this is a movement of mutual confession (うちあけあい運動), in which one frankly confesses the mistakes one has made in the past and the feelings one has arrived at before engaging in mutual criticism. Further, people go to farms and factories during study time, where they try to extract lessons from reality.[322]

"Self-reconstruction" was often paired with "thought reconstruction" (思想改造), as in the

ongoing "Thought Reconstruction Campaign" (思想改造運動) in China in the early fifties.

Takeuchi introduced this movement to Japanese readers in 1953 as a grass-roots movement for the

intellectual reform of university students and professors.

> Classes still exist and interests still sometimes mutually conflict, but accommodation is sought purely by means of education and conversation. For that reason, a permanent intellectual movement (思想運動) is unfolding on a national scale, the Thought Reconstruction Campaign. Narrowly defined, the campaign refers to the spontaneous re-education movement in the preexisting intellectual class.

> This movement first occurred at the end of 1949 among groups of students in Beijing centered upon Qinghua University. It eventually spread through the whole country, and came to include teachers and intellectuals more generally.

> In the autumn of 1951, university professors were the subjects of a thought reconstruction campaign unfolding in the region of Beijing and Tianjin. In one respect, this was a campaign to make explicit the responsibilities of teachers in the new university system. It was meant to define the content of university reorganization in preparation for industrial construction.

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[321] Takeuchi Yoshimi, "Chûgoku chishikijin no jiko kaizô," *Kaizô* (Jul. 1951).

[322] Takeuchi Yoshimi, *Chûgoku kakumei no shisô*, (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1953), 3-4

Yet it also gradually brought to light the petit-bourgeois thinking firmly embedded within the psychology of professors, as well as the colonial disposition to worship American and European scholarship while slighting the national traditions of one's own country…[323]

In positing a grass-roots ideal for Japanese thinkers to aspire to, Takeuchi tended to exaggerate the non-coercive spontaneity of the movement.[324] Still, the conflict Takeuchi ascribed to this campaign, pitting cosmopolitan, urban intellectuals influenced by the Deweyean pragmatism of Hu Shih against the communal, rural mindset of Yan'an, hit close to home for the American-educated intellectuals associated with *Science of Thought*.[325] Tsurumi herself was far from isolated from events involving the newly established PRC. In 1949, she wrote an article on dormitory life among women textile workers in China, and one of her earliest books brought up the problem of the "self-reconstruction" of Chinese intellectuals in order to expose the limitations of their counterparts in Japan.

In 1951, the same year Tsurumi Kazuko came into direct contact with the Life-Writing at an educators' conference in Nakatsugawa, she began writing a book on the China-born American author Pearl Buck, which was serialized in part in the woman's magazine *Shinjoen* (新女苑). Tsurumi had met Buck in America during a trip with her father and brother before she entered Vassar. In 1938, the year Buck received the Nobel Prize for literature; she presented Tsurumi with copies of *The Good Earth* and *This Proud Heart*. The latter included a note from Buck dated "Dec. 4, 1938" and signed, "For Kazuko Tsurumi, with the hope that this may throw some light on our

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[323]Ibid, x

[324] At the same time, characterizing these campaigns as purges orchestrated from the top probably also misses the complexity of these sociological phenomena. Recent scholarship has suggested that early "thought campaigns" in China were facilitated by anti-elitist attitudes that were a part of an intellectual milieu occupied by Mao and many other intellectuals.. Hung-Yok Ip, op. cit.

[325] On the conflict between pro-Soviet and pro-American sympathies during the campaign, see for example Cui Xiaolin, *Chongsu yu sikao,* (Beijing: Zhonggongdang-shi chubanshe, 2005), *17-26*

discussion."[326] She continued to correspond sporadically with Buck after the war, writing a letter to request the author's support of the anti-nuclear movement in Japan.

Pearl Buck, Tsurumi's first book after an early collection of poetry, was not intended as a work of literary criticism but is an attempt to make sense of the triangular relationship among China, Japan, and the US through a reading of Buck and contemporary Chinese authors. Tsurumi framed this as an intensely personal task:

> I do not intend to theorize about the literary value of Pearl Buck's work in this book. That is a task beyond my ability. It would make more sense to say that I want to pass through (通過) Pearl Buck in order to shed light on my own problems - perhaps obsessions would be a better word. While being dragged along by these obsessions, I grappled with this book in the faint hope that, through Pearl Buck, I could maybe end up in a more certain place than before.[327]

The Vassar-educated Tsurumi, raised in a bilingual household, viewed Buck as a kind of kindred spirit, a woman whose life also fell somewhere between two national and cultural worlds.[328] She was particularly impressed with Buck's relentless criticism of racism in the United States. Rather than inculcating a sense of superiority toward "Chinese backwardness", Buck's experience in China seemed to have sharpened her critical insight into American race relations and inequality. Tsurumi hoped to draw on her experiences with discrimination in America in the same way - as a source of critical insight into the society in which she had been raised.

Tsurumi was by no means uncritical of Buck's work. Yet the more she identified with Buck, the more she expressed a kind of ambivalence toward her own position as an intellectual. Tsurumi's attempt to discover the limitations of Buck's literary representation of modern Chinese society was a self-conscious attempt to discover and move beyond her own limitations as an American-educated

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[326] Archival copy from Kyoto, Japan, Kyoto bunkyô daigaku, Tsurumi Kazuko bunko.

[327] Tsurumi Kazuko, *Pâru Bakku*, (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten), 1

intellectual in postwar Japan. She considered her reflections on Pearl Buck to be part of her own

"self-reconstruction," a process that also included her involvement with the Life-Writing and Life-

Documentary Movements. She prefaced her criticism of Buck with, "Those who criticize others

must be responsible for the necessary reflection of that criticism onto themselves."[329]

In chapter 3, Tsurumi drew on translated memoirs from the Chinese "Thought

Reconstruction Campaign" (思想改造運動) to criticize Pearl Buck's representation of intellectuals

and the masses in her 1949 novel *Kinfolk*. This novel features an American-educated Chinese

educator named James who Buck modeled on one of the founders of the prewar rural "Commoner

Education Movement," (平民教育運動) Y. C. James Yen. James returns to China from America

and takes up residence as a teacher in a rural village. He establishes a link to peasants in the

community through a powerful local family. Tsurumi likens James' relationship to the community

to that of social scientists conducting surveys of village life, the same target of criticism in her essay

about encountering the Life-Writing Movement in Nakatsugawa.

> The bond between intellectuals and the masses represented by James in *Kinfolk*, and the self-reconstructive way of life of Chinese intellectuals engaged in rural reforms is fundamentally different.
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> The first difference pertains to the method of approaching the masses. [In James' case], the method was to go through the boss (ボスのルート), using the ruling power in order to get to the masses…
>
> When villages and factories are tightly in the grip of the old interests, as in the case of farm and factory surveys that take place in Japan, one is less likely in danger of being expelled if one goes through the bosses. This is sometimes more effective, but the constraints are also great. After liberation, when intellectuals, members of an organized task force (工作隊) engaged in land reform, entered the village, from the start they entered, *at least in appearance*, on the side of the masses who opposed the old interests, including landowners, warlords,

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[329] Ibid, 192

and police.[330]

Tsurumi characterized James' activites in a way that echoed ongoing criticism of the progressive Commoner Education Movement in China. This movement, which developed in parallel to the life-writing movement in its early days, was started in the 1920s by two students of John Dewey, Tao Xingzhi and James Yan. It began as a rural literacy campaign and developed into a broader movement that aimed at overcoming the separation of schoolwork (intellectual labor) from the community at large (manual labor). This objective was summed up by Tao as the "school-ification (学校化) of society" - an inversion of Dewey's call for the "socialization of the school". An illustration of this logic can be seen in Tao's decision to change his pen name. He is said to have inverted the characters in Zhixing (知行, lit: know-act) to Xingzhi (行知, lit: act-know) on the basis of a new understanding of the primacy of action in education. The life-writing educator Kokubun Ichitarô was well aware of Tao's activities. While engaging in propaganda activities on behalf of the Japanese army in Guangdong during the war, Kokubun discovered Tao's work and helped introduce him to Japanese audiences.[331]

Yet by the 1950s, Deweyean reformers like Tao Xingzhi, Yan Yangchu, as well as Hu Shih seemed old-fashioned in the eyes of more radical activists and students inspired by the success of Mao's revolution. These radical reformers were associated with the anti-bourgeois "Thought Reconstruction Study Campaign." Though often hostile to the progressive educators associated with John Dewey, the campaign formed the most immediate reference point for intellectuals like Tsurumi

[330] Ibid, 121

[331] On Kokubun Ichitarô's activities in China, see Tsuda Michio, *Kokubun Ichitarô: Tenkô to teikô no hazama*, (Tokyo: San-ichi), ch. 3. Tsuda is interested in the question of Kokubun's war responsibility and makes no mention of his interaction with Chinese educators. After returning to Japan, Kokubun wrote articles that helped introduce the work of Tao Xingzhi to Japanese educators in the journal *Jidô bunka*. On the reception of Tao in Japan, see Zhou Honglin, *Tao Xingzhi yanjiu zai haiwai*, (Beijing: Renmin jiayu chubanshe), 457-483

and Takeuchi, who were concerned with the problem of personal "self-reconstruction" during the

fifties. Takeuchi, based on his assessment of Hu Shih, saw the conflict between members of the

earlier "Commoner Education Movement" and the "Thought Reconstruction Study Campaign" as

the inevitable outcome of the logic of Deweyean social criticism.[332] Takeuchi implied that the

ultimate vindication of Hu Shih's pragmatism could be seen in the harsh criticism he suffered in the

hands of his Communist critics.

Tsurumi's engagement with circles and the life-writing movement was part of her struggle to

reconcile pragmatism and Marxist determinism. In 1953, at the same time Tsurumi was participating

in circles in Yokkaichi and Tokyo, she was also involved in a collaborative study of advice columns

in the popular media with other members of Science of Thought. The group struggled with

problems of historical agency that repeatedly surfaced in discussions about the circle movement. In

an introduction to the group study, Kazuko's brother Shunsuke cited the French philosopher Sartre

and the American psychologist Carl Rogers as pessimistic and optimistic approaches to the study of

advice.[333] For Sartre, the problem was that the person seeking advice could seem to have already

made up his mind through the very act of seeking advice. Realistically speaking, asking for advice

was only another way of making a predetermined decision.

> You may say, "Well, he went to see a professor for advice." But if you consult a priest, for
> instance, it's you who has chosen to consult him, and you already know in your heart, more
> or less, what advice he is likely to give. In other words, to choose one's adviser is only
> another way to commit oneself. This is demonstrated by the fact that, if you are Christian,
> you will say "consult a priest." But there are collaborating priests, temporizing priests, and
> priests connected to the Resistance: which do you choose?[334]

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[332] Takeuchi Yoshimi, "Koteki to Dyûi," in *Dyûi kenkyû*, edited by Tsurumi Kazuko, (Tokyo: Shunjûsha, 1952)

[333] Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai, *Mi no ue sôdan*, (Tokyo: Kawade shobô, 1956), 15-16

[334] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, translated by Annie-Cohen-Solal, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 25

Carl Rogers on the other hand believed in the power of advice that came closer to the ideal of self-transformation, namely, "client-centered therapy" that required the therapist to enter into an egalitarian relationship "as a co-worker" with the patient.[335]

Between these two poles, Tsurumi tried to express the tension between the need to, on one hand, retain a *realistic* view of the possibilities available within the structure of capitalist society and, on the other, the desire to provide some kind of practical guidance or even *therapeutic relief* through a synthesis of perspectives she ascribed to Marx and Dewey. Among the members of Science of Thought, she was always among the most critical of Dewey for what she saw as "optimistic" distortions in his work caused by inattention to Marxist issues of class, capitalism, and history. Yet she increasingly saw the two thinkers as capable of supplementing each other. She believed Marx was necessary to rectify pragmatism's historical deficit, but Dewey's belief in the possibility of new, unpredictable collisions and combinations among actors and social structures could help Marx think about the future.

The problem for Tsurumi, and a central problem for Science of Thought, was that an analysis of capitalism seemed too far removed from, and could even delay, the leap to revolutionary praxis, causing Marxists to vacillate between dogmatic commitment and pessimistic resignation. The Deweyean emphasis on habit was a potential mediator between theory and praxis. Yet it was necessary at least temporarily to bracket the question of the precise relationship between habit and the ultimate success of the revolution; otherwise one would relegate vast swathes of everyday concern to the dictates of common sense.

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[335] Carl Rogers, *Client-Centered Therapy*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1951), 54. Interestingly, given Minami Hiroshi perception of China as embodying the spirit of the TVA, Rogers also cited Lillienthal's book on TVA, *Democracy on the March,* as a major intellectual inspiration for his own therapeutic approach.

The Yokkaichi Circle

While in Nakatsugawa, Tsurumi met Sawai Yoshirô, the organizer of what became the

"Documenting Daily Life Club" (生活を記録する会) in a predominantly female textile workers

union branch at a Tôa Wool Spinning and Weaving Company's factory outside Yokkaichi, about 15

miles from Nagoya. The club, mostly composed of young unmarried textile workers, had recently

put together a mimeographed collection of writings on everyday life in their native poverty-stricken

villages under the title *My House*. They were inspired by *Yamabiko gakkô* as well as by the activities of

a writing circle at a neighboring textile factory called "The Bamboo Sprout Club" (竹の子会).[336]

Sawai sent the essay collection to Muchaku Seikyô and other intellectuals, soliciting their advice, and

Tsurumi saw a copy of it sometime in the summer of 1952 before meeting Sawai, who invited her to

visit the group in Yokkaichi.

This encounter was the start of a chain of events that led to Tsurumi becoming one of the

most prominent intellectual spokespersons for the movement to get workers to produce naturalistic

accounts of their daily life, adopting as a slogan Muchaku Seikyô's advice to students to simply

"write things as they are" (ありのままに書く) . She participated in the writing circle in Yokkaichi

for two years and co-edited a collection of writings by the group (*The History of Mothers*) that became

one of the most widely read and commented upon works of "circle literature" (prolonging the

debate over whether life-writing was really literature or not). Playwright Hirowatari Tsunetoshi

adapted the book and the story of its production into an award-winning play *Daughters Who Weave*

Tomorrow in 1957. Inspired by the Yokkaichi group, Tsurumi started her own writing circle in Tokyo,

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[336] For one account of the relationship between the two circles, see Tsurumi Kazuko, "Shufu to
musume no seikatsu kiroku," in *Tsurumi Kazuko mandara*, vol. 2, (Tokyo: Fujiwara shobo, 1998), 354-
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"The Daily Life Writing Club," (生活をつづる会) that included working women, housewives, and a few husbands, out of which the edited volume *Housewives Clutching Pencils* appeared in 1954.

The "Documenting Daily Life Club" in Yokkaichi emerged out of a cultural association or "circle" in the factory union led by Sawai. As a labor organizer, Sawai originally focused on raising the class-consciousness of employees through a political newsletter in the factory, but he felt that the militant language of the labor movement was an ineffective means of reaching most of the workers. He decided to found a chorus group where workers could socialize and hopefully discover their common interests in a more relaxed setting.

Like critics who debated the autonomy of the circle movement from mass-culture, union officials were ambivalent about Sawai's association. Around the time of its formation, one official criticized it for acting like a "second union" (第二組合), a term that referred to new company unions beholden to management, which competed with trade unions. In the early 1950s, the majority of Japanese workers belonged to trade unions that adopted an antagonistic stance toward management. Many of these unions were affiliated with the national union confederation Sôhyô, whose leaders believed socialism could be achieved in Japan "from the bottom-up" through workplace activism and strikes.[337] Yet the 1950s was a time of intense clashes between unions and management, and union leaders were increasingly worried about being supplanted by company unions, a fear that was realized in the 1960s with the triumph of unions and management culture.[338]

Sawai thus had to overcome the suspicions that his circle was antagonistic to union interests. He drew up a mission statement that declared that the "Yokkaichi Cultural Circle" was formed in order to "awaken correct class consciousness," and to "smash reactionary bourgeois culture while

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[337] Andrew Gordon, *Wages of Affluence*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 48

[338] Andrew Gordon, "Contests for the Workplace," in *Postwar Japan as History*, edited by Andrew Gordon, (Berkeley: University of Califronia Press, 1993), 383-388

establishing a democratic culture that elevates the value and rights of working people."[339] With an idea of bourgeois culture in mind, Sawai steered the choir group away from singing popular songs from the radio and films.[340]

However, in a short history of the group written in 1954, he commented that the original mission statement's talk of raising consciousness and smashing bourgeois culture was more an exaggerated plea for the relevance of the group to the labor movement than an accurate description of the members' activities.[341] Yet he also argued that it was through seemingly frivolous group activities, such as singing songs familiar to the workers from elementary school, that members began forming the bonds of friendship necessary for the circle's later iteration as a writing collective, one that involved the frank sharing of details about private life. Reaching the point where workers were able and willing to write about their daily life was important not because it allowed the group to write and publish autobiographical literature, but because it helped secure the autonomy of the circle. Writing provided an object of group discussion and criticism that could lead to further progress, a way to track the evolution of the workers' own thinking over time, and an alternative to the distractions of popular culture,

Tsurumi wrote in her afterword that Sawai's history of the circle's evolution from chorus group to reading and life-writing circle revealed a theory of circle building that stressed the gradual transformation of the individual. Yokkaichi's success could conceivably be reproduced throughout Japan, realizing a kind of active, participatory democracy at the level of small, self-governed, productive groups.

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[339] Sawai Yoshirô, "*Haha no rekishi* ga dekiru made," in *Haha no rekishi,* edited by Tsurumi Kazuko and Kinoshita Junji, (Tokyo: Kawade shobô, 1954), 135

[340] Ibid, 136

[341] Ibid, 135

She recalled that her first meeting with the group was awkward, with both parties, perhaps self-conscious about their disparate social backgrounds, reluctant to share their feelings. In the evening however she followed the group to a field near a shrine where they sang songs, danced, and put on an impromptu performance of an operetta based on the story of Little Red Riding Hood. Afterwards exhausted from all the activities, the women let loose their anxieties and troubles in an "outpouring" of speech. It was at this moment that Tsurumi first felt she had been included among the circle of friends.[342]

According to Tsurumi, the problematic of friendship was about more than overcoming the barrier separating an urban, American-educated intellectual like herself from rural woman textile workers. Solidaristic friendship of the kind she encountered in the circle seemed unusual among workers in general. Communication was difficult among women who came from villages in different regions of the country and spoke local dialects of Japanese. Yet they could still participate in chorus and dance activities even if they were mostly illiterate, ideally forming lasting bonds of friendship with members of the circle. Tsurumi remembered being told by one of the members during her visit, "The best way to make friends is to first of all start a drama or chorus circle. That way, even people who can't write can join. Print out copies of the song and have each person give a copy to three people, inviting them to the next chorus session. Making a circle strong means including even one more person than last time."[343]

Besides communication difficulties, Tsurumi saw the factory as a place that encouraged competition for advancement and salary increases, and the workers' collective living quarters as a site of mutual surveillance.[344] According to Tsurumi, since most of the workers came from poor

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[342] Tsurumi Kazuko, "*Haha no rekishi* o tsukutta hitotachi," in *Haha no rekishi,* edited by Tsurumi Kazuko and Kinoshita Junji, (Tokyo: Kawade shobô, 1954), 182

[343] Ibid, 182-183

[344] Ibid, 180-181

farming families and had worked grueling hours at home before arriving in Yokkaichi, they were less motivated than workers elsewhere to push for higher wages and better working conditions. No matter how bad it got, they felt, "it was easier than being at home," and "working just eight hours a day is too cushy."

This touched upon a long-standing dilemma faced by activists concerned with marginalized elements of the labor movement (particularly women) and attracted to *Yamabiko gakkō*'s example of rural educational and community reform. Namely, were stronger unions and substantial improvements in working conditions impossible without first improving educational and economic conditions in the countryside where many workers came from? In the first half of the 1950s, this question, which was heatedly discussed in the context of the success of Mao's rural-based strategy in China and the ongoing (and ultimately unsuccessful) activities of a Japanese Communist Party faction engaged in a violent attempt to unleash armed struggle in the countryside. Perhaps influenced in part by her accounts of a peaceful "rural revolution" underway in China, the project Tsurumi actively participated at Yokkaichi centered upon the textile worker's villages of origin as a place to apply lessons learned in the factory circle in the cause of rural reform.

Tsurumi remarked that most of the workers dreamed of escaping from their economic lot by marrying a white-collar worker in a modern "love marriage," rather than returning home and marrying a farmer chosen by their parents. This dream, circulated in the popular media, both undercut their solidarity with other workers and distracted them from improving conditions in the factory.[345] Remaining single and employed was rarely mentioned as a viable possibility, and the woman's movement in Japan during the early fifties remained committed to motherhood as the path to female political and social power.[346]

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[345] Ibid, 188-189

[346] On the focus on motherhood within the woman's movement in Japan, see Wesley Sasaki-

Given these circumstances, members of the "Documenting Daily Life Circle" tried to turn the seeming inevitability of returning home and marrying a farmer into an opportunity for a new writing project oriented toward the future improvement of their communities. Sawai explained their situation as follows, "… no matter how much they hated the idea of returning home to a farming village and marrying someone, in a workplace in which women outnumbered men nine to one, they seemed to have no other choice, but if they wanted to improve their villages they had to toughen up."[347] Their first collection of writings, *My House*, was full of descriptions of the rural poverty the women had grown up surrounded with and were reluctant to return to. One of the members who traveled to the conference in Nakatsugawa, Hara Toyoko, spoke with Imai Yojirô, an educator who was one of the leaders of the life-writing movement. Imai praised the work but said it was too much about hardships of the past, and that they ought to write more about their daily experiences as *workers* in the present.[348] Yet the members of the group believed they would not remain workers forever. In response to Imai's criticism and the unpalatable prospect of returning to the village, marrying, and having children, the group began a project to write and think about how they could at least learn from and improve upon the situation their own mothers had faced in anticipation of their own return.[349]

Tsurumi participated in this project, editing the writings with the playwright Kinoshita Junji as *The History of Mothers*. Tsurumi remained unmarried and childless throughout her life, an unusual choice frequently remarked upon in profiles of her in women's magazines. In an interview from this period of her life in 1955, she seemed somewhat ambivalent about her independent lifestyle. Living

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Uemura, *Organizing the Spontaneous*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001), 116-117. Kathleen Uno, "The Death of Good Wife, Wise Mother?" in *Postwar Japan as History*, edited by Andrew Gordon, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993)

[347] Sawai Yoshirô, op. cit., 152

[348] Ibid, 148

[349] Ibid, 152-153

with her wealthy family during the war, she said that she "flew out of her parents house" in 1945 and began living alone, but that it somehow seemed unreal, as if she were a child pretending to be an adult. She contrasted this lifestyle with the independent mindset of the female textile workers she had met, who lived far from home at the factory out of an obligation to their family. She also suggested that she had come to understand these women better after moving back in with her parents in order to take care of her ailing mother.[350] Unease about the difference between her own progressive lifestyle and that of the women she sought to connect with seemed a motive for her to travel to Nakatsugawa, regret her social scientific studies of working women, and join the circle in Yokkaichi in the first place.

In a reading group with Tsurumi, the textile workers read Zhao Shuli's *Wedding Registry* (結婚登記) in Japanese translation, a novel about active married life in a village community in the PRC. When members of the circle compared opportunities for women purportedly available in China with those in Japan, they seemed dismayed at the gap.   Sawai commented that the only conclusion was that, "In China you can do things like that, but here in Japan that's impossible."[351]

More productive was reading the Marxist medieval historian Ishimoda Shô's collection of writings *The Discovery of History and the Nation*. An essay included in Ishimoda's book, "A Letter about Mothers," was one of the main inspirations for the group's project on motherhood, and it was perhaps both a consolation and encouragement in consideration of the workers' likely fate after life in the factory. The essay was addressed to an anonymous intellectual with a "reactionary" mother. Ishimoda began his epistolary response by decrying historians' neglect of the experience of mothers, a neglect that appeared symptomatic of the absence of ordinary people, the constituents of the nation, in most historical accounts. He cited as an example the fact that, while biographers of the

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[350] Tsurumi Kazuko, "Ie o deyô," *Shinjosei,* (Jul. 1955)

[351] Sawai, op. cit., 153

socialist martyr Kôtoku Shusui discussed the guilt the man experienced when he neglected his

mother in order to participate in radical politics, they never bothered to seriously investigate her and

the way she might have felt. By extension, the central, yet often hidden, role of mothers

corresponded to what Ishimoda perceived as a centuries-long struggle waged by the Japanese masses

against various forms of oppression by the ruling classes that had also been neglected.

For Ishimoda, this was not simply a gap in the historical record that needed to be empirically

filled in the interest of completeness. He believed that insight into the experience of mothers and

motherhood would deepen male intellectuals' empathetic understanding of struggles for national

independence, including Japan's struggle for independence from what Ishimoda and most Marxists

believed was a semi-colonial relationship with the United States. He approvingly cited an example in

Lu Xun's attempt to express his sorrow over the death of the author Rou Shi, a former student of

his who was secretly executed in 1931 by foreign police in the concession of Shanghai, in terms of a

mother's loss of her son.

This kind of empathetic understanding was important in part because the struggle for

national independence required intellectuals, in order to connect with the masses, to sometimes put

aside a way of thinking that opposed rational, enlightened thought to superstitions and folk beliefs.

He recounted an incident in his own life involving his parents that seemed to dramatize the false

choice between reactionary "feudalism" and enlightened "progressivism" among Japanese

intellectuals:

> When I was in higher school in Sendai, I was dragged to the police for simply being a
> member of a social science research club, expelled from school, and sent back to my
> hometown. When I appeared at home, my father became extremely angry and scolded me
> harshly. This was probably out of parental love, but since he said things like being tainted
> "red" would undermine my chances for success, and that would in turn render meaningless
> my being sent to the higher school, I came to despise him. My father was an atheist and
> compared to my conservative mother, he was much more intellectually (思想的) progressive.
> Yet my conservative mother never scolded me about the incident. On the contrary, she

made me feel certain that people had no reason to be ashamed about doing the right thing. However, my inevitable suffering made her suffer and feel anxious. Wanting to comfort me in my bitterness, she took me on a trip to Sapporo, where she had given birth to me. Memories of travelling with my mother in Hokkaido, whose natural beauty she had told me about time and again as a child, left an impression upon me that I cannot forget. If I had not been expelled, I think I would have ended up with a far more shallow consciousness of mothers. From that time onwards, I became convinced that an awareness of what is right does not depend on the progressive or conservative tendencies of one's thinking (思想), but upon the depth of one's humanity (人間性). I became convinced that despite the fact that my father was in command of "modern" thought, his humanity was poisoned by a bourgeois ideology of success (立身出世主義), whereas my mother, even if she was "feudal," expended all her efforts to protect her children from the outside world and from the authority of the father, and that this toil and resistance deepened her humanity as a mother and her instinctual understanding of what is right.[352]

Through this story, Ishimoda admonished intellectuals who complained about their own "reactionary" mothers, encouraging them to try to understand them better, using a subtle, subterranean history of popular resistance (to the father and by extension the ruling classes of successive eras) as their guide.

The proposal to write "a history of mothers" in the spirit of Ishimoda seemed to touch a nerve among the textile workers at Yokkaichi. The "Documenting Daily Life Circle" originally consisted of about twenty members, some of whom were ostracized as "odd" by other workers and their family members for their participation in the group. Indeed, this ostracism was a topic of several of their documentary essays, yet for this project the number of participants almost doubled to ninety women. They volunteered to write essays based on research they did, mostly in interviews, when they visited their home villages for the O-bon festival of the dead. The circle participants were apparently among the most productive in the factory, but the growth and activities of the circle

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[352] Ishimoda Shô, *Minzoku to rekishi no hakken*, (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 2003), 436-437

worried management enough to fire Sawai, who sued the company in response, eventually winning the case.[353]

A few essays were chosen for inclusion in the 1954 mass-market paperback that Tsurumi helped edit, while others were internally published in the usual mimeographed form of the circle movement. The published essays suggest that the problem of the "reactionary mother" resonated with women at Yokkaichi. One essay by a worker named Tanaka Michiko suggested that distance had opened up between mother and daughter owing to the fact that the latter had left home, experienced life in a factory and labor union, and participated in a circle of other fellow workers. She tried to understand the hardship her mother had experienced through her marriage. Since she lived her entire life in the confines of her husband's household, she "was unable to understand people outside her family, and because she did not think, she began to pass on rumors and gossip about them."[354] Tanaka ended the essay on the optimistic note characteristic of much life-writing. She believed that her participation in life and in the circle had made her into a person for an age different from that of her mother, someone who would not repeat the mistake of, "entering into an unhappy marriage" and whose "opinions were not under the control of her parents." It was for this reason that she claimed she would, if given the choice, prefer to participate in circles and self-governance rather than learn how to perform tea ceremony and make flower arrangements, skills associated with middle and upper-class women.[355]

The *History of Mothers* took stock of the progress the circle had made since it was first started as a group for choral singing and casual socializing. Tsurumi Kazuko considered it a successful

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[353] Tsurumi Kazuko, *Social Change and the Individual*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 242

[354] Tanaka Michiko, "Haha no hansei," in *Haha no rekishi,* edited by Tsurumi Kazuko and Kinoshita Junji, (Tokyo: Kawade shobô, 1954), 92

[355] Ibid, 92-93

example of self-transformation, an environment that nurtured social individuals. Members

"maintained a poise that allowed them to state their thoughts clearly, whether to superiors or to

friends." They were also people who "did not demean others, trying to only improve their own lot,

but acted with an awareness that their joy and sadness was connected to the joy and sadness of their

friends [in the circle]."[356] She later wrote that most of them did become mothers back in their

villages, where they were active members in the community and occasionally held reunions.[357]

For Tsurumi, Sawai's circle in Yokkaichi became the benchmark against which she would

often compare her own attempts at circle organizing. Her favorable impression of the Yokkaichi

group had much to do with the sense that it enabled her to at least temporarily transcend the limits

of her self-conscious standpoint as a cosmopolitan intellectual and connect with ordinary workers.

But in order to make this connection and mutual relationship possible, workers had to "be

themselves," and not act like aspiring intellectuals – a condition that often ended up reproducing a

cultural hierarchy, albeit in more subtle ways than a conventional student-teacher relationship. The

desire for an authentic encounter with non-intellectuals could conflict with the stated aim of

working toward the creation of an egalitarian space. This conflict became more visible to Tsurumi

later.

Tensions within the Circle

As part of her own attempt at self-transformation, Tsurumi tried to recreate her experience

at Yokkaichi in Tokyo, founding her own life-writing circle there, the Seikatsu o tsuzuru kai (Writing

Life Club). She held meetings in her small apartment that included female workers, housewives, and

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[356] Tsurumi Kazuko, "Shufu to musume no seikatsu kiroku," *Tsurumi Kazuko mandara*, vol. 2, (Tokyo: Fujiwara shobo, 1998), 366

[357] Tsurumi Kazuko, *Social Change and the Individual*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 243

a few men. Her participation in this group lasted longer than in Yokkaichi, and she became aware of

new difficulties over time. The first was that Tokyo was a far less self-contained environment than

the relatively isolated factory in Yokkaichi, and myriad popular distractions existed to pull members

away from commitment to the circle.   Secondly, she became more aware of the fact members of the

group were reluctant to criticize her as an equal member of the group, in part owing to her prestige

as an "intellectual."
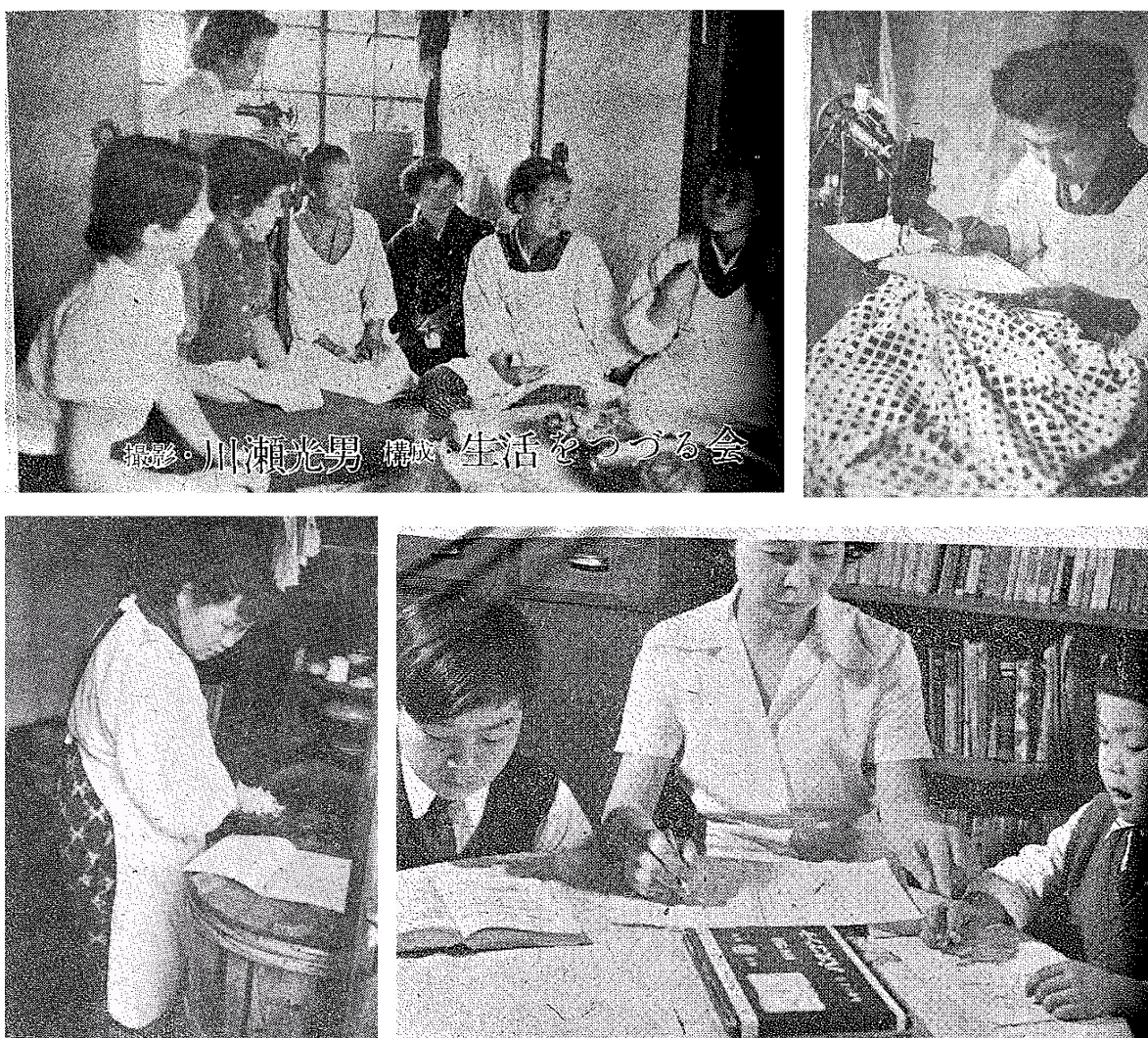
Figures 4.4-4.8, Photos from an article in *Science of Thought* about the process of creating life-writing
essays in the Tokyo-based Seikatsu o tsuzuru kai. Upper left photo depicts a gathering in Tsurumi
Kazuko's apartment. The other photos are answers to the question "when and where do you write?"

Photos by Kawase Mitsuo, text by Seikatsu o tsuzuru kai, "Seikatsu tsuzurikata ga dekiru made" *Shisô no kagaku*, (Aug. 1954), 7-9

When a woman textile worker who participated in the circle ventured criticism, it touched on a tension within the circle movement that Tsurumi could never fully resolve. The woman wrote a letter to Tsurumi saying she, and the circle in general, was not "dark" enough. She wrote that while the circle was a fun, happy, and optimistic space, as soon as she left it and thought about all the work she had to do the next day, she became depressed. She reasoned that she experienced this dissonance moving in and out of the circle because Tsurumi was still somehow out of touch with the way of life experienced by laborers. "In order to fix the darkness in the world, you had to really know darkness."[358]

Tsurumi believed that it was possible to gradually reach a middle ground where she and the worker could understand each other and cooperate effectively given enough time. Yet intellectuals' involvement in the circle movement was haunted by the criticism they had earlier directed at mass culture. Circles and popular entertainment could seem distractions that offered only temporary relief from the daily grind while deferring fundamental change to a future that never seemed to arrive.

The revolutionary expectations projected on the circle movement seemed less tenable as time went on. In part, this was due to increasing suspicion directed toward movements affiliated with the militant Left as the Japanese Communist Party plummeted in popularity during the fifties. But it was also because experience with circles over time began to reveal patterns suggesting that committed participants were self-selected, "intellectual types." Tsurumi Shunsuke described them as skinny and, "though laborers, they were of an intellectual disposition, and thus there is a certain

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[358] Tsurumi Kazuko, "Hanashiai, kakiau nakama," *Tsurumi Kazuko mandara*, vol. 2, (Tokyo: Fujiwara shobo, 1998), 378-379

tendency for circles to simply become a places of escape and mutual consolation for them." His

conclusion? "As long as this is the case, even if the life-writing movement becomes very popular, it

will always only gather together a person of a certain dispositional and constitutional type. It can't

assemble the masses as a whole."[359] For Tsurumi, this limitation undercut the claim of the circles to

openness.

The perceived self-selection of circle participants touched on the contentious issue of the

relation of life-writings to literature. The life-writing theorist Kokubun Ichitarô as well as Tsurumi

Kazuko's co-editor of *History of Mothers,* the playwright Kinoshita Junji, both argued that circle

participants should not aspire to write literature in their attempt to convey "things as they are" in a

simple, unadorned way. Yet the observation that participants were "intellectual types" implied that

they really aspired to leave work in the factory behind and perhaps write professionally. Some

participants in the movement like Kamisaka Fuyuko, who were provided a venue in publications like

Science of Thought, did just that.[360]

Yet the alternative to the professionalization of the circles was in some cases political

ossification. Sawai started the circle in Yokkaichi in part because he believed that the formulaic

language of the working class movement did not communicate effectively with ordinary textile

workers, but once circle-building became a fully-fledged movement endorsed by the Left, it was

accused of engendering its own formulism. Although ostensibly voluntary, participation in a circle

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[359] Kuno Osamu, Tsurumi Shunsuke, Fujita Shôzô, *Sengo nihon no shisô*, (Tokyo: Chûô kôronsha, 1959), 120

[360] In 1959, Kamisaka published *Shokuba no gunzô*, a collection of essays documenting human relationships at her workplace (Toyota Motor Corp.). Much of the material had been originally published in *Science of Thought.* To the dismay of some of her colleagues at the Institute, Kamisaka later became an outspoken conservative commentator. She intervened in debates pertaining to World War II historical revisionism and official visits to Yasukuni Shrine, a controversial shrine honoring Japan's war dead. For an introduction to many of her political views and her relationship with the Institute, see Tsurumi Shunsuke and Kamisaka Fuyuko, *Tairon: Ishoku shôwa-shi*, (Tokyo: PHP Shinsho, 2009).

within a union came to feel like an obligation for some workers. This obligation, which made use of time that could have been spent more "productively," could seem to be "holding workers back" in the same way as the prohibition against writing literature. In 1960, Ishimoda looked back on the heyday of Left-wing involvement in the circle movement and lamented this development

> If you took the time spent at the circle and applied it to "[productivity] research," then it would certainly be easier to increase efficiency and performance. Yet the foremost reason you participate in a circle is because it is pleasurable work. The circle gathering is not just pleasurable… the formation of a new kind of human relationship, one born out of taking on a collective responsibility, imparts to us the joy of creating a group. This is an aspect of creation that the enlighteners of the past did not understand… Circle activity is not "service." The people who went to the circles out of an imposed "obligation" perhaps should have never done so.[361]

Furthermore, Tsurumi Shunsuke thought that the power of a "non-literary" approach to writing was limited to people, often manual laborers, whose situations contained problems related to poverty and inequality considered easier to document through observation than those of white-collar workers. "Given the method of the life-writing movement today, unless existence itself contains problems, it is not possible to produce good life-writing." No matter how hard they try, the "petit-bourgeoisie of the cities" cannot produce good writing of this sort.[362]

Economic growth taking off during the second half of the fifties and accelerating in the sixties undercut the basis for revolutionary optimism about the entire circle movement. Intellectuals worried that the autonomous space for circles to nurture dreams of radical change were being crushed by pressure to conform to the demands to the workplace, transforming them into apolitical leisure circles, while at the same time, the transformation of daily life wrought by economic growth deprived documentary life-writing of the critical edge it possessed when it could focus on more blatant forms of poverty and exploitation.

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[361] Ishimoda Shô quoted in Oguma Eiji, *"Minshu" to "Aikoku,"* (Tokyo: Senyôsha, 2002), 352-353
[362] Ibid, 136

Conclusion

Tsurumi's ideal of self-transformation posited the creation of democratic subjects out of the crucible of collective activity in autonomous circles. The movement to found and participate in these circles throughout Japan was seen as both as an extension of the project to realize postwar democracy and a change of course for intellectuals who had become critical of their role as social scientific observers and top-down enlighteners. They gravitated to the egalitarian pedagogical methods of *Yamabiko gakkô* and the life-writing movement in an attempt to break out of a hierarchical model of democratic enlightenment, hoping to realize democracy as an ongoing egalitarian social process rather than a far-off end result. The perception that a "long-term revolution" that employed gradualist methods was underway in China provided inspiration for intellectuals like Tsurumi Kazuko who made this turn.

A combination of conflicting factors – self-selection, professionalization, political formulism, and the loss of revolutionary idealism – combined to weaken the circle movement as the fifties wore on. As the economy began its period of high growth, intellectuals associated with Science of Though shifted their attention once again to a research project on "political conversions" during the wartime years in order to make sense of the present impasse and reorient themselves toward changing social and political circumstances.

Chapter 5: The Age of Conversion:

> The Japanese people, their hopes that Japan would develop into a democratic nation betrayed, now became polarized into two extremes; the minority under the banner of Marxism; the majority under the banner of entertainment.
> - Katô Hidetoshi, "Middle-Brow Culture," 1957

> To survive, man must change […] The question, What are we to do? Can no longer be answered by directions as to how it is to be done: the question can only be answered by an appeal to slumbering possibilities. <u>Conversion</u> is not enforceable. All we can do is point to realities and make articulate the voices that for centuries have been calling for a change of heart.
> -Karl Jaspers, "The Atomic Bomb and the Future of Man" 1956

> Wherever the consumption of abundance has established itself, there is one spectacular antagonism which is always at the forefront of the range of illusory roles: the antagonism between youth and adulthood. For here an adult in the sense of someone who is master of his own life is nowhere to be found. And youth – implying change in what exists – is by no means proper to people who are young. Rather, it characterizes only the economic system, the dynamism of capitalism; it is *things* that rule, that are young – things themselves vie with each other and usurp one another's places.
> -Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, 1964

In October 1954, in the internal newsletter for the Institute for the Science of Thought,

Tsurumi Shunsuke placed a call for volunteers to join a new research circle.

> *Tenkô* research group (supervisor: Tsurumi Shunsuke). *Tenkô* does not only exist in Japan. In the West, some turn (*tenkô*) toward Catholicism when they get older for example. We will seek the universal form of this kind of change, investigating how the character of particular historical ages, societies, and individuals influences this process.

A number of students and recent graduates from universities in the Tokyo area responded to

Tsurumi's announcement. This was the start of an eight-year long collaborative research project

(1954-1962) led by Tsurumi Shunsuke on the phenomenon of *tenkô*, a word with no obvious English

equivalent but perhaps best translated as "political conversion."[363] Members of the research group

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[363] *Tenkô* has also been translated as "ideological conversion," "ideological transformation," and "political apostasy." An article by Tsurumi Shunsuke summarizing the research in English uses the term "ideological transformation," whereas Tsurumi Kazuko uses the term "ideological conversion." Support for the translation "political conversion" comes from the way the researchers carefully

tried to explain how and why progressive intellectuals affiliated with a wide variety of organizations and ideological factions – including liberal politicians, Communists, and existential philosophers – all converted to support for militarism in Japan during the thirties and forties, and then commonly "re-converted" (逆転向) to supporting democracy after the war. Although the focus of the project was on the past, the researchers' concerns and the reception of the published work were inseparable from contemporary debates about middle-class culture and conformism, generational conflict, new debates about war responsibility, and the future of the progressive movement with which Science of Thought was affiliated.

The members were dissatisfied with conventional political oppositions that they believed derived much of their force from an overly simple interpretation of the wartime years. Their attempt to redraw the line separating support and resistance was motivated by a desire to think of new forms of flexible political association, a desire that also manifested itself in members' participation in emerging citizens movements during the fifties and sixties. Reinterpreting the past was part of an effort to develop a progressive form of political realism that balanced an idealistic commitment to popular democracy and a realistic willingness to adapt to social change during the fifties.[364]

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define *tenkô* in contrast to the act of religious conversion while noting that both terms describe ideological change. They write, "… whereas *kaishin* (conversion) predominantly grasps ideological change (思想変化) at the level of religion, *tenkô* grasps it at the political (政治的) level." Tsurumi Shunsuke, "Joron: tenkô no kyôdô kenkyô ni tsuite," *Kyôdô kenkyû tenkô* edited by Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai, (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1959), 12. For alternative translations, see Tsurumi Shunsuke, "Cooperative Research on Ideological Transformation" *Journal of Social and Political Ideas in Japan*, (Apr. 1964), Tsurumi Kazuko, *Social Change and the Individual*, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1970), 36-37

[364] In recent scholarship on the thirties in Japan, the *Tenkô* study has been widely criticized for reinforcing false binaries of collaboration and resistance. Leslie Pincus criticized the study for reinforcing "the claims of modernization historians that the 1930's represented a deplorable deviation from what was otherwise the positive growth of a democratic, capitalist society." On the contrary, I argue that the researchers pathologized the political culture of the thirties not to relegate it to a past history of political oppression but to show how it continued to be a part of postwar

In its completed version, the study, titled simply *Collaborative Research: Tenkô*, weighed in at three volumes and over 1400 pages. The chapters ranged from detailed biographical studies of individual "converts" (tenkôsha) to three long essays by the political theorist Fujita Shôzô that tried to describe the overall dynamic behind hundreds of *tenkô* incidents clustered around historical events like the Manchurian Incident in 1931, the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in 1937, and the Japan's surrender in 1945.

As Tsurumi described in the introduction to the first volume of the study (1959), *tenkô* was originally a juridical term used by the Ministry of Justice before World War II to refer to the renunciation of "dangerous thoughts" (危険思想) among thousands of Leftists suspected of "thought crimes" (primarily Communism) under the Peace Preservation Law of 1925. Many of those arrested made formal "*tenkô* declarations" (転向声明), an act that allowed suspects the opportunity to avoid jail or receive a commuted sentence in return for publicizing their renunciation of their problematic political beliefs.[365] The most famous of such declarations was made in June of 1933 by two jailed high-ranking members of the Japanese Communist Party, Sano Manabu and

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society, albeit in a transformed guise. Rather than produce another "exposé" (暴露) of forgotten support for militarism and covert resistance to it, they tried to bracket ethical judgments of wartime intellectual "turns" (tenkô) – a move that led some contemporary reviewers to accuse the group of trying to exonerate wartime collaborators under the guise of objectivity. Yet this attempt was motivated less out of a commitment to positivist or value-neutral social science than by the desire to create the conditions for new forms of flexible political organization on the Left that would not constitute a betrayal of the ideals of popular front democracy. For criticism of the study in English, see Leslie Pincus, *Authenticating Culture in Imperial Japan: Kûki Shûzô and the Rise of National Aesthetics*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 216-217. Other examples include Peter High, *The Imperial Screen*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), xiii-xiv, and Miles Fletcher, *The Search for a New Order: Intellectuals and Fascism in Prewar Japan*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982).

[365] Kevin Doak notes that the vast majority of those arrested for thought crimes under the Peace Preservation Law after 1928 were never persecuted. He points to this as evidence of the widespread preference for eliciting "Tenkô confessions" among the authorities. Kevin Doak, "A Naked Public Square? Religion and Politics in Imperial Japan" *Politics and Religion in Modern Japan* edited by Roy Starrs (New York: Palgrave, 2011).

Nabeyama Sadachika. Sano and Nabeyama's joint *tenkô* statement paved the way for hundreds of similar declarations among lower ranking members in the Party over the next several months.

After the war, writers and journalists stretched the semantic range of the term to refer to other changes in political orientation outside this specific historical and juridical context. For example, the conservative political scientist Hayashi Kentarô referred to his turn toward anti-Communism in the fifties as an act of "*tenkô*" (in scare quotes).[366] This generalized sense of the word was important for the group's later study. Although the *tenkô* of Sano and Nabeyama was a reference point for the researchers, they made a special effort to make visible less apparent shifts in political orientation, particularly among non-Communist intellectuals who had evaded the issue of their own war responsibility by maintaining a low profile amid the widespread turn toward militarism in the thirties and forties.

As a result of the association with Sano and Nabeyama, *tenkô* was a stigmatized term among postwar leftists that connoted political and intellectual capitulation. Intellectuals who lived through the war used the term in a postwar context of accusation or repentant confession. Yet unlike participants in earlier debates, the researchers who participated in the *tenkô* study strove to adopt a more ethically neutral stance toward the idea of political conversion. In the introduction, Tsurumi stated, "We do not make the value judgment that *tenkô* in itself connotes something that is wrong." He claimed that the group used the term because it could imply a variable combination of "external duress" and "personal spontaneity." They perceived both in the wartime political shifts they analyzed.[367]

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[366] Hayshi Kentarô, "Waga 'tenkô' no shishô-tachi" *Shinchô*, (Feb, 1958), 56-60

[367] Tsurumi Shunsuke, "Cooperative Research on Ideological Transformation" *Journal of Social and Political Ideas in Japan*, (Apr. 1964), 54

Besides Tsurumi Shunsuke, most of the researchers were members of the "postwar generation" (戦後派) born in the thirties. They were too young to have experienced the wartime years as adults, and one reviewer claimed that this allowed them to produce a more objective and nuanced account of the intellectual turn to fascism, "free from prejudice and emotional involvement."[368] Yet despite this distance from the events they described, the younger participants in the project did not set out to produce a work of detached historical scholarship. Rather, they hoped to transform the intellectual landscape of postwar Japan and rejuvenate a "stagnant" progressive movement during the fifties. Tsurumi was intially driven by a desire to make sense of his own experiences during the war, while the concerns of younger researchers were anchored in the political situation of the postwar years.

Like many members of their generation in Europe, they felt caught between the authority of the Communist Party and the conformism they associated with middle-class and white-collar culture. They searched the past for insight into dilemmas facing the contemporary left, paying particular attention to the organizational difficulties encountered by their wartime counterparts. At the same time as they noted parallels between the thirties and fifties, they believed they were facing a new political situation, one that roughly corresponded to the descriptions of mass middle-class society in the work of David Riesman and C. Wright Mills, both of whom were translated into Japanese while the *tenkô* study was underway. Though they did not intend to depoliticize the past, they believed the persistence of the *tenkô* stigma made political adjustment to this changed situation difficult.

The researchers worked to further two objectives that had motivated the original formation of *Science of Thought* in 1946. The first was to reorient intellectual attention away from "pristine systems of thought" to the messier ad-hoc philosophies of life implicit in everyday behavior.

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[368] Yuzuru Okada, "Part II – Japanese Intellectuals: Their Thought – Notes by the Editor" *Journal of Social and Political Ideas in Japan*, (Apr. 1964), 37

Focusing on political conversions was an attempt to redefine thought or ideology (思想) in a way

that emphasized its dynamic relationship with individual experience rather than its "absolute

correctness." Indeed, Tsurumi argued that in the same way artifacts of popular culture were usually

considered too vulgar or reactionary to warrant serious intellectual attention, the thought and

behavior of the "politically converted" (転向者) had been ignored or dismissed after the war ended.

This was not only because focusing attention upon the wartime activities of the converts would add

to the shame they experienced after the war, but also because the fact that they had performed *tenkô*

was considered evidence that their ideas had been proven "wrong" and were thus not worth

dwelling upon after the war. Tsurumi criticized the Communist Party for using this logic to ignore

tenkô while lavishing attention on the heroic actions of "politically unconverted" (非転向) party

members who chose imprisonment over renouncing their political beliefs. In the preface to the first

volume of the *tenkô* study, he wrote:

> "Researching *tenkô* is like kicking a weakling while he is down. It won't accomplish anything."
> This way of thinking remains deeply entrenched." It is a way of thinking that grasps the
> history of Japanese thought as the development of correct ideology – as progress from one
> correct viewpoint to the next. In each stage of history there is one form of absolute
> correctness. On a single elevated line linking together each form of absolute correctness sit
> the successive ideologies of the unconverted. (非転向の思想). The presupposition that the
> history of Japanese thought ought to be viewed like a precipitous mountain ridge guarantees
> that it will continue to bear little fruit. Because they want to display the height and
> continuity of the mountain skyline, people make a forced effort to make it seem higher and
> to make the discontinuous areas seem continuous. However, when you view this history
> fairly, the line is neither high nor continuous. This is why both the left and the right have
> made a forced effort to beautify it. This effort only serves to create again and again the same
> hypocritical and whitewashed history of Japanese thought.[369]

Tsurumi argued that, by viewing intellectual history as a linear succession of "correct

ideologies" elevated over a landscape of error, postwar intellectuals had ignored the ambiguous and

often contradictory relationship among ideas, experience, and empirically observable behavior. This

[369] Tsurumi Shunsuke, "Joron: tenkô no kyôdô kenkyô ni tsuite," *Kyôdô kenkyû tenkô* edited by Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai, (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1959), 3

from which to criticize the Communist Party without renouncing their commitment to Leftist ideals of social transformation and radical democracy. The critique of the bureaucratization of the French Communist Party advanced by Cornelius Castoriadis and other contributors to the journal *Socialisme ou Barbarie* (1949-1965) was one example. Takeuchi Yoshimi's critique of the Japanese Communist Party as an extension of an "honor student culture" that disdained manual labor was another.[371]

Yet criticizing the Communist Party was not enough. The research group argued that the failure of non-Communist intellectuals, politicians, and journalists to fully face up to their own forms of *tenkô* during the war was symptomatic of a broader tendency to disguise, ignore, or simplistically rationalize changes in political position over time. Without making any dramatic moves, these intellectuals had quietly adapted to the political environment of the wartime years, and they continued to adapt to a shifting ideological situation after the war. The *tenkô* study suggested that this behavior contributed to a widespread sense of contemporary political inertia.

One contemporary symptom of this inertia cited by the group was the phenomenon of unacknowledged "employment conversions" (就職転向) among contemporary student activists who shed their radical beliefs upon graduating from university. Many of the researchers were themselves students, and they were acutely conscious of the pressure to suppress one's anti-establishment political views in the interest of securing employment. They accused companies of using an array of tactics to screen prospective job candidates for "red" beliefs, which, like tuberculosis, were popularly believed to be contagious. While arguing that the wartime state and postwar society enforced political and intellectual conformity through different mechanisms, they perceived continuity between their own situation and that faced by the political converts they researched.[372]

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[371] Yoshimi Takeuchi, "Intellectuals" " *Journal of Social and Political Ideas in Japan*, (Apr. 1964), 89-90

[372] Yamaryô Kenji, personal communication.

Members of the Science of Thought *tenkô* research circle approached their subject from a standpoint critical of 1950s conformism and anxious about a repeat of the failure of Leftist anti-war movements in Japan. Through this approach, they challenged the Cold War discourse of political realism advanced by conservative thinkers that portrayed the shedding of radical ideas as a natural consequence of a life-course progression from idealistic adolescence to sober maturity. By carefully distinguishing *tenkô* from "maturity" and relating it to the present, these young thinkers tried to renegotiate the boundary between a normative life cycle and the arena of Cold War politics.

The Intellectual Origins of *Tenkô* Research

Reopening the issue of *tenkô* was connected with generational conflict over unresolved issues of war responsibility. Tsurumi originally proposed researching political conversions in 1946, and he later claimed that his interest in the subject was motivated by anger toward the wartime behavior of his father, the liberal politician Tsurumi Yûsuke (1885-1973). The idea came to him while he was in Java as an English translator for the Imperial Navy. He returned to Japan from studying at Harvard in 1942, and that same year he enlisted as a military translator in order to avoid being drafted. While stationed in Java, he agonized over whether he might eventually be forced to take part in combat. Under these conditions, he fantasized about killing himself and his father Tsurumi Yûsuke, whose actions during wartime inspired his initial "model" of *tenkô* behavior, a model he generalized to apply to actions beyond the scope of formal declarations by suspected Communists.

The elder Tsurumi was first elected to the Diet in 1928. Influenced by the internationalism of Nitobe Inazô and Woodrow Wilson, he publicly supported stronger ties between America and Japan before the outbreak of the Pacific War. He sent his children Shunsuke and Kazuko to study in the US in 1938, at a time of increased diplomatic tension between the two countries. At the same time, he supported expansion and war in China after the Manchurian Incident in 1931.

Tsurumi Shunsuke came to regard his father's support of the war as a betrayal of his liberal, cosmopolitan beliefs. He saw this betrayal as representative of a turn among many writers, academics, and politicians to embrace the war effort amidst widespread enthusiasm for imperial expansion in China. For example, Kurata Hyakuzô, whose books he had avidly read as a teenager, seemed to abandon an individualistic, free-spirited philosophy of life in order to conform to the demand for total mobilization during the war. Anger toward figures like Kurata and his father fueled Tsurumi's desire to establish an alternative to the intellectual ideals of cosmopolitanism and *kyôyô* after the war. [373]

Tsurumi believed thinkers and politicians ought to pay more attention to the twists and turns in their intellectual trajectory. Ignoring the past was an evasion of responsibility, while simply expressing remorse and labeling one's wartime actions a "mistake" was a means to avoid analyzing them in a way that might reveal unexpected continuities between the past and the present.

A positive model for him was the Harvard philosopher George Santayana. He first proposed researching *tenkô* in a long review of Santayana's multi-volume autobiography *Persons and Places* and his partly autobiographical novel *The Last Puritan*. There he argued that Japanese thinkers should learn from Santayana's ability to "follow thought to its origin and show the process of intellectual change" – particularly in reference to illuminating the connections between his early Catholic beliefs and his later position of philosophical agnosticism.

The descriptive "individual case-study" approach adopted by the *tenkô* study was influenced by Santayana's attempt at philosophical autobiography. Tsurumi was impressed by how Santayana avoiding framing his intellectual trajectory as a story of linear progress from religious superstition to a more enlightened or "correct" worldview. Santayana, a colleague and critic of the pragmatist William James at Harvard, began a section of his autobiographical essay, "A General Confession" by

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[373] Tsurumi Shunsuke, *Kitai to kaisô* vol. 1, (Tokyo: Shôbunsha, 1997), 29

noting that a reader of his earlier humanistic works "may notice a certain change of climate" when confronted with recent works by him that assert the primacy of man's "animal mind." Despite this seeming shift, he argued that a "philosophically religious" attitude linked his Catholic upbringing and early humanism with writings that adopted a more naturalistic and agnostic position.

> I had begun philosophising quite normally, by bleating like any young lamb: agitated by religion, passionately laying down the law for art and politics, and even bubbling over into conventional verses, which I felt to be oracular and irresistible. But my vocation was clear: my earliest speculation was at once intimate and universal, and philosophically religious, as it has always remained; yet not exclusively on the lines of that complete Christian system which first offered itself to my imagination. I was always aware of alternatives; nor did these alternatives seem utterly hostile and terrible… Hesitation and heresy were odious to me in any quarter; and I cared more for the internal religious force of each faith than for such external reasons as might be urged to prove that faith or to disprove it.[374]

This consistent attitude led Santayana to a relativistic position of "radical criticism" toward both religious dogma and skeptics that purport to be free of dogmatic beliefs.

> The exposition of my philosophy is still incomplete... Yet virtually the whole system was latent in me from the beginning. When in adolescence I oscillated between solipsism and the Catholic faith, that was an accidental dramatic way of doing honour both to rigour and to abundance. But the oscillation was frivolous and the two alternate positions were self-indulgent. A self-indulgent faith sets up its casual myths and rashly clings to them as to literal truths; while a self-indulgent scepticism pretends to escape all dogma, forgetting its own presuppositions. With time it was natural that oscillation should give place to equilibrium; not, let us hope, to a compromise, which of all things is the most unstable and unphilosophical; but to a radical criticism putting each thing where it belongs. Without forgetting or disowning anything, myth might then be corrected by disillusion, and scepticism by sincerity. So transformed, my earliest affections can survive in my latest.[375]

Tsurumi saw Santayana as a philosopher who strove to sustain an ongoing dialectic between his philosophical thinking and the experience he had accumulated over the course of his life. Skepticism that was internally coherent yet implicitly contradicted by one's behavior lacked sincerity, yet banishing skepticism in order to defend or rationalize one's behavior meant plunging into myth.

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[374] George Santayana, "A General Confession," in *The Essential Santayana* edited by Martin A. Coleman, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), 18

[375] Ibid, 22

Rationalizing or ignoring everyday actions was symptomatic of the sundered relationship between philosophy and experience that Tsurumi had hoped to overcome after the war. At the end of his *American Philosophy*, he argued it was now necessary to "develop techniques to force contact between philosophy and every nook and cranny of everyday life."[376] Thought and behavior ought to remain in a state of ceaseless cross-pollination.

Tsurumi suggested that Santayana's embrace of his outsider status in American society demonstrated an acute awareness of the need to reconcile philosophy and everyday life. Despite the weakening of his religious faith, Santayana refused to downplay his Catholic background to blend into the predominantly Protestant community in Boston.

> … a *déraciné*, a man who has been torn up by the roots, cannot be replanted and should never propagate his kind. In the matter of religion, for instance, I found myself in this blind alley. I was not a believer in what my religion, or any religion, teaches dogmatically; yet I wouldn't for the world have had a wife or children dead to religion. Had I lived always in Spain, even with my present philosophy, I should have found no difficulty: my family would have been Catholic like every other family; and the philosophy of religion, if ever eventually discussed among us, would have been a subsequent private speculation, with no direct social consequences. But living in a Protestant country, the free-thinking Catholic is in a socially impossible position. He cannot demand that his wife and children be Catholics, since he is not, in a controversial sense, a Catholic himself; yet he cannot bear that they should be Protestants or freethinkers, without any Catholic tradition or feelings. They would not then be his wife or children except by accident: they would not to his people. I know that there are some who accept this even pretend to have become Protestants, and bury as deep as possible the fact that they were born Catholics or Jews. But I am not a man of that stamp. I have been involuntarily uprooted. I accept the intellectual advantages of that position, with its social and moral disqualifications. And I refuse to be annexed, to be abolished, or to be grafted onto any plant of a different species.[377]

Tsurumi was impressed by Santayana's effort to turn his *deraciné* position into an intellectual advantage rather than a source of shame. He believed Santayana understood the critical force of "reactionary" religious ideas of original sin that ran counter to deeply rooted tendencies among

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[376] Tsurumi Shunsuke, *Amerika tetsugaku*, in *Tsurumi Shunsuke chosakushû* 1, (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 1975), 173

[377] George Santayana, *Persons and Places*, volume 2, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1945), 122-123

American intellectuals – the tendency to adopt an optimistic view of progress and human nature in particular.

The Harvard-educated Tsurumi may have wanted to turn his lingering unease around intellectuals educated in Japan into a similar advantage. He argued that it was worth adopting a stance similar to Santayana's in order to oppose the dominant intellectual tendencies in postwar Japanese society, which he described as follows:

> In Japan, there is a powerful tendency (A) to perceive August 15, 1945 as a tectonic event, such that all words and deeds before that day are called "militaristic" and everything afterwards is called "democratic." Furthermore, separately from A, there also exists the tendency (B) to separate all contemporary words and deeds into two and call one "progressive" and the other "reactionary." Let us call A and B representative of the two opposed powers in Japanese society. "Militaristic" and "democratic," "reactionary" and "progressive" – it is useful to grasp an object through these broad divisions. Yet on occasion, dividing things in two like this appears to be a means to avoid thinking about them in more penetrating detail, concomitant to a type of intellectual laziness. Observe the way "reactionary" is used in literary and intellectual criticism. Regrettably, it sometimes suggests the attitude that since the object (to which the word "reactionary" is affixed like a street poster) is bad, there is no need to pay close attention to it or to research it. I think that especially now, the essence of such "reactionary" things ought to be researched with greater interest than ever, and that the occult, pejorative (呪詛的) use of the word "reactionary" is harmful. The more August 15th appears a decisive "fault line," the more we ought to expend effort at seeing the continuity that runs across it. Before and during the war, the potential for a democratic movement existed here and there, and during the postwar of today militarism remains embedded in various aspects of daily life. The basis of the so-called democracy of today was already visible in the words and deeds of wartime, and the basis of militarism of yesterday still remains a pillar of the daily life of the people.[378]

In Tsurumi's view, there were two ways to approach this continuity. The first was to try to track "value perversion" (価値倒錯) among the masses (大衆) before, during, and after the war, explaining the process by which one set of values (postwar) could both replace and be based upon an earlier set of values (prewar and wartime). The difficulty of observing change and continuity at the level of "subjective value-orientation" animated articles on American social science that filled up

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[378] Tsurumi Shunsuke, op. cit., 127. The earliest version of this chapter is Tsurumi Shunsuke, "Hon no uwasa: *Santayana jiden* dai-2-kan," *Shisô no kagaku* (Dec. 1946).

much of the early issues of *Science of Thought*. The "Philosophy of Ordinary People" project that

Tsurumi helped organize was intended as a first step toward applying American social scientific

methods to the problem. Drawing upon interdisciplinary attempts to study value change in America,

participants in the project hoped to form a more accurate picture of popular subjectivity that

avoided the usual way of dividing the world into "militaristic" and "democratic" or "reactionary"

and "progressive" camps during the Cold War. Yet critics in and outside the group argued that

the results were distorted by the researchers' estranged relationship with the "common people" they

studied.

The second approach to trans-war continuity was to study the *tenkô* of intellectuals from Left

to Right. Besides unearthing the value-systems of ordinary people, one could observe continuity

and change through an analysis of political conversions, *tenkô*, among opinion leaders during and

after the war.

> Since "Tenkô," a phenomenon that occurred among hundreds of famous opinion leaders, might seem peculiar to Japan, it requires special scrutiny. Yet it resembles the phenomenon by which Christianity replaced the various sects of Rome, and it must be discussed from the standpoint of world history and in connection with sciences like the psychology of religion. We could thus call this research an investigation of the principle of conversion (回心).[379]

In order to perceive continuity and avoid categorizing this behavior according to the

conventional "progressive or reactionary" dichotomy, Tsurumi argued that it would be necessary for

analysts to "extend a hand of sympathy to all people, while also ensnaring them in a net of

accusations." Tsurumi shelved the *tenkô* proposal for eight years, choosing instead to direct his

energies toward researching the "Philosophy of Ordinary People" together with other members of

Science of Thought. He returned to the issue in the mid-fifties – a time when the issue of

continuities between the pre-1945 past and the present began to attract widespread interest.

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[379] Ibid, 12

Kôdansha and Middle-class Culture

Why might Tsurumi have returned to the issue of *tenkô* in the fifties? One reason might have been the growing perception among progressives that they were rapidly heading toward the same "defeat" experienced by their Leftist counterparts during the thirties. This perception was provided theoretical support by influential cultural analyses of the "semi-feudal" structure of the Japanese psyche that informed the *tenkô* study. It also seemed to correspond to unfolding social and political changes. The popular-front progressive movement that emerged out of the "revolutionary situation" of the early Occupation years entered a period of turmoil from 1951 to 1955. The Japanese Communist Party, whose leaders had commanded respect among progressives owing to their anti-fascist credentials, split in 1951 over the question of whether or not to support armed struggle in the countryside in solidarity with the Communists fighting in the Korean War. Public opinion turned against the party while progressive intellectuals clashed over how to respond to the Communist movement at home and abroad.

Within Science of Thought, one source of anxiety was the disappearance of many progressive associations formed in the early years after the war. *Science of Thought* was one among dozens of associations and intellectual journals during the surge of popular interest in democracy from 1945 to 1947. By 1953, Tsurumi Shunsuke looked back on this origin and ominously noted that the almost all of these early associations and journals had disappeared. The journal and Institute had become an "orphans."[380] At the same time, the increasing popularity and confidence of new conservative weekly magazines associated with middle-class culture was a source of concern among liberal and leftist progressives. The situation faced by intellectuals during the years leading up to total mobilization for war seemed relevant to make sense of the present. Indeed, when the final volume of the study appeared in 1962, it was trumpeted in *Science of Thought* as "A universal must-

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[380] Tsurumi Shunsuke "Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai kaihô" *Me* (Jan. 1953)

read during the return of the age of great *tenkô*!!" (再びめぐりきた大転向の時代に万人必読の書!!)

In 1954, the same year Tsurumi Shunsuke and other members of Science of Thought began the *tenkô* study, the Institute began an ill-fated relationship with the publisher Kôdansha that lasted only 11 months. Unlike the small-scale operations that had put out *Science of Thought* and *Me* in the past, Kôdansha was a major corporation that published everything from mass tabloids (*Kingu*) to manga (*Nakayoshi*) to literary journals (*Gunzô*). The company had high hopes that *Science of Thought* would appeal to a mass audience, but circulation numbers remained low and its association with the Institute was marred by controversy and conflict with the Japanese Communist Party. The group's experience with Kôdansha raised new questions about the sustainability of a progressive movement that tried to bring together different generational, socioeconomic, and ideological groups under a single banner. Critics also wondered whether the ascendency of a new middle-class culture during the fifties might be rendering the raison-d'être of Science of Thought – overcoming the gap between intellectuals and the masses, obsolete. The *tenkô* study was motivated in part by a desire to imagine a progressive movement that could thrive in this new culture without compromising its political ideals entirely.

Kôdansha might initially seem to have been a natural fit for Science of Thought's vision of a common democratic culture. The founders of the group intended the journal *Science of Thought* to be part of a broader "thought movement" (思想運動) that would overcome the social and cultural gap that separated intellectuals from the masses – a gap that many progressives believed had contributed to the rise of militarism in Japan during the thirties. In a 1947 essay, "Cultural Revolution and the Task of the Intellectual Stratum," the Marxist literary theorist Kurahara Korehito famously characterized this gap as the continued separation of Japan into two distinct cultures of reading – "Kôdansha culture" and "Iwanami culture." Kurahara described Iwanami culture, named

after the publishing house Iwanami shoten, as an elite intellectual culture associated with the

academicism, *kyôyô,* and prestigious universities and high schools.[381] Iwanami was well known for

publishing a paperback series of canonical works of literature and philosophy from East and West,

and its flagship journal before 1945 was the scholarly, philosophical journal *Thought* (*Shisô*). Since

Science of Thought appeared highly critical of the intellectual "obscurantism" of Iwanami-connected

philosophers like Nishida Kitarô, some observers were under the impression that the "Thought" (思

想) in the group's name was part of a subtle dig at the Iwanami publication, an interpretation that

implied that Iwanami's journal *Thought* was unscientific.

At the other end of the spectrum, Kôdansha culture was associated with mass-market

peridocials and popular novels. Science of Thought repeatedly criticized intellectuals for dismissing

"Kôdansha culture" as crass and unworthy of serious literary criticism. Early articles in the group's

journal tried to demonstrate the shortsightedness of this view of popular culture. Tsurumi Shunsuke

and Takeda Kiyoko analyzed best-selling works by Sasaki Kuni, a writer of comic fiction, and

Yoshikawa Eiji, a writer of historical fiction known for his classic samurai novel *Miyamoto Musashi*.

Both of these writers wrote serialized novels in newspapers that were later published books by

Kôdansha. Treating their works seriously was part of a multi-faceted attempt to promote a common

culture of democracy by redefining the boundaries that separated intellectual and popular spheres.

By teaming up with Kôdansha, the Institute for the Science of Thought sought to bring a

vision of democratic culture to a larger audience. Yet in trying to increase the journal's popular

appeal, the editors were accused of dumbing it down and succumbing to the temptation of crass

commercialism. A particular target of ridicule was a folded insert in the first issue of the re-launched

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[381] Kurahara Korehito, "Bunka kakumei to chishikisô no ninmu" *Sekai* (Jun. 1946). See also
Horiguchi Tsuyoshi, "Senjiki ni okeru Iwanami bunko no juyô" *Masu komynikêshon kenkyû* (no. 72,
2008).

Science of Thought depicting "The Three -isms" (existentialism, Marxism, and pragmatism) in comic format. The comic was intended to accompany a series of published dialogues between academics and high school students on the subject of various "isms." The intention was to force academics to explain complicated philosophical systems of thought to a non-specialist audience.
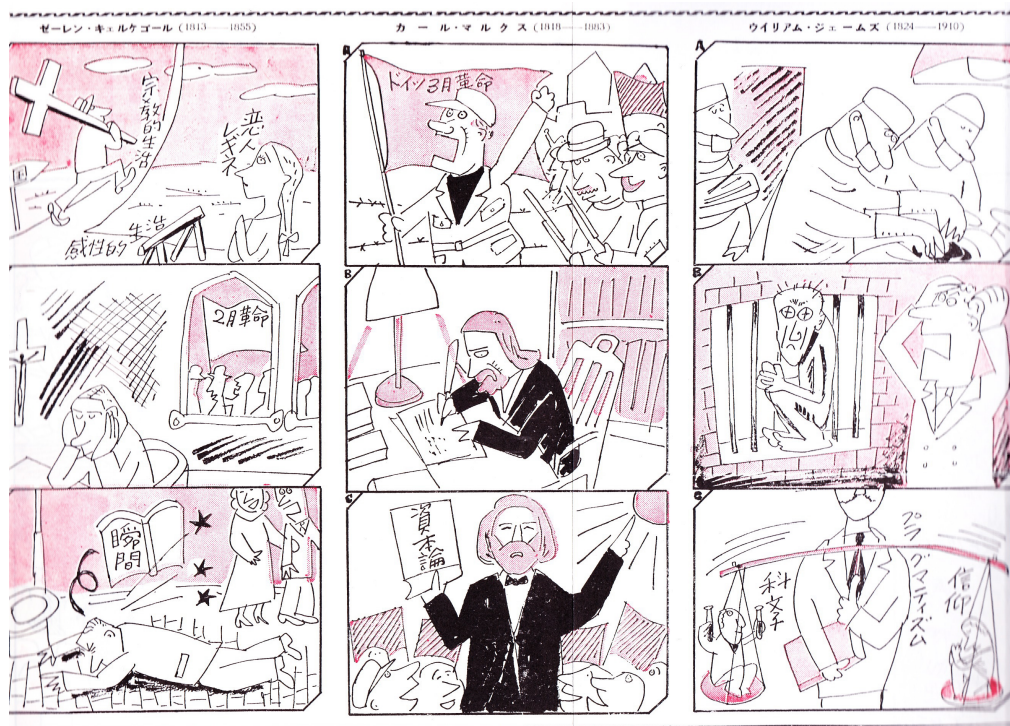
Figure 5.1 – Detail from fold-out insert, "The Three –Isms" included in May 1954 issue of *Science of Thought*. The three vertical comics depict the emergence of existentialism, Marxism, and pragmatism through the lives of Søren Kierkegaard, Karl Marx, and William James.

The next month, the journal published a sampling of the negative responses to this experiment. One reviewer put it as follows: "The authors argue against reducing thought (*shisô*) to formulaic –isms while at the same time including a meaningless fold-out "Scroll (e-maki) of the History of Modern Thought"– an act that makes a mockery both of the masses and of thought."[382]

Although the responses were not all negative, the backlash against the comic both in and outside the Institute was symptomatic of the difficulty of broadening the journal's popular appeal

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[382] Shinohara Isaku review quoted in *Science of Thought*, (Jun 1954), 82

without alienating its regular readers. This was a particularly sensitive issue in the mid-fifties, when divergent predictions regarding the emergence of new expressions of middle-class culture (中間文化) circulated among intellectuals in Japan, United States, and Western Europe. Symbols of middlebrow culture included *Reader's Digest* and the *Saturday Review* in America and weekly magazines (週刊誌) like *Sandê mainichi* and *Shûkan shinchô* in Japan. Though weeklies had existed in Japan before the war, their circulation increased dramatically in the fifties, and after 1956 major publishers scrambled to launch their own to keep up with the demand.   Whereas mass journals like *Kingu* were associated with entertainment and intellectual journals like *Sekai* with serious discussions of politics and culture, new weeklies mixed news, commentary, and entertainment in a way that seemed to blur the line between the two. The popularity of weeklies and the threat they seemed to pose to the publishing niche occupied by highbrow journals reawakened latent anxiety over the relationship between mass culture and totalitarianism. In America for example, the critic Dwight MacDonald argued that the way middlebrow magazines mixed politics and entertainment might enable totalitarianism.[383]

Throughout the fifties, Science of Thought was torn between embracing middle-class culture and trying to provide a critical alternative to it. On the one hand, new forms of journalism and literature associated with the middle-class might bridge the wide separation between intellectual and mass culture that had seemed so problematic in the aftermath of the war. On the other hand, unlike more "apolitical" forms of popular culture studied by the group, it seemed to the group to run the risk of turning politics into a form of entertainment. Some articles in *Science of Thought* focused on the way consumer culture opened up new avenues for political participation in the progressive movement. The journal ran an article by a Kyoto University student, Nishimura Kazuo, who tried

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[383] Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 66.

to involve hundreds of young female readers of the weekly *Heibon* in the Peace Movement by corresponding with them through the personals section of the magazine.[384] Other articles, such as the sociologist Hidaka Rokurô's essay "On Political Apathy," adopted a more negative view of the overall affect of popular culture on political participation.

Fujita Shôzô, a student of Maruyama Masao and unorthodox member of the Communist Party who became a central member of the *tenkô* study group, produced one of the more sophisticated analyses of the relationship between politics and popular culture. He argued in 1953 that "Americanized" mass culture had taken over one of the key ideological functions he ascribed to the pre-1945 state – removing the emperor from the messy realm of politics. Before 1945, official propaganda and censorship ensured that the emperor was outside the boundaries of acceptable political discussion. Though some criticism was allowed by the Allied Occupation, Fujita argued that the American Occupiers encouraged the mass media to transform him into a different kind of transcendent figure, an apolitical celebrity.[385]

Fujita's critique touched on an important difference between new middle-class weeklies and intellectual journals associated with progressivism, including *Science of Thought* – the former carried many more articles on the activities of the imperial household. Some intellectuals associated this popular interest in the imperial household with a "reactionary" desire to restore the pre-1945 regime. Although Fujita harshly criticized the hidden links between the mass media and remnants of the wartime regime, his analysis suggested that intellectuals who ignored the appeal of these new expressions of popular culture did so at their own peril.

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[384] Nishimura Kazuo, "Otome-tachi wa kangaeru,"*Shisô no kagaku*, (May 1954). For more on Nishimura's letter-writing campaign, see Sakamoto Hiroshi, *"Heibon" no jidai* (Kyoto: Shôwadô, 2008), 38-44

[385] Fujita Shôzô, "Tenôsei to wa nani ka," *Tenôsei no shihai genri*, (Tokyo: Misuzu shobô, 1998), 12

In 1957, Fujita was interviewed by the journal *Chûô kôron* about his view of the 1956 Soviet Invasion of Hungary, an event that deepened the political schism on the Left caused by de-Stalinization the same year over whether or not to support the Communist Party. The debate focused on whether (1) to express solidarity with the rebels' fight for "national self-determination" (Minzoku kaihô) in light of Japan's own "semi-colonial" status vis-à-vis the US during the Cold War, (2) to oppose the rebels as "reactionary" in order to promote Soviet victory in the struggle for international socialism, or (3) to remain silent. Fujita expressed some dissatisfaction with all these views. The Japanese Communist Party's policy of endorsing the Soviet invasion might be the "correct answer," but it was a form of blind political "a priorism" that alienated the party from the masses. "Active silence," the position of the Japanese Socialist Party, was an apolitical gesture that corresponded to the growing conservative sensibility of the masses outlined in Fujita's essay on Americanization. He ultimately endorsed the adaptive political "realism" (リアリズム) of the Yugoslavian leader Josip Broz Tito. He argued that Tito made an effort to adapt to a changing situation, criticizing the first Soviet deployment of troops to Hungary but endorsing the second when he felt the violence of the uprising began to threaten "socialist society." Less important than Fujita's specific response was his assertion that the Left had to develop a form of political realism that was capable of connecting the conservative "existential moral sensibility" of the masses (taishû) to a contingent "universal potentiality" implicit in every unfolding political event.[386]

For Fujita, the masses were neither feudal reactionaries nor progressive proletarians. They had a peaceful, inward-looking mindset that was misunderstood by the Left and manipulated by promoters of social "tranquility" on the Right. This was in line with an approach to mass and middlebrow culture adopted by critics who were more sympathetic to its aims than Dwight McDonald. For example, in 1949, the American art historian Russell Lynes lauded the middlebrow

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[386] Fujita Shôzô, "1956-nen Hangarî mondai o megutte," *Chûô Kôron* (Feb. 1957)

zeal for self-improvement, and he argued that Virginia Woolf's critique of it as "betwixt and between" implied that the world ought to be forever separated into two classes – lowbrows who work and highbrows who create art.[387] A few years later, the Science of Thought-affiliated sociologist Katô Hidetoshi wrote an article in which he argued that intellectuals who dismissed middlebrow culture (his gloss on "chûkan bunka") were guided by an erroneous conception of the emergent new "realities" of postwar society.

> It is possible that as middlebrow culture continues to develop, it will become the core of the national culture of Japan... If this becomes the case, it would be sheer sentimentalism for our intellectuals to continue to display contempt for their own petit-bourgeois mentality and condemn such expressions of the new mass culture as the weekly magazines and musicals. The petit-bourgeois intellectuals of Japan today should free themselves from their unreasonable obsessions and re-evaluate what their position in society really is. If they do so they will find that today's middle-class assumes a far more important role in society than did the petite bourgeoisie whose decline was predicted by Marx and Engels. The doctrine of class struggle, which mechanistically divides social classes into capitalists and laborers and ignores the interests of the middle-class, can on longer be applied to the realities of Japanese society. The members of the middle-class should indeed take pride and confidence in their role in society.[388]

Intellectuals had become incapable of perceiving reality due to their fidelity to a static image of class-divided society. Unless they corrected this image, they would become irrelevant. The logic of Katô's argument resembled one of the new explanations for *tenkô* during the war. A year after his article appeared, Yoshimoto Takaaki argued that Communists unnecessarily isolated themselves from the masses due to their superficial understanding of the semi-feudal, as opposed to purely class-based, structure of Japanese society. This isolation eventually created the conditions for Sano and Nabeyama's "conversion" to fascism in 1933 – a turn that they argued was the result of suddenly discovering that revolution had to be adapted to the "particular conditions" of Japanese society.

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[387] Russell Lynes, "Highbrow, Lowbrow, Middlebrow" *Harper's Magazine* (Feb. 1949).

[388] Katô Hidetoshi, "Middlebrow Culture" *Journal of Social and Political Ideas in Japan*, (Apr. 1964), 73-74

The *tenkô* study was inseparable from the question of how intellectuals ought to relate to ongoing transformations associated with the rapid growth of the middle-class. The question of how to adapt to a changing social environment while retaining some form of active political commitment appeared to be a key problem for intellectuals during both the thirties and the fifties. Furthermore, one reason why the researchers wanted to overcome the notion that *tenkô* was a simple black-or-white issue was because they believed a similar attitude informed intellectual attitudes toward the rise of middle-class mass culture. The goal was not to exonerate wartime converts or become boosters for the middle-class, but to somehow prevent repeat of the thirties. The participants were guided by a desire to avoid the collapse of the progressive movement in Japan by recalibrating its course and reforming it from within – before it reached a crisis that would lead to a repetition of the past.

While the *tenkô* study was underway, Science of Thought confronted an internal crisis that touched on its relationship to both the Communist Party and middle-class culture that caused it cease publishing the journal for most of the duration of the project. On March 13th 1955, the weekly tabloid *Sundê Mainichi* published an article on an ongoing "internal conflict" within Science of Thought. It reported that someone in the organization had accused Tsurumi Shunsuke of embezzling funds from Kôdansha to start a new business venture with an unnamed woman. The article noted that "… *Science of Thought* has less than 10,000 copies in circulation and it mainly focuses on youth-oriented "enlightenment activities"… It's influence is not nearly as great as the journal *Kaizô*, but exposing this internal conflict is a big deal because a number of big name young intellectuals are on the advisory board of the Institute, including Takeuchi Yoshimi, Minami Hiroshi, Kawashima Takeyoshi, and Taketani Mitsuo."[389] Tsurumi denied the accusation but Kôdansha ended its relationship with the Institute shortly after the *Sundê Mainichi* article appeared.

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[389] -- "Naifun tsuzuku sôgô zasshi," *Sandê mainichi*, (Mar. 13, 1955), 62 (fix quote)

Years later Tsurumi argued that the conflict was part of a plot to have him expelled from the group by members of the Japanese Communist Party who had joined the Institute during a period of expansion in the early fifties. The membership of the Institute, which had begun to open local branches all over Japan, grew rapidly at that time due to the political turmoil that enveloped the Communist Party and the Communist-controlled Association of Democratic Scientists (Minka) during around the time of the Korean War. Intellectuals who were dissatisfied or had been purged from these groups gravitated toward Science of Thought, increasing tensions within the group and between it and the Party.[390]

The chairman of the Institute at the time, Takeuchi Yoshimi, eventually steered the group out of this period of internal turmoil and the members, including those affiliated with the Communist Party, unanimously voted against censuring Tsurumi. Yet the scandal had exposed sharp divisions within Science of Thought, and an effort was made to make its finances more transparent and to strengthen the connection between the Tokyo office and branches in cities like Nagoya and Kyoto.[391] The Institute, now without a publisher for its journal, was in dire straits, but the *tenkô* study offered the hope that the past might offer insight into how to avoid a total collapse.

Organization Men

The young intellectuals who participated in the fifties *tenkô* study were guided by contemporary concerns that were mostly absent in Tsurumi's original proposal to study the phenomenon in 1946. This included widespread interest in how different "organizations" (組織) and "small associations" (小集団) could influence the behavior of their members. A year before the

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[390] Yokô Kaori, "'Shisô no kagaku' ni okeru tagenshugi no tenkai to taishû e no apurôchi" *Shakai kagakubu kensetsu 40-shûnen kinen gakusei robun shû*, (Nov. 2006), 202

[391] Ibid.

study began, the sociologist Katô Hidetoshi wrote a short essay entitled "group *tenkô*" in which he

argued that the issue of political conversion had been distorted by the tendency of critics to focus on

dramatic individual declarations made by imprisoned Communists, rather than the more subtle

political and ideological changes that occurred within the relative anonymity of an organization.

> So-called "*tenkô*" generally implies a "*tenkô* declaration" affixed to an "individual" name.
> However, the inconspicuous sort of *tenkô* I am referring to is generally affixed to the name
> of an "association" (集団) – an association linked to wartime socialist and labor parties for
> example. The individuals who performed such *tenkô* are lost in the shadow of the
> organization. Group control (コントロール) over relationships among individual members
> softens the curve of a political turn (tenkô), and the individual feels little friction in the case
> of collective, gradual *tenkô*. In other words, they manage to escape in the midst of a group
> undergoing *tenkô*, unlike solitary political converts – so-called *tenkôsha* (転向者).[392]

Katô wanted to shift the debate about *tenkô* from questions of individual political subjectivity

toward the group. This would link it to ongoing efforts to create autonomous, democratic, and

resilient organizations that might anchor a revitalized progressive movement in the fifties. At the

end of 1954, the internal newsletter for the Institute for the Science of Thought published a

preliminary report on the *tenkô* study drafted by Hanzawa Hiroshi, a former high school teacher and

political activist from Tottori prefecture. He became involved in Science of Thought after meeting

Tsurumi, then an assistant professor at Kyoto University, at a local protest against the "Subversive

Activity Prevention Law" (破壊活動防止法) in 1952.[393] In the report, Hanzawa asserted that

researching *tenkô* could help overcome organizational difficulties confronted by progressive

associations.

> We agonize over the organizational problems (組織の問題) confronted by the thought
> campaigns (思想運動) underway in Japanese society, and rigorous *tenkô* research can be

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[392] Katô Hidetoshi, "Shûdan no naka no tenkô" *Me*, (July, 1953).

[393] The law, intended to "restrict the activities of or even to dissolve organizations involved in certain
terroristic subversive activities," was passed by the Diet in the wake of the clash between police
forces and demonstrators during the "Bloody May Day" of 1952. It was attacked by the Left as step
backwards toward the "peace preservation" laws of the past. See Cecil H. Uyehara, *The Subversive
Activities Prevntion Law of Japan*, (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

used to improve organizing techniques. In each historical instance, the collapse of various progressive movements in modern Japan finds expression in a burst of political conversions that betray the calculations of movement leaders. These conditions are relevant even today, after the war.

Interest in organizational techniques was stimulated by the participation of intellectuals in the circle movement during the late forties and early fifties. The mixed experiences of participants and observers inspired dozens of proposals to improve the way circles and labor unions were organized. Even as they searched the past for a means to overcome contemporary organizational difficulties among progressives, members of the Science of Thought *tenkô* study circle paid careful attention to the organizational structure of their own group. Unlike looser study groups that had been formed as of the Institute in the past, the *tenkô* group published a plan that outlined the division of labor in the circle and proposed a system whereby group members would be in charge of preparing informational note cards on the individual intellectuals included in the study, a technique intended to facilitate communication within the circle.[394]

The search for transparent and egalitarian organizational techniques was also stimulated by disillusionment with the hierarchical structure of the Japanese Communist Party. Some critics blamed the inconsistent and unpopular decisions of the JCP leadership for causing an "impasse" in circle-organizing during the mid-fifties. They pointed to the "bureaucratization" of the Party as a reason for its failures. In 1956, the literary critic Itô Sei wrote an influential essay "Organization and the Human," in which he argued that Communist writers, insofar as they were "cogs in an organization," were no different from journalists in a corporate bureaucracy.[395] Focusing on the way different bureaucratic organizations enabled *tenkô* provided a standpoint from which to advance a critique of technocratic tendencies in postwar society that also accounted for the failures of a

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[394] Tenkô kenkyû gurûpu, "Tenkô kenkyû no puran" *Shisô no kagaku kaihô* (Dec. 1954), 10

[395] Itô Sei quoted in Hirano Ken, *Shôwa Bungakushi* (Tokyo: Chikum Shobô, 1963), 266

progressive movement that had earlier succumbed to the anti-fascist prestige surrounding the Japanese Communist Party. In this regard, their standpoint resembled that of Cornelius Castoriadis and intellectuals associated with the journal *Socialisme ou Barbarie*. In a 1949 essay, Castoriadis criticized Stalinists for aligning themselves with "bureaucrats in the economic and the administrative fields, and those responsible for 'managing' the labor force, namely, the 'working class's' trade-union and political cadres."[396]

.   This approach to *tenkô* reflected increasing interest in organizational techniques and management ideas. The number of published articles containing the word "organization" (組織) in the title sharply increased at the start of the decade. By 1960, the number surpassed that of articles containing the words "democracy," "individual," or "society" in the title combined.[397] These articles analyzed the organizational strategies of corporations, agricultural co-ops, labor unions, and government bureaucracies. Critics discussed techniques to transform labor unions into "fighting organizations" (闘争する組織) and to overcome gender inequality within the "patriarchal organization" of the family (家父長制家族組織).[398]

Promoters of new organizational management ideas often held up the promise of "democratizing" (民主化) workplaces in a way that avoided the political clashes associated with

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[396] Cornelius Castoriadis, "Socialism or Barbarism" in *Political and Social Writings Volume 1, 1946-1955* edited and translated by David Ames Curtis, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 100

[397] This is a very rough estimate based upon searching the National Diet Library database of article titles from the fifties. I do not discuss here the many articles that appeared during the fifties that use the word "organization" (組織) in its biological sense. This sense of the Japanese word is close to the English definition of organization as "The development or coordination of parts (of the body, a body system, cell, etc.) in order to carry out vital functions; the condition of being or process of becoming organized (organized adj. 1). Also: the way in which a living thing is organized; the structure of (any part of) an organism."

[398] A few examples, Nakajima Tetsuzô et al, "Tatakau soshiki no saiken" *Rôdô keizai junpô*, (Feb. 1952). Kitamura Tatsu, "Waga kuni kafuchôsei kazoku soshiki no genri to sengo ni okeru henka" *Hokkaidô gakugei daigaku kiyô*, (Jan. 1959).

labor unions. Much of this writing resumed an interrupted discourse on scientific management and Taylorism that had existed in Japan since the 1910s.[399] Under the banner of democratization, Occupation authorities revived and intervened in this discourse by promoting Human Relations (HR) as a means of reducing the dehumanizing aspects of scientific management techniques and democratizing the workplace. These initiatives began to attract popular attention in the early fifties.[400] Works by the organizational theorist Elton Mayo and the management consultant Peter Drucker first appeared in Japanese translation and their ideas were widely disseminated through weeklies.

Yet writers for *Science of Thought* and other journals associated with progressivism were skeptical of popular interest in American management ideas. In an article in *Science of Thought* surveying the "HR Boom," Kamisaka Fuyuko noted the journalistic interest surrounding the translation of William Whyte's 1956 bestseller on management in major American corporations, *The Organization Man*, into Japanese. She acknowledged that the book's popularity in America and Japan showed that "problems concerning the relationship between the organization and the individual are of common interest to all modern men," but argued that in management discourse, "modernization, rationalization, and democratization" were nothing more than "skillfully deployed code-words" that induced a state of "hypnosis" among white-collar workers.[401] Leftists considered HR a disguised form of "scientific paternalism" while traditionalists considered it a fad unsuited to Japanese cultural conditions.[402]

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[399] On the history of management ideology and reception of Taylorism in Japan, see William Tsutsui, *Manufacturing Ideology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).

[400] Ibid, 155-156

[401] Kamisaka Fuyuko, "Kigyô no naka no HR-ron" *Shisô no kagaku* (Jul. 1959), 51-52

[402] Tsutsui, op. cit., 157-158

Yet the content of the completed essays in the *tenkô* study sometimes suggest a greater affinity with ideas of rational management than polemics against Taylorism or HR. In particular, Fujita Shôzô argued that the conditions for *tenkô* were partly caused by irrational mixing of ethical and organizational issues in progressive associations. He argued that when the Communist Party leaders Sano and Nabeyama renounced their opposition to the war and, without leaving the Party, declared their intention to reorient the JCP toward support for the emperor in 1933, the rest of the Party leadership ought to have treated it less as a "betrayal" and more as a procedural mistake. Fujita pointed out that, regardless of the merits or demerits of Sano and Nabeyama's position, they simply were not authorized to arbitrarily abandon the policy enshrined in the 1932 Comintern Theses, which included a commitment to abolishing the "absolutist emperor system" in Japan. The fact that Communists were drawn into a discussion of the problematic *content* of Sano and Nabeyama's position was evidence that the Party was an organization that lacked a coherent or transparent "organizational philosophy" (組織の哲学).[403]

Fujita argued that this lack of an organizational philosophy was a symptom of a much broader tendency to conflate procedural issues with questions that pertained to the "absolute correctness" of situational judgments. This tendency ran through the postwar political establishment and the progressive movement. Drawing on Isaiah Berlin's notion of positive and negative liberty, Fujita suggested that the tendency was linked to the absence of a clearly defined notion of positive liberty (積極的自由) in modern Japanese history. Since the Meiji period, intellectuals had defined the struggle for liberty as a struggle to overturn the restraints imposed by lingering "feudal tendencies" in Japan. By doing so, they mapped the opposition between negative

[403] Fujita Shôzô, "'Shôwa 20-nen, 27-nen' o chûshin to suru tenkô no jôkyô" *Kyôdô kenkyû tenkô* vol. 3, (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1962), 12-13

liberty (freedom from restraint) and positive liberty (freedom to be one's own master by enacting self-restraining law) onto the opposition between feudalism and modernity.

This selective reading of history allowed Fujita to hone in on the urgent need for new "process-oriented" democratic organizations on the Left. Unless democracy was defined as part of the process of group decision-making rather than the endpoint of revolution or modernization, progressive organizations and democratic governments were vulnerable to transient crises that seemed to close off the possibility of the end goal. A premature announcement of the "end of ideology" could cause the total collapse of an entire movement.

This was in line with the overall aim of the group – to strengthen a fragile "progressive movement" in Japan through critically examining the past. Against the notion that paying attention to the messy details of the wartime years would harm the movement, Tsurumi advanced the following argument:

> Since the end of the war, some, including those in the Communist Party, have argued that raising the *tenkô* problem will weaken or cause the fragmentation of progressive forces. We do not believe in the organizational theory [this argument is based upon]. The stagnation of progressive forces was caused by avoiding a discussion of the internal weakness of progressive groups as indicated by the *tenkô* problem and, while preserving that weakness, enlarging those groups after the war. The work of creating organizations with real fighting power (戦闘力) means creating them in a way that has passed through and withstood a thorough discussion of the *tenkô* issue.[404]

The failure to work through the *tenkô* issue was one source of organizational dysfunction on the Left. Within the Communist Party, Fujita claimed *tenkô* was the "original sin" that ensured passivity on the part of rank-and-file members who had experienced the war. Fujita argued that many of them had psychologically transferred their guilt about their wartime behavior into strict devotion to the party and its "unconverted" leadership.[405] This ensured loyalty but also created a

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[404] Tsurumi Shunsuke, "Joron: tenkô no kyôdô kenkyô ni tsuite," *Kyôdô kenkyû tenkô* edited by Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai, (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1959), 25

[405] vol 3

rigid top-down hierarchy and discouraged communication – both targets of the HR critique of Taylorism.

Employment Conversion: Infiltration, Bad Faith, or Rite of Passage?

Fujita also saw that the transferential relationship between former converts and the unconverted alienated younger Leftists who had little experience of the war. Younger members of the party felt torn between loyalty to the Communist Party and the need to adapt to local concerns. This dilemma corresponded to the experience of several of the younger members of Science of Thought who contributed to the *tenkô* research in various ways. For example, Suzuki Tadashi (b. 1928) first became active in the Party while still a high school student at a normal school in Nagoya in the late forties. After graduation, he was barred from securing a teaching position after becoming a target of the anti-Communist Red Purge but managed to secure a permanent paid position in a local JCP branch. Soon afterwards, he became ill with tuberculosis and was placed in a crowded public sanitarium designed to prevent the spread of the disease. He continued to be involved in political activities while institutionalized, helping to organize patients agitate for better living conditions. Through this experience, he became frustrated with the "high-handed" way the JCP, caught between representing the interests of patients and hospital workers, dealt with the newly formed Japan Patients Alliance.   After his discharge from the sanitarium, he was in the difficult position of being blacklisted by both the public school system and the JCP. While supporting himself with part-time teaching jobs, he became involved in the Nagoya branch of the Institute for the Science of Thought and contributed articles on *tenkô*.[406]

Suzuki's experience touched on the relationship between anti-establishment political beliefs and unemployment, a vital issue among younger researchers in the study. Even if one did not join

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[406] Suzuki Tadashi, "Yoshimoto Takaaki to 'tenkôron'" *Genryû kara mirai* e edited by Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai (Tokyo: Shiso no kagakusha, 2005) 152-154

the Communist Party or become the target of a blacklist, students worried that disclosing Leftist beliefs or student activism would torpedo their chances for employment after graduation. The pressure to hide or recant Leftist ideas around graduation time led to so-called "employment *tenkô*" (shûshoku tenkô) that dramatized the difference between seeing political conversion as an unfortunate yet necessary adaptation to circumstances, a moral betrayal, or a tactic to evade detection and continue with covert political activity. The original short proposal for the *tenkô* research group in 1954 alluded to this connection.

> The fact that students in the progressive camp shed their progressiveness (進歩性) after employment constitutes an obstacle to the expansion of a movement, and this phenomenon is relevant to the question of how organizations ought to be formed in the immediate future. Without pursuing responsibility for *tenkô* in one's own camp and among one's friends and associates, without illuminating the rule-governed nature of *tenkô* [behavior]… it is impossible to secure the nucleus of a movement, and this is one reason the movement becomes bloated and deceptively fragile.

Universities had long been associated with socialist ideas and radicalism, but the progressive tendencies of college students stood out more sharply in the fifties against the backdrop of conservative electoral victories. The newly formed, conservative Liberal Democratic Party began an unbroken period of majority rule in 1955 that lasted nearly four decades, yet the party never found much support among high school and university students. Opinion surveys consistently showed the majority of students backed the Japanese Socialist Party, and support for the Japanese Communist Party was higher at universities in comparison with the general public. Furthermore, the proportion of students backing Leftist parties was markedly higher among upperclassmen as compared to freshmen.[407] The notion that university life "radicalized" impressionable young people was sensationalized in the popular press.

The political divide separating the majority of college students from the general public took on the appearance of a growing cultural divide in the fifties. In his widely acclaimed novel from

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[407] Takeuchi Yô, *Kakushin gensô no sengoshi* (Tokyo: Chûô kôronsha, 2011), iv-v

1955, *Taiyô no kisetsu* (*Season of the Sun*), Ishihara Shintarô portrayed high school students yachting, boxing, and chasing after women – an unusual depiction of youth culture at the time. He based the novel in part on the exploits of his younger brother Yûjirô, who became a star after appearing in a film adaptation of the novel in 1956. Ishihara claimed that he knew that the depiction of youth in the novel would strike many readers as extreme. He wrote it while he was a college student in the undergraduate seminar of the social psychologist and Science of Thought member Minami Hiroshi at Hitotsubashi University. There, he became conscious of the stark difference between his life on campus and his brother's freewheeling life in his hometown in Shônan. After writing the novel, he contrasted the ascetic, "Soviet-style," life he lived in student dorms with the exotic "new customs of consumer society" enjoyed by his younger brother.[408]

The widespread perception that universities were hotbeds of Leftist radicalism cut off from mainstream culture left its mark on company hiring practices. Surveys showed that companies placed "thought" (思想) high on a list of criteria for the recruitment of college graduates. Using euphemistic language, recruiters juxtaposed health and ideological requirements for employment, as in this 1955 manuel from a food company:

> Besides ideology-related issues, we emphasize physical fitness, and we perform a physical screening of all candidates before they enter the company. We are receptive to students who have firm grasp of academic fundamentals, but so-called "après-guerre" personality types are not welcome. We prefer down-to-earth students instead.[409]

Recruiters used written examinations and interviews to screen out "red students" in the way they used physical exams to screen out job candidates with tuberculosis, as if Communism and tuberculosis were contagious.[410] Exams included essay questions that touched on political issues

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[408] Quoted in Takeuchi Yô, *Kyôyô no botsuraku* (Tokyo: Chûkô shinsho, 2003), 80-81

[409] Ibid, 69

[410] Takeuchi Yô notes that population of tuberculosis patients in Japan peaked at the same time as fears of student radicalization increased in the fifties. Communism in particular was treated like an

related to the Cold War and the peace movement. Job candidates were asked to discuss their views

on socialism, Yoshida Shigeru's foreign policy toward Communist countries, and the 1951 Security

Treaty Between the United States and Japan. These questions were less about testing knowledge of

contemporary political issues than about screening candidates for problematic political beliefs.[411]

While Leftists criticized recruitment exams for forcing student activists to renounce their

political beliefs or "convert" (*tenkô*) to conservative ideology, from the standpoint of the researchers

affiliated with Science of Thought, this would have been a misrepresentation symptomatic of the

simplistic way *tenkô* had been discussed in reference to the war. A more subtle approach to the

problem had to deal with the way students responded to attempts at ideological screening by

developing "tactical maneuvers" (機動作戦) to evade being eliminated during interviews and

written exams. This was a delicate task since recruiters were aware that candidates might not be

entirely forthright about their beliefs. In 1957, the journal *Chisei* carried an article on recruitment

examinations that addressed student anxieties about political questions and presented a few

successful tactical responses:

> The question, "What political party do you support" is also frightening. Until recently the
> response, "the right-wing of the Socialist Party" served as a protective talisman, but since the
> left and right factions have united, such a convenient response no longer exists. If you say
> "the Liberal Democratic Party," you will fall in the enemy's trap, ensnared by a mean-spirited
> rejoinder like, "aren't you just saying that because you think it's safe?" Here too though, one
> man succeeded with an unexpected tactic:
>
> "As you'd expect, the Socialist Party… I know that I will be at a disadvantage with a
> response like this, but you know, the youth always serve as society's antithesis. Young
> people who aren't dissatisfied with society – who don't notice society's flaws – are no longer
> young. They are called young because they have such sharp perceptions. Gôshi Kôhei,
> founder of the Japan Association of Corporate Executives, said something along these lines.
> Thus I feel secure here responding in such a frank way."

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infectious disease that might spread to other employees. Ibid, 69-70

[411] Ibid, 69

The above response was the tactic of a man who was employed at a textile firm in Nihonbashi.[412]

From the standpoint of the Science of Thought study, the key question would have been whether or not these "tactical maneuvers" were a form of "disguised *tenkô*" (偽装転向). Tsurumi technically defined this term in volume two of the study as "ideological change that appears, to an authority exercising coercive force, to correspond to the intention that accompanies that coercive force, but to powers outside that authority, appears as the acquisition of an expressive form or tactic appropriate to a new situation and its more or less active or passive realization by an ideological intention that has hitherto opposed the intentions of said authority."[413] A key factor in his definition was that disguised *tenkô* had to have tangible effects that made it at least potentially recognizable as such to an outside observer.

Disguised *tenkô* represented an alternative to the stark choice between support and resistance to the imperial state. Yet Tsurumi noted that most of the movements that began as disguised *tenkô* during the war ended as purely subjective conditions of "self-deception." Tsurumi believed that this development explained why, despite the fact that so many intellectuals claimed to have been performing covert acts of resistance to the militarist regime through the war, they made no attempt to "surface" during the two weeks between surrender and the beginning of the US Occupation. The tendency for infiltration to become a form of bad faith was due to the fact that the "infiltrators often became their own witnesses," as well as "the lack of a concept of a universal observer" in

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[412] Unsigned, "Sôgô kenkyû nyûsha shiken" *Chisei*, (Sept. 1957), 125

[413] Tsurumi Shunsuke, "Dai-issetsu: Yokusan undô no sekkeisha – Konoe Fumimarô" *Kyôdô kenkyô tenkô*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1960), 53

Japanese tradition.[414] The first problem was organizational; the second concerned the need to

cultivate "universal values" in Japan.

Although Tsurumi was analyzing the early forties, the way he framed the issue of failed

"disguised *tenkô*" was reminiscent of a recurrent trope in short stories and memoirs by student

activists from the mid-fifties throughout the "golden era " of high GDP growth in the sixties. This

included members of the later "ANPO generation" who participated in the epochal US-Japan

Security Treaty protests in 1960. Konnô Sô, a former student activist who had participated in

ANPO, wrote in *Science of Thought* about grappling with his choice of employment after graduation.

He confessed his disappointment in his former student comrades to the reader, "It would be a lie if

I told you I had no ill-will toward school friends who fought with me during the ANPO struggle, yet

seemed to have no compunction over their simple choice of employment."[415]

After agonizing over what to do, he decided that there was no way to fully reconcile his

political beliefs with the need to find employment. He resolved however to become a "black

marketeer of the psyche" at his workplace – a possible reference to a kind of disguised tenkô.

Yoshimoto Takaaki defined a black marketeer as someone who manifested political revolution as a

part of daily life outside one of the establishment parties.

Konnô decided an agricultural co-op was the most appropriate place for the kind of activism

he wished to engage in. There he was considered an outcast among his fellow workers, but he

claimed not to mind. While continuing to interrogate himself about the nature of the work, he

arrived at several universal propositions that he disclosed in a letter to a friend sent in 1966:

> 1) First grasp work as daily labor. Labor in present reality means that the more you work,
> the more it becomes a single cheap commodity. This is nothing other than the self-
> alienation of labor

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[414] Ibid, 56.

[415] Konno Sô, "Kigyô rodô genba" *Shisô no kagaku*, (Jan. 1975), 16

2) Work is actually the totality of the division of labor in society. Through the division of labor, humans overwhelmingly diminish their self-potential in capitalist society.

3) While conscious of the inhuman essence of work, turn this negativity into the infinitesimal possibility of self-recovery that is a part of each kind of work. The content of this transformation is sometimes resistance within the company and sometimes creation through organized effort. In essence, it is the recovery of the human fusion of self and work, never mere sentimentalism.

4) Empirically present the content of this transformation alongside the causes for non-transformation, and through this presentation enrich the content of collective work, such that this makes work-related matters a source of energy. This is the highest form of the "field reports" that are part of the circle movement.[416]

He devoted himself to his work in order to increase his opportunity for authentic political activism, participating in workgroup circles and becoming a leader in the company's union. He was unconcerned when some of his fellow workers "distanced themselves from the frontline and got sucked up into the company."[417]

Yet after years of working to build an organization in the co-op, he was transferred to another workplace after a company merger. Believing his work had been reduced to nothing through the merger, he experienced a deep sense of disillusionment. He wondered to himself whether he had in fact performed an "authentic tenkô." The article ended with Konnô claiming that he had decided to temper his revolutionary expectations in order to sustain a movement and avoid becoming a pariah in the workplace. He suggested that the "turnabout" (逆転) from the position of his student days was representative of the ANPO generation.

While Konnô's disguised *tenkô* ended in failure vis-à-vis his original intentions, he embodied the ideal of postwar political subjectivity enshrined in the *tenkô* study in several respects. In the introduction to the first volume, Tsurumi stated that, "We consider our present work to be the first step toward creating a habit among Japanese intellectuals of clearly recording the times and the ways

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[416] Ibid, 17

[417] Ibid

in which they undergo or refuse to undergo political conversion."[418] Leaving a clear record was

necessary to escape from the trap of repeatedly rationalizing one's political choices in retrospect.

Konnô not only confessed and reflected upon his political oscillations, he analyzed letters he had

written at various stages in his life – records of his changing views on work and the nature of

Japanese capitalism. Although the company merger and his transfer contributed to a mid-career

crisis that influenced his later political views, he never reduced his twists and turns to the outcome

of purely external events.

Yet he also wondered whether his political "wavering" might also have been due to the

"slow accumulation of years." This passing observation touched on the distinction between

"maturity" (成長) and *tenkô* in the Science of Thought study. In the study, the researchers tersely

distinguished *tenkô* from the terms "maturity," "development," and "growing up" as follows.

> Tenkô is a term used to record the thought of an individual who has already become an
> adult. One cannot investigate the *tenkô* of children.[419]

They made a similar analytic distinction between *tenkô* and adaptation, arguing that the latter

was simply a "biological term." Yet in the case of adaptation, the researchers acknowledged that

some intellectuals tried to reduce *tenkô* metaphorically to "adaptation to human social life" – a

gesture that obscured the question of individual responsibility for one's political choices. There was

an element of adaptation in the choice whether or not to *tenkô*, particularly when one's life might be

threatened, but *tenkô* always exceeded the semantic boundaries of bare adaptation.

Distinguishing *tenkô* from maturity and adaptation was important because both terms were

believed to naturalize political decision-making. Yet "maturity" became a centerpiece of the new

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[418] Tsurumi Shunsuke, "Cooperative Research on Ideological Transformation" *Journal of Social and Political Ideas in Japan*, (Apr. 1964), 57

[419] Tsurumi Shunsuke, "Joron: tenkô no kyôdô kenkyô ni tsuite," *Kyôdô kenkyû tenkô* edited by Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai, (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1959), 11

conservative criticism of progressives, the peace movement, and radical student activism. This

critique was associated with the literary critics Fukuda Tsuneari in the fifties and Etô Jun in the

sixties – after Etô turned away from the progressive movement in the aftermath of US-Japan

Security Treaty Protests. Whereas the *tenkô* study was in part an attempt to adjust progressive

politics to the emergence of middle-class hegemony, conservative critics focused on how this

adjustment exacerbated "infantilizing" tendencies that already existed within mass consumer culture.

Rather than focusing on the tactics necessary to retain political commitment when faced with the

threat of "employment *tenkô*," they sought to depoliticize the whole issue. They argued that student

activists learned valuable teamwork skills through political participation at university, but they ought

to be encouraged by responsible adults, a dwindling species, to renounce their immature idealism

over time. Yet despite their opposing views on political issues associated with progressive

movements (the US-Japan Alliance, remilitarization), both the *tenkô* researchers and the conservative

critics tried to rethink politics in light of Cold War political events and cultural changes associated

with postwar economic prosperity. They thus both attempted redraw the lines of political

opposition between progressives and reactionaries that were grounded in a narrative about wartime

resistance, support, and victimization – a narrative that the *tenkô* study attempted to revise.

Conclusion

When the *tenkô* study began in 1954, progressives had already begun to discuss the

"revolutionary situation" of the mid-forties in the past tense – as a movement that had either ended

or was on the verge of ending. The historian Ôguma Eiji's distinction between "two postwars" after

1945 helps makes sense of the transition underway during this period.[420] The first postwar refers to

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[420] Oguma uses the concept of "Two Postwars" to show how certain key concepts, including
"democracy", "patriotism", "race", and the term "postwar" itself accumulated different meanings

the first decade after the war. It overlapped with the Allied Occupation and was marked by an

"anarchic condition symbolized by poverty and black-markets." Newspapers were filled with stories

of companies going bankrupt, powerful conglomerates breaking up, and veteran politicians and

business leaders being driven from public posts by Occupation authorities. Ôguma argues that this

decade was broadly perceived as one of extreme social instability, a situation that made predicting

the course of one's individual life-trajectory exceedingly difficult.

Ôguma cites a recollection by the author and citizen- group activist Oda Makoto (1932-

2007) that illustrates this instability in reference to graduates from the university at the pinnacle of

the educational hierarchy – still named Tokyo Imperial University until 1947:

> The government bureaucracy, a haven for Tokyo University graduates, was unpopular. The large companies that employed them were also in dire straits. Only the black marketers were riding high. People with no educational background and little more than the shirt on their backs (徒手空拳派) were raking in cash while the bureaucrats and salaried men from the university were on the verge of starvation…
>
> At that time I once heard from an acquaintance, a salaryman alumnus of the University Tokyo, who was approached by a young person asking whether he ought to go to university or not. He said he immediately told the youth that going to university was useless, and that it would be better to begin working in the real world. Half seriously and half jokingly my acquaintance added, "From here on out, we're not in an era in which you can say things are going to go this or that way because you're a university graduate. This is an age of real merit. This is a world of democracy. Everyone is equal! (Then lowering his voice) I mean, even I graduated from the U. of Tokyo…"
>
> At that time he was debating whether or not to quit his job at a large company and start a

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within two successive discursive formations linked to political and social change. The first of arose around 1945 and the second originated more gradually during the fifties (1955-1956 is a symbolic marker due to the fact that it marks the moment when Japan's long-standing majority party, the LDP, rose to dominance and when the government announced that the economy had finally grown beyond its peak pre-1945 level). In the first formation "postwar democracy" connoted poverty, anarchy, and a disdain for tradition motivated by the desire to uproot the emotional and intellectual remnants of wartime fascism. In the second, the same term connoted prosperity, stability, and a new appreciation of "Japanese culture" that differed from much of the earlier discourse on democracy. He argues that for many intellectuals shaped by the events of 1945, the transformations associated with the "second postwar" entailed a complex negotiation between allegiance to the ideals of the "first postwar" and adaptation to the changed political, economic, and social situation of the second. Ôguma Eiji, *"Minshu" to "aikoku"* (Tokyo: Senyôsha, 2002)

business with a friend. To him, now an executive in a large corporation, his condition at the time probably seems like nothing more than one of transitory "hesitation." (気迷い)[421]

A degree from the Tokyo Imperial University had long been considered the key to entering the ranks of the academic, economic, and political elite (Right or Left), but would it continue to serve that function in the changed postwar landscape of "New Japan"? Would it instead become a symbol of the corrupt old order that might pass into oblivion – if not by decree of the Allied Occupiers then as a natural consequence of democracy or the outcome of a popular revolution?

Writing in hindsight of Japan's spectacular economic growth during the sixties, Oda suggested that such questions came to seem a mere symptom of momentary confusion brought on by the transitory chaos associated with the immediate aftermath of the war. Ôguma argues that this retrospective assessment marked the distance between the "first postwar" and the changed discursive environment of the "second postwar," which was associated with stability and economic prosperity.

In his first book from 1951, *Asatte no shuki,* Oda wrote that he had already ceased to believe in "tomorrow," a reference to early postwar optimism, but retained faith in an ever-deferred "day after tomorrow."[422] His turn to the day-after-tomorrow was one of several new attempts to articulate a new critique of the postwar situation that implicated and transcended both sides of the political divide. In hindsight, it appears to anticipate the elision of the chaotic, undecided "first postwar" by the stable "second postwar" as the foundation of a historical narrative that emphasizes Japan's "rise from the ashes" after World War II.

The *tenkô* study was an attempt to imagine the day after tomorrow through a reexamination of the past. The participants believed the unresolved legacy of the war had a continuing corrosive affect on Japanese politics. The complex picture of the wartime years that emerged from the study

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[421] Oda Makoto quoted in Ôguma Eiji, op. cit., 12-13

[422] Oda Makoto. *Asatte no shuki* (Tokyo: Kawade shobô, 1951)

was mediated by contemporary anxieties about the political pressure exerted by middle-class society, the threat of bureaucratization facing progressive movements, and the generational revolt against the authority wielded by figures who claimed the mantle of anti-fascist resistance. They worked to reduce the taboo on *tenkô*, motivated by much the same impulse that led organizers of a new citizens movements to try to free themselves from conventional political dichotomies in the sixties.

Conclusion: The US-Japan Security Protests and their Aftermath

From April to June of 1960, hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets to protest a revised US-Japan Security Treaty (ANPO), which would solidify the Cold War alliance between the two countries. On May 26ᵗʰ, 540,000 protested nationwide. On June 11ᵗʰ, 235,000 protesters marched around the National Diet Building in Tokyo. On June 14ᵗʰ, clashes between riot police and protesters led to the death of a student, Kanba Michiko, who became a martyr among anti-treaty activists. Although the protests failed to prevent the ratification of the treaty on June 19ᵗʰ, they did topple the administration of the conservative Prime Minister who signed it, Kishi Nobusuke, who resigned on July 15ᵗʰ.

The political debate about Japan's security alliance with the US had begun with the simultaneous signing of the Security Treaty with the San Francisco Peace Treaty in 1951. Conservatives in the majority Liberal Democratic Party supported the treaty, while the second largest party, the Japanese Socialist Party, advocated neutrality in the Cold War. Progressive intellectuals opposed to the treaty engaged in a peace movement centered on associations like the Japan Memorial Society for Fallen Students (1950), the Peace Discussion Circle (1950), and the Society for the Protection of Children (1952). The 1960 protests were in part an extension of a decade-long political struggle for neutrality, which many progressives believed was necessary for Japan to secure peace, achieve national autonomy, and overcome its "semi-colonial" status vis-à-vis the United States.

Yet the scale of the 1960 protests and the diversity of the protesters led many to believe that they signaled a break from the oppositional politics of the past. Intellectuals hailed the participation of ordinary citizens (*shimin*) in the opposition movement.[423] Rather than joining because of a deep

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[423] On the idea of the "citizen" in the context of the ANPO protests, see Simon Avenell, *Making*

commitment to progressive causes, some citizen protesters participated out of outrage at the

parliamentary tactics adopted by Kishi to force the treaty through the Lower House of the Diet in

anticipation of an official visit by President Eisenhower in June. As their numbers grew throughout

the spring, some observers began to believe that much more was at stake than the security alliance

between Japan and the United States. Supporters of the protests pinned the fate of postwar

democracy on its success or failure. An editorial in the May 22nd *Asahi* newspaper declared that,

"We are at a crossroads between preserving democracy and killing it."[424] In a speech delivered to a

gathering of progressives in Tokyo on June 14th, Takeuchi Yoshimi asserted that, "This fight is a

clear and simple struggle between democracy and authoritarianism... I want nothing to distract us

from the fact that our objective is to overthrow tyranny and rebuild democracy with our own

hands."[425] Success would not only secure the diplomatic autonomy of Japan and score a victory for

progressives; it would vindicate the participation of ordinary citizens in politics, and it would

demonstrate that Japan had achieved "democracy from the grass-roots."[426]

Tsurumi, Takeuchi, and other intellectuals associated with *Science of Thought* were among the

most enthusiastic supporters of the citizens' movement that appeared to coalesce in opposition to

the security treaty. Members took part in the protests and tried to push it to transcend the

conventional political divide between progressives and conservatives by setting an example of

principled opposition to the government in the name of defending democracy. On May 29th, 1960,

the Institute for the Science of Thought issued an unprecedented group declaration that called for

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Japanese Citizens, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), chapter 2.

[424] Quoted in Ôguma Eiji,*"Minshu" to "aikoku"* (Tokyo: Senyôsha, 2002), 509.

[425] Takeuchi Yoshimi, "Tatakai no yottsu no jôken" *Shisô no kagaku* (Jul. 1960), 17

[426] The title of an essay by Tsurumi Shunsuke published in the immediate aftermath of the protests. Tsurumi Shunsuke "Ne-moto kara no minshushugi" *Shisô no kagaku* (Jul. 1960), 20

nullification of the treaty and dissolution of the current government. In a statement appended to

the declaration and published in the July "emergency special issue" of *Science of Thought* on

"Resistance as a Citizen," the group reasserted its intellectual raison d'être in the course of justifying

its actions.

> The Institute for the Science of Thought has, since its inception, engaged in its activities as
> an organization unattached to a particular ideological standpoint (思想的立場), and it has
> sought to facilitate exchange among various systems of thought, ranging from conservatism
> to progressivism. As a result, the Institute has never asserted a unified standpoint in regard
> to specific political policies, and it ought not to. In fact, there have been almost no instances
> of complete agreement among members in regard to political problems. Even with the new
> treaty, members' opinions range from agreement to complete rejection, with many nuanced
> differences in between.
>
> Yet the sudden approval of the treaty by a group within the Liberal Democratic Party
> directly impinges upon our future, and it is tantamount to denying not only its outright
> opponents but also other members of the LDP the opportunity to engage in a full rational
> discussion about an important political policy that divides public opinion in two. Policy
> makers have publicly exhibited an attitude that suggests they are trying to reach a decision on
> the basis of the power of a few. Remaining silent in this situation would contradict in
> principle the spirit of the movement our association is engaged in, a movement to reap the
> rewards of a pluralistic exchange among different systems of thought (思想の多元的交流),
> and it would diminish its reason for being.
>
> Dissolving the current Diet is the only way to alleviate this injustice and establish self-
> restraint on the part of the political sovereign. At the same time, we think that this opens a
> way to change the mental state of Japan, described as a system of irresponsibility, into a
> system of responsible debate. On the basis of this judgment, we thought it necessary to
> make clear our position, a position that transcends the question of our attitude vis-à-vis the
> new treaty.[427]

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[427] Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai, "Seimei riyû" *Shisô no kagaku*, (Jul. 1960), 3. The phrase "system of
irresponsibility" was a reference to Maruyama Masao, "Chôkokkashugi no ronri to shinri," *Sekai*,
(May 1946).   In an essay published in 1957, Maruyama summed up the system of irresponsibility as
"the product of interaction between these common characteristics of mass society and the peculiar
power structure of Japan" centered on the moral authority of the emperor. Maruyama Masao,
Thought and Behavior in Japanese Politics translated by Ivan Morris, et. al (Oxford: Oxford University
Press, 1969), 307

By projecting the intellectual diversity of their own association onto the oppositional movement as a whole, they hoped to counter Prime Minister Kishi's suggestion that the silent majority, "the voiceless voices," supported the treaty and that the citizen protests were simply an outcome of the "manipulation of individuals by progressive organizations."[428] This was not simply a tactic to claim the political high ground against supporters of the treaty. It also tapped into the dissatisfaction the group had felt at the routine opposition between progressive and conservative camps that motivated their projects to uncover the "Philosophy of Ordinary People," to study and engage in the circle movement, and to reopen the issue of wartime political conversions in the *tenkô* study. Although their approaches and objects of analysis changed over time, they consistently strove to connect "thought" (思想) with lived experience in a way that defied generalizations about class and culture. The idea of a citizens' movement thus appealed to the group less because it connoted the emergence of bourgeois political subjects in Japan than because the movements seemed to defy the generalizations that underlay the sociological predictions of growing political passivity in mass society. The figure of the citizen became a new vehicle for the group's ongoing struggle to further the emancipatory project of democracy while simultaneously opposing the negative effects of modernization.

After the protests subsided in late June, intellectuals heatedly debated whether or not the movement was a success or a failure. Those affiliated with *Science of Thought* who took an active role in the protests declared the movement a success. Takeuchi argued that the ratification of the treaty was insignificant in comparison to the "national experience" (国民的経験) gained in the protests in May and June.[429] Yet from the perspective of the history of *Science of Thought*, this rush to proclaim a

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[428]Tsurumi suggested this political context in his essay on democracy from the grass-roots. Op cit., 27

[429] Oguma, op. cit., 546-547

"summary judgment" (*sôkatsu*) on the movement as a whole mattered less than the continued effort to observe and encourage political activity unfolding on a less dramatic scale in individual communities and workplaces.

In December of 1961, *Science of Thought* became embroiled in controversy when its publisher Chûô kôron decided to bow to political pressure and cancel a planned special issue of the journal that critically analyzed the Japanese imperial institution and explored its possible relationship to right-wing violence in the aftermath of the ANPO protests.[430] This led to a confrontation between the Institute and its publisher over the issue of free speech, which thrust the group into the public spotlight. In 1962, the group began publishing *Science of Thought* on its own. In part due to the publicity the Institute received during the controversy, early issues of the re-launched journal sold well, and *Science of Thought* continued publication with few interruptions until the fiftieth anniversary of its founding in 1996. In the intervening years, the journal and its core contributors supported citizen's movements dedicated to advancing the rights of women and minorities, opposing the Vietnam War, and combating the environmental degradation of Japan brought on by unrestricted economic growth. Many of the organizations founded during this period remain active today.[431]

In a notice in the last issue, the doctor and anti-war activist Ueno Masahiro (1934-2002), then head of *Science of Thought*, explained that, "We have not had ample opportunity to reflect on how we have both influenced and been influenced by political and intellectual conditions in Japan and abroad and, in connection with these conditions, by the thought and behavior of the masses (*shomin taishû*)." He announced the journal would go on hiatus while members of the Institute, most of whom had reached retirement age, took time to "exhaustively review the past from many

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[430] Chûô Kôron decided to cancel the *Science of Thought* issue on the "emperor system" after the CEO of the company, Shimanaka Hôji, was targeted in a failed assassination attempt that had resulted in the death of his maid in February of that year. The management feared that the issue would incite more violence and protests directed at the company from the Right.

[431] Avenell, op. cit., chapters 3 and 5

different angles." He added that the journal might be re-launched, provided its associates found "a way to incorporate the energy and wisdom of a new generation."[432]

The precariousness of the journal's position in the intellectual landscape of contemporary Japan was evident long before it ceased publication. On the basis of a vision of democratic intellectual culture that emerged in the months following the end of the war, *Science of Thought* combined academic research, popular journalism, and academic research in a way that proved difficult to sustain beyond the generation of its core members.

Science of Thought was founded in 1946 with a mission to promote democracy and overcome the gap between intellectuals and the public. The founders of the journal opposed the academic establishment in Japan, which they associated with elitism and bureaucratic conformism. At the same time, they believed that the open and democratic form of intellectual collaboration they adopted would lead to breakthroughs in the advancement of knowledge. During the late forties and early fifties, the journal carried articles on the cutting edge of research in emergent fields of analytic philosophy, semiotics, and communications. The academic recognition later accorded these articles vindicated the cooperative model adopted by the Institute; yet research that proceeded along the lines of inquiry it introduced increasingly became the domain of specialists, a trend at odds with the journal's mission to democratize scientific culture. A surge of interest in French structuralist and post-structuralist theories of language in the 1980s reminded some older observers of the attempt launched by the journal to transmit American ideas of philosophy and social science in the late 1940s, although the younger advocates of French thought were critical of the dilettantism they detected in the work of the postwar progressives associated with *Science of Thought*. As products of an economically prosperous and comparatively egalitarian society, they were less concerned with

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[432] Shisô no kagaku kenkyûkai – sakuin no kai, *Shisô no kagaku sôsaku-in* edited by (Tokyo: Shisô no kagakusha, 1999), 736

bridging the gap between themselves and the masses than they were with defending the value of rigorous intellectual critique against the leveling tendencies of mainstream culture.

Conflicts between *Science of Thought* and its publishers convinced its members that unrestrained political and intellectual discussion was incompatible with the demands of mainstream journalism, but they also believed that completely ignoring the popular demands of the market was a form of aloof intellectual escapism. In 1972, ten years after the journal broke with the large publishing house Chûô kôron over its decision to cancel the politically controversial issue on the emperor, the concerns of the editors had shifted from the threat of political silencing by the radical right to anxiety over the possibility that the advancing commodification of language might render freedom of thought an empty right in the era of technocratically managed economic growth. They wrote, "Today, we do not believe that a "freedom of speech and thought" actually worth defending can be taken for granted. We will not be swept away by the onrushing commodification of speech and thought, nor will we try to run from it, but by accepting this situation as the condition for our activities, we hope to produce a living language and thought that transcends it."[433] This balancing act attracted a small yet dedicated following of readers and writers who believed that the journal ought to retain its idealistic commitment to both populism and intellectualism even if that meant resigning itself to a small readership. Yet, despite the clear signs of waning relevance, it was clear that by sustaining that commitment for so long, the journal had developed a distinctive voice, one that had become a part of the discursive repertoire of Japanese public intellectuals.

The fact that the journal continued publication for fifty years, through all the political fissures and headlong changes in Japanese society, is a testament to its adaptability. On the basis of their wartime experiences, the founders brought an experimental mindset to the task of promoting a democratic and open intellectual culture, testing different approaches and changing course in

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[433] Ibid, 730

response to criticism. The philosophical pluralism of the group proved difficult to maintain in the politically polarized context of the Cold War, but it remained necessary, both to sustain its intellectual productivity and to remain true to the democratic ideals its members sought to realize.

Today, over two decades since the beginning of the economic recession of the 1990s, democracy may seem to connote little beyond searching for a way to sustain the society of egalitarian consumerism that arose during the high growth era. Does *Science of Thought*, which tried to enshrine the philosophy of ordinary people, bear some responsibility for this outcome? The answer must be "yes and no." Intellectuals who adopted a more pessimistic view of the democratic potential of the masses and popular culture maintained a more consistent critical position toward postwar society, but *Science of Thought* never stopped striving for an ideal of popular democracy that exceeded – and sometimes became entangled in – the logic of economic growth and middle-class consumerism. They tried to enlist the masses in this pursuit without condemning or condescending to them, as so many doctrinaire progressives did.

Former associates of *Science of Thought* remain active as public intellectuals in Japan today, and they continue to catch glimpses of radically democratic potential embedded in contemporary popular culture. In an article written for the thirtieth anniversary of the group in the seventies, Tsurumi Shunsuke took stock of the group's past and tried to predict its future direction.

> If I were to express it in language that's a bit hard to understand– though I really don't need to – I would say that the basic space in which the philosophy of *Science of Thought* takes shape now is intersubjective. It doesn't stop at the purely subjective side of everyday thought.
>
> For a very long time I didn't watch television, but recently I've enjoyed watching the variety show *Kindon*. When the character Kindon comes out, […] he sets in motion a very large intersubjective space. He reads postcards people send in and turns them into ad-lib sketch comedy. Recently he read a postcard sent in by a three-year-old. These are skits that even a three-year-old child can enjoy.
>
> There is intersubjectivity at work here. Amazingly, it works through the postcards people send in from all over Japan – from 5 to 75 years old. This is what I think democracy is.

When I watch this, I think, "the wheel of Japanese history can't turn back around now." Then somehow I start to feel my blood running again. Even if it were a direct order from the emperor, you couldn't get a sea of people to respond the way they do here.

I feel something like what Arthur Lovejoy called the "The Great Chain of Being" on *Kindon*. Something like that chain is working through the mass media, and there's something among the masses that responds to it. I have a feeling it's possible to create a philosophical equivalent to that, something of intellectual value worth preserving.[434]

Tsurumi, now 90 years old, is still trying to tap into a kind of intersubjectivity as an advocate for the anti-war movement. In 2011, he explained one origin for his views:

When I was in Singapore during a lull in the war, I saw a group of older low-ranking infantrymen. Among them, there was a private who had let his facial hair grow. I felt close to him. You really can't become a lieutenant if you let your beard grow like that, but he didn't care. He didn't mind even though privates got beaten and bloodied if they let their beard grow. I thought his whiskers were expressing something. They were telling a story. They said, "I hate war." That was transmitted to me, and I a receptacle for it. Oh days of war! This is not about Left or Right-wing thought. Leftists become Rightists, and Rightist become Leftists. But simply "I hate war" – that sense of disengagement, of dropping out, doesn't come easily to Left or Right.[435]

He has outlasted many of the detractors of *Science of Thought* who criticized the group from the Left, from the Right, and sometimes from both directions. Some of the Leftists and activists who attacked the group for not being radical enough in the sixties turned sharply to the Right after the waning of the student movement in the seventies and eighties.

At the mid-point of his career, Tsurumi summed up the "thought movement" represented by *Science of Thought* as follows:

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[434] Tsurumi Shunsuke, "Shisô no kagaku to atarashii tetsugaku no hôkô," reprinted in *Yomu hito, kaku hito, henshû-suru hito*, edited by Kinen-shinpojiumu o kiroku suru kai (Shisô no kagakusha, 2010), 215

[435] Tsurumi Shunsuke and Sekigawa Natsuo, *Nihonjin wa nani o sutete kita ka* (Tokyo: Chikuma shobô, 2011), 93-94

I guess you could call it a chaotic movement. It remains chaotic still. Should we praise *Science of Thought* or not? Your answer to that question is going to depend on what you think about chaos.[436]

The chaotic struggle waged by the associates of *Science of Thought* to realize the emancipatory promise of modernity and to overcome its immanent pathological consequences remains unfinished, but the experience of its participants retains its relevance for those who would strive for a more democratic and equitable society today.

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[436] Tsurumi, "Shisô no kagaku to atarashii tetsugaku no hôkô," 219

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