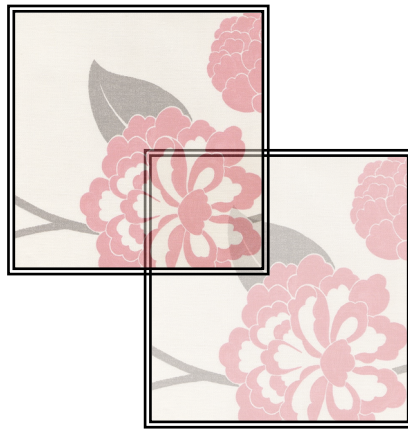


One Village, One Mind?

*Eto Tekirei, Tolstoy, and the Structure of
Agrarian-Buddhist Utopianism in Taishō Japan*



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[PREZI 1 – 4]: ON THE BOOK

• The primary task of the book is to provide a detailed, critical, and comparative analysis of the intellectual genealogy (and geography) of various forms of “modernist” and “progressive” Buddhism that emerged during the five decades leading up to the Pacific War—including the implications of such for postwar and contemporary Buddhism in Japan and beyond. A secondary goal is to bring some light to the grey and underexposed areas that lie within and between various conceptions and manifestations of “progress,” “reform” and “modernity” in the formative period of modern Japanese Buddhism.

• I employ the term *progressive* to refer to a person or group that: a) is concerned with broad-based social welfare; b) believes that society can and should be refashioned along lines that will enhance social, political and economic equality; and c) is engaged in sustained “critical engagement” with prevailing ideological structures.¹ This second and third aspect correlate with what has elsewhere been called the “threshold of modernity”; i.e., the point at which it is recognized that the order of society is not natural or ordained, but is rather the product of social, historical and economic forces. Once this cognitive leap is made, it is a short step to the possibility of a reflexive transformation of society via human agency.² And this is where utopian thinking comes into play.³

[PREZI 5]: GENEALOGY OF “PROGRESSIVE BUDDHISM”

• One of the most significant outcomes of the broader Meiji Buddhist Enlightenment was the appearance of numerous lay Buddhist associations and publications—i.e., varieties of non-institutional Buddhist activism.⁴ According to Yasutomi Shin'ya, these movements can be grouped under three broad categories: 1) Buddhism for the state; 2) Buddhism for society; and c) Buddhism of the self.⁵

2 SHIELDS: Taishō Agrarian-Buddhist Utopianism

• I would like to suggest a fourth possibility that arose in the late Meiji and Taishō periods, largely as a result of the influence of Russian writer Leo Tolstoy: 'Buddhism for nature.' In this paper, I present the little-known case of Eto Tekirei, whose utopian experiment Hyakushō Aidōjō—the Farmer's Institute (or Meditation Hall) of Love—sought to provide a comprehensive alternative lifestyle rooted in a Tolstoyan, agrarian ethics but also heavily inflected by Buddhist ideals—particularly those of Zen.

[PREZI 6–10]: TAISHŌ TRENDS

[PREZI 11]: TOLSTOY IN JAPAN

• Tolstoy's ideas on the individual, religion, society and politics were of immense influence on the "young men of Meiji"—the generation coming of age in the last decade of the Meiji period. Tolstoy appreciated Asian culture, dabbled in Buddhism, and denounced Western imperialism and colonialism, urging non-Western peoples to resist (non-violently) becoming slaves or puppets to the West and its ideals, and instructing them to go "back to the land."⁶ Although Tolstoy and his followers are often labelled "antimodern," this is a mistake, based on a simplistic conflation of "modernity" and urban culture. Like Kiyozawa Manshi, his work contains aspects that are distinctly "modern" (or "modernist")—including a rationalist interpretation of religion and (proto-existentialist) focus on the individual.

[PREZI 12–13]: TOLSTOY'S APPEAL

[PREZI 14]: 4 TAISHŌ "UTOPIAS"⁷

• One of the first Japanese writers influenced by Tolstoy was Tokutomi Roka (1868–1927). On the way back from a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Roka visited Tolstoy's villa in Yasnaya Polyana in 1906, and soon began to inject his literary works with Tolstoyan qualities of self-introspection and a resistance to authoritarianism.⁸

· In 1908, as leftwing activism grew in the wake of the Russo-Japanese War, Roka gave a controversial address to the Debating Society of the First Higher School of Tokyo entitled “The Sadness of Victory,” in which he evoked the emptiness felt by even the greatest generals upon their so-called “victories” in battle, concluding, in words that evoke the “conversion” of legendary Buddhist king Aśoka (304–232 BCE) after the battle of Kalinga: “Of what value is man’s victory? The people search after ‘success’ or ‘distinction’, offering their very lives in payment. But what is success, what is distinction? These are nothing more than pretty reflections shining forth from the dream of man’s aspirations.”⁹ This speech hit a chord with a number of the students in the audience, some of who promptly quit school to return to their native villages as *narodniki*.¹⁰ Roka himself would spend his final two decades ensconced in a Musashino forest retreat called Kōshun-en, living the life of a “natural man” (*shinzen nin*).

[PREZI15–17]: HYAKUSHŌ AIDŌJŌ

· Eto Tekirei was another budding intellectual and writer who got caught up in the Tolstoyan current. After studying law and politics at Tokyo Imperial University, around 1906, he abandoned his studies to become a farmer. Yet even this was not enough, so in 1910, with the assistance of Tokutomi Roka, Tekirei took up residence in the village of Takaido in the Musashino area just outside of Tokyo.¹¹ Calling his new home Hyakushō Aidōjō, he attempted to practice the Tolstoyan life to the fullest, while incorporating Buddhist and Christian elements into his thought. Tekirei also borrowed heavily from the work of the anarchist Kropotkin,¹² and was inspired by the works of Andō Shōeki, the Edo-period agrarian thinker and proto-communist visionary.¹³ In 1922, Tekirei published his *Aru hyakushō no ie* (The Household of a Farmer), which, coupled with *Tsuchi to kokoro o tagayashi tsutsu* (Tilling the Soil and the Heart, 1924), serves as both memoir and justification for his agrarian socio-religious vision.

4 SHIELDS: Taishō Agrarian-Buddhist Utopianism

· Citing Maruyama Masao's remarks on the tendency towards ideological polarization during this period, Nishimura Shun'ichi argues that this tendency extended to Taishō agrarian thinking, as well, such that there emerged a "right wing" faction of thinkers dedicated to *nōhonshugi* (lit. 'agriculture-essence-ism') and a "left wing" or progressive faction espousing *nōminjichishugi* (lit. 'farmer-autonomy-ism').¹⁴ Nishimura correctly places Eto among the latter, "progressive" group.¹⁵ And yet, given our concern here, just how reliant was Eto on Buddhist ideas and principles for his progressive, naturalist vision?

· As noted, after a few years of the life of a farmer, Tekirei sought a more meaningful lifestyle. In his words, he began to have serious doubts about Tolstoy's idealized views of peasant life, and resolved to establish a new system for living with nature, which he called *kashoku nōjō* 家稷農乘—which we might translate as the "Wheel of Household Grain Farming." In fact, the first half of this four-character set, *kashoku*, is borrowed directly—and thus effectively set in contrast to—the traditional term *shashoku* 社稷, used to refer to the state as a tutelary deity of grain. Here, in Tekirei's (anti-*kokutai*) reformulation, it is the household (*ie*) that becomes the locus of livelihood, rather than the state. In addition, the final character *jō* is clearly borrowed from Buddhist tradition, where it refers to a particular "vehicle" or branch of the Dharma, one that leads effectively to *nirvāṇa*—as in the Great Vehicle (Sk. Mahāyāna; Jp. Daijō).

· Tekirei goes on to divide this general concept into eight categories: 1) farm methods (or 'dharma': *nōhō*); 2) farm organization (*nōsei*), 3) farm association (*nōso*), 4) farm "path," including social and economic standpoints (*nōdō*), 5) farm thought, including philosophy and art (*nōsō*), 6) farm doctrine, including culture (*nōkyō*), 7) farm spirit, including spirituality and religion (*nōkon*), 8) farm practice (*nōgyō*).¹⁶

· Clearly, in the spirit of late-Meiji New Buddhism, Tekirei is aiming for a comprehensive lifestyle structure—one that stretches (or destroys) conventional boundaries of labor, philosophy, art, religion, society, and politics. Indeed, due to its application to all facets of ordinary life, he would go on to call his vision a “non-religious religion” (*mushūkyō no shūkyō*).¹⁷ The primary difference of course, between Tekirei and the New Buddhists is that here “nature” or the “soil” replaces “Buddhism” as the organizing locus. And yet, while most of these principles may seem quite removed from traditional Buddhist teachings, if we recall the non-ideological discussions of “faith,” as well as the “pantheistic foundations” and “greater naturalism” of the New Buddhists, we see some remarkable parallels in the progressive wing of the Taishō literary-agricultural movement.

· For example, the journal *Aozora*, founded in 1925 by Ōnishi Goichi and Ikeda Taneo, proclaims in its declaration of principles:

[PREZI 18] AOZORA QUOTE

1. As children born with the great earth as our mother and the vast sky as our father, we believe that we must find the foundation for our daily lives in the spirit of the pure farmer, and that moreover this is the very root of human existence.
2. We repudiate the urban-based civilization, which continues to oppress and trample down the people both spiritually and economically, and pledge instead to establish an agriculturally based civilization that conforms to the land.
3. This creed is not meant to give birth to yet another fixed doctrine; rather, we simply look to re-connect with our innate disposition to till the great earth and lead the natural life of the farmer.¹⁸

· Compare this with the following passages from Sakaino Kōyō and Takashima Beihō, the two primary figures in the New Buddhist Fellowship:

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[PREZI19]: NBF QUOTES

We New Buddhists wish to establish Buddhism on the basis of a pantheistic worldview. A pantheistic perspective shall be the foundation of Buddhism. Upon this foundation, the Buddhism of the future can be continuously improved and purified. This is what we are calling New Buddhism.¹⁹

Thus, with our spiritual nature, we must love the natural beauty of reality (*jitsuzai no fūkō*). We must love the Buddha and the gods, which are other names for that reality. To put it in modern terms, facing towards the natural beauty of reality we must implement a *greater naturalism*. By using our knowledge and our faith, we must satisfy the hunger and thirst of our divine nature. While human beings cannot live without bread, they also cannot live by bread alone. This harmony between spirit and flesh is the foundation on which human life can begin.²⁰

• While the agrarian fixation is clearly stonger in *Aozora* than with the New Buddhists, there is affinity with regard to: a) the emphasis on reaching beyond “civilization” towards some deeper—natural—foundation for human existence; 2) the desire to be “non-partisan” and “post-ideological”—without thereby losing the capacity to engage in forthright criticism.

• And while we might find parallels with right-leaning evocations of a “return to the soil” in the work of Katō Kanji and other advocates of *nōhonshugi*, here—as with the NBF—there is a noticeable lack of mention of the state or *kokutai*. In short, at issue is the individual's relations with a) nature, b) themselves, and c) their society or community. In similar fashion, Eto Tekirei was fiercely resistant to the notion—promoted by, for instance, *nōhonshugi* activist Yamazaki Nobuyoshi, that “going back to the land” must become systemized as a matter of “national policy.”²¹

· Tekirei also borrowed heavily from the work of Dōgen, taking particular note of the Sōtō Zen master's emphasis on the bodily basis of awakening, as expressed in the well-known phrase: "To gain the way you must first master your body." As Wada Kōsaku explains, this became the basis of Tekirei's idea of "practice" (*gyō*).²² Elsewhere he writes that while he never practiced *shikantaza* in a meditation hall, he did so in the "heaven and earth meditation hall" (*tenchi zendō*)—i.e., while engaged in the "practice" of farming.²³

· And with regard to the relationship between work and nature, he relied upon the following passage from the Devadatta chapter of the *Lotus Sutra*, describing the Buddha's reminiscences of his past life as a king who has renounced his throne to follow a teacher of the "wonderful law": "Picking fruit, drawing water, gathering firewood, and preparing food, even offering my own body as a couch for him, feeling no weariness in body or mind. I served him for a thousand years, for the sake of the Dharma, diligently waiting upon him so he lacked nothing."²⁴

· Once again, while the trope of the "suffering" or "self-sacrificial" servant was also put to good use by *kokutai* ideologues, Tekirei resisted the state-centric emphasis of *nōhonshugi* in favor of what might be called an "individualist"—or moderately "socialist"—quest for existential truth. In this respect, his critique of Marx is worth noting, in that—again like his New Buddhist predecessors—accepts the basic premises of the Marxist (as well as the Darwinian) critique of traditional "idealist" philosophies and religions, while resisting the harder-edged implications of a kind of materialism (and determinism) that treats human beings simply as "matter" or as "animals."²⁵

[PREZI 20–23]: IDEOLOGY & UTOPIA

8 SHIELDS: Taishō Agrarian-Buddhist Utopianism

· In his classic 1922 work *Ideology and Utopia*, German social theorist Karl Mannheim delineates the “utopian mentality” as that which is always in *incongruence* with the world—i.e., “oriented towards objects which do not exist in the actual situation.” At the same time, Mannheim distinguishes *utopian* incongruity from *ideological* incongruity. Whereas ideologies may also “depart from reality” in thought, they do not go so far as to effect change on social life—rather, they are ultimately adopted or assimilated in support of the status quo.²⁶

[PREZI 24]: MANNHEIM QUOTE₁

In the course of history, man has occupied himself more frequently with objects transcending his scope of existence than with those immanent in his existence and, despite this, actual and concrete forms of social life have been built upon the basis of such “ideological” states of mind which were incongruent with reality. Such an incongruent orientation became utopian only when in addition *it tended to burst the bonds of the existing order*.

Consequently representatives of a given order have not in all cases taken a hostile attitude towards orientations transcending the existing order. Rather they have always aimed to control those *situationally transcendent* ideas and interests which are not realizable within the bounds of the present order, and thereby to *render them socially impotent*, so that such ideas would be confined to a world beyond history and society, where they would not affect the *status quo*.²⁷

· In short, representative elites attempt, whenever possible, to transform (or co-opt) emergent utopias into ideologies, in part by *emphasizing situational transcendence*.²⁸ This is a particularly effective strategy when it comes to religious utopias, which are frequently already rooted in transcendental motifs or aspirations.²⁹ The challenge, in Mannheim’s view, is for utopias to maintain a certain measure of “critical distance” or resistance to assimilation—and this, he argues, requires that they be attuned to actual, material circumstances.³⁰

· With the exception of Tekirei's Hyakushō Aidōjō, the Tolstoyan-Buddhist experiments of late Meiji and Taishō belong to what Mannheim calls the *liberal-humanitarian* sort.³¹ Unlike the early *chil- iastic* type of utopian movements these are rooted less in “ecstatic- orgiastic energies” than in “ideas.” In the liberal conception, a “for- mal goal projected into the infinite future” functions as a “regulative device in mundane affairs.”³² I believe Tekirei's experiment comes closer to what Mannheim calls the *socialist-communist* idea. Social- ism concurs with liberalism in rejecting “chiliastic excitement” in fa- vor of a “recognition that latent ecstatic energies must be sublimated through cultural ideals,” and yet:

[PREZI 25]: MANNHEIM QUOTE2

[I]nsofar as the question is one of the penetration of the idea into the evolving process and the gradual development of the idea, the socialist mentality does not experience it in this spiritually sublimated form. We are faced here with the idea in the form of a novel substance, al- most like a *living organism which has definite conditions of existence....* The socialist “idea,” in its interaction with “actual” elements, operates not as a purely formal and transcendent principle which regulates the event from the outside, but rather as a “tendency” within the matrix of this reality which continuously corrects itself with reference to this context. *The concrete investigation of the interdependence of the entire range of events from economic to psychic and intellectual must bring to- gether isolated observations into a functional unity against the back- ground of a developing whole.*³³

· It is important to note that the socialist recognition of conditioned existence is firmly embedded within a materialist orientation.³⁴ In- deed, it is precisely the awareness of the power of material phe- nomenon to shape social structures, beliefs and ideas that divests these structures, ideas, and beliefs of their inevitability, opening up avenues for transformation at all levels.³⁵

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• The quasi-Buddhist sense of conditionality—which is part and parcel of a deep and abiding historical consciousness—Mannheim perceptively sees as an important (if often neglected) aspect of socialist orientation, and one that distinguishes it from both the radical atemporality of the chialistic spirit (found in modern anarchism, especially Bakunin) and the de-historicized “idea” that undergirds the liberal attitude.³⁶

[PREZI 26]: CONCLUSIONS

• So what does all this mean for present or future Buddhism?

1) I think the tensions involved in considering the creation of a sustainable, intentional community—a *critical utopia*—that highlights some combination of personal transformation, communal activity and nature can be highly instructive to thinking about the application of Buddhism to twenty-first century life.

2) I think it is crucial to examine the various ways in which Buddhist ideas—utopian or otherwise—are “co-opted” by hegemonic cultural, political and economic forms, whether that be Western capitalism or the Chinese government.

3) Finally, I believe the Meiji New Buddhist Fellowship’s struggles—and failures—to resolve the tensions of a modernistic interpretation of Buddhism that bridges *humanist* and *naturalist* perspectives, while emphasizing the *social* core of Buddhist practice, remain a subject of further study, and even, dare I say, practice.

Notes

¹ Of course, this requires as a bare minimum a belief that “society” exists. Though it probably goes without saying, Margaret Thatcher, who famously proclaimed: “there is no such thing as society,” falls outside the progressive camp.

² As Justin Ritzinger (2014) puts it, in an article on the anarchist writings of Chinese Buddhist reformer Taixu (1890–1947), “Across this threshold, society becomes its own product”; also see Shmuel N. Eisenstadt, ‘Multiple Modernities’, *Daedalus* 129:1 (2000), pp. 2–3.

³ Of course, whether this refashioning should be *amelioristic*—as most liberals and social democrats would have it, or *revolutionary*—as orthodox Marxists, anarchists and many socialists and communists would prefer, is a matter of debate within the broader progressivist camp. It is also important to note that, at least in the context of the late 19th and early 20th century Japan, “progressives” were not necessarily anti-nationalistic (whatever that might imply), nor were they opposed to the growing call to national unity and harmony.

⁴ As Kashiwahara Yūsen notes, “these movements, released from the strictures of institutional Buddhism, were more receptive to outside influence,” and would have an immense impact on the development of not only modern Japanese Buddhism but by extension modern Buddhism as a whole. Kashiwahara 1990, 60; also see Tamamuro 1980, 340–41.

⁵ Yasutomi 1996, 59. The first—and largest—of these, would include the *kairitsu* or Buddhist “restoration” figures (e.g., Fukuda Gyōkai), as well as many variations of Buddhist “modernism” emerging out of the work of Enlightenment figures such as Inoue Enryō and Shaku Sōen, both of whom sought to both strengthen the Dharma *and* protect the imperial state. The second category includes the generally progressive New Buddhist movement of the late Meiji period and later Buddhist socialists such as Seno’o Girō. Finally, the third category, “Buddhism for the self,” has roots in the “spiritualism” of Shin sect reformer Kiyozawa Manshi, and emerges more fully with the “aesthetic” and “existential” Buddhism of the Kyoto School and D. T. Suzuki. The Tolstoyan-Buddhist intentional communities that flourished in the Taishō period were largely products of the third category (Buddhism for the self); and this made them vulnerable to “co-optation” by the first (Buddhism for the state) in the early Shōwa period. By the mid-Taishō period, the second category (Buddhism for society), embodied by the work of the New Buddhist Fellowship, had largely disappeared from Japan, as concern for “character” and “society” was replaced by emphasis on “personality” and “culture.”

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⁶ Indeed, as Marks notes, Japanese readers of Tolstoy tended to see him as familiar rather than exotic or mystical—the way he was usually seen in the West—and for various reasons treated him as “one of their own” (Marks 2003, 124).

⁷ Among the many “young men of Meiji” influenced by Tolstoy, the four I examine in my chapter are Itō Shōshin (1876–1963), Nishida Tenkō (1872–1968), Eto Tekirei (1880–1944) and Musha(no)kōji Saneatsu (1885–1976). All four men identified strongly with Tolstoy, not only as writers and thinkers but also in terms of adopting the master's lifestyle and attempting to put his ideas into practice. In particular, they were attracted to what Akamatsu Katsumaro called: “the practical effectiveness of Tolstoy's doctrines of love, labor, nonresistance, and reverence for the agrarian way of life” (Akamatsu 1981, 98). All of them established “intentional communities” that, remarkably—with the exception of Tekirei's—have persisted until today. Finally, all four, to varying degrees and in eclectic and piecemeal fashion, incorporated Buddhist ideas, values and/or practices into their utopian experiments. In this paper, in the interests of time, I will focus only on Tekirei, certainly the least known of the four.

⁸ See *Shizen to jinsei* (Nature and Human Life, 1900) for Roka's reflections on nature, and *Mimizu no tawagoto* (Gibberish of an Earthworm, 1913) for his adoption of the Tolstoyan peasant lifestyle. See Shifman 1966, 68–76 for the correspondence between Roka and Tolstoy.

⁹ Cited (in translation) in Akamatsu 1981, 99.

¹⁰ Akamatsu 1981, 99; also see Moiwa 1981. The Russian word *narodniki* refers to a person associated with a loosely defined progressive social movement that first arose in Russia in the 1860s and 1870s, in response to the poverty and social problems unleashed by of Tsar Alexander II's “emancipation” of the serfs. The ideology developed and promoted by the *narodniki* was a form of populism, focused especially addressing the grievances of rural peasants—still the vast majority of ordinary Russians—rather than urban workers. In many respects, the Russian *narodniki* movement reflected resembled the Popular Rights and Freedoms movement of early Meiji, albeit the Russian case would give birth to a more sophisticated ideology in the work of critics like Nikolay Mikhaylovsky (1852–1904), who, inspired by the work of Alexander Herzen (1812–1870) and Nikolay Chernyshevsky (1828–1889), incorporated elements of Marxist criticism into his interpretation of *narodnichestvo*. Most *narodniki* were suspicious of capitalism, and held an idealized view of peasants and rural life. Though the movement failed to achieve its aims—in large part due to its largely middle-class and urban leadership as well as the backlash against its successful assassination of Tsar in 1881—it influenced the course of Russian socialism (and anarchism) and played a significant role in so-

cial thought and experimentation in late Meiji and Taishō Japan. For more on the *narodniki*, see Kolakowski 2005, 609–612.

¹¹ Musashino would become the center of the Japanese *narodniki* movement, with Tokutomi Roka, Ikeda Taneo and Onishi Goichi all spending some time in the Kamitakaido area during the Taishō period. See Nishimura 1992, 151.

¹² Kropotkin's *Fields, Factories and Workshops* “really taught [him] how to live a life of labor”; Akamatsu 1981, 100; also see Eto 1925; Nishimura 1992, 170.

¹³ See Nishimura 1992, 173–74. Andō—a lapsed Sōtō Zen monk who called for the abolition of the warrior class—was a strict rationalist and humanist whose vision was not bound to Confucian or Neo-Confucian moralism. Andō's magnum opus was *Shizen shin'eido* (The True Way of Administering [Society] According to Nature, 1753). Along with his exact contemporary Tominaga Nakamoto, Andō is one of those rare thinkers whose works are so far ahead of their time that the reader suspects forgery (see Andō 1991, 1992; Norman 1949, Yasunaga 1992, Najita 2002). Tekirei called his commune on the outskirts of Tokyo *Tenshinkei*, which is borrowed from Andō's trope of the natural order as “movement,” “truthfulness,” and “reverence”; see Najita 2002, 75–76.

¹⁴ Nishimura 1992, 88

¹⁵ Along with Shimonaka Yasaburō (1878–1961), Ishikawa Sanshirō (1876–1956), and Onishi Goichi (1898–1992)—and against “rightists” such as Gondō Seikyō (1868–1937, Tachibana Kōzaburō (1893–1974), Yamazaki Nobuyoshi (1873–1954) and Katō Kanji (1884–1967); Nishimura 1992, 89. For an analysis of the life and work of Katō Kanji vis-à-vis the emergence of *nōhonshugi*, see Havens 1970a.

¹⁶ Nishimura 1992, 171

¹⁷ Tekirei writes about this in his correspondence with Akegerasu Haya in the Buddhist journal *Chugai Nippō* (March–April 1916); see Wada 2012, 293–94.

¹⁸ Cited in Nishimura 1992, 150; my translation. As Nishimura notes, the third of these principles is clearly borrowed from the work of American agrarian activist A. C. Townley (1880–1959), founder of the Non-Partisan League (1900), a progressive agrarian political party that had some success in the US midwest during the 1910s.

¹⁹ Sakaino Kōyō, *Shin Bukkyō* 2, 9: 325 (Sept 1901)

²⁰ Takashima Beihō, *Shin Bukkyō* 11, 3: 263 (March 1910)

²¹ See Nishimura 1992, 171.

²² Wada 2012, 12–14

²³ See Saitō et al., 2002, 232

²⁴ Cited in Wada 2012; *Lotus Sutra*, chap. 12 “Devadatta”; trans. http://www2.fodian.net/world/0262_12.html

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²⁵ See Wada 2012, 59–64. In certain respects, Tekirei's eclectic philosophy is rooted in principles similar to Kiyozawa Manshi's *seishinshugi*, so it comes as no surprise to learn that in early 1902 the young Tekirei visited the Kōkōdō to hear Manshi lecture on Shinran and was favorably impressed by the older man. Two decades later he would write that it was due to Manshi (and his reading of Shinran), that Tekirei first truly discovered the "self" (*shi*). He would later have contact with two of Manshi's chief students: Akegarasu Haya and Chikazumi Jōkan (1870–1941). See Wada 2012, 285–86.

²⁶ Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 192.

²⁷ Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 192–93, my emphasis.

²⁸ Though ideologies, like utopias, may be "situationally transcendent," unlike utopias they are also capable of being assimilated to the social order; i.e., though "they often become the good-intentioned motives for the subjective conduct of the individual," they "never succeed *de facto* in the realization of their projected contents. Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 194.

²⁹ Mannheim cites the example of Christian *agape* or brotherly love, which, at least for most of Christian history, has remained a nebulous—and largely politically harmless—ideal out of reach of the social realities in which Christianity has actually existed. In other words, over the course of time it became an "ideology," despite the fact that it may indeed—as liberation theologians argue—have originated as a "utopia." It seems likely that Asian Buddhist tropes such as *awakening*, *no-self* and *compassion* have functioned in a similar way (as the Critical Buddhists would assert).

³⁰ Of particular note for our purposes is Mannheim's conclusion with regard to the *critical* function of the socialist approach: "It is not sufficient [i.e., as with the liberal view] to have a good intention in the abstract and to postulate in the far-off future a realized realm of freedom, the elements of which are not subject to control. It is necessary rather to become aware of the real conditions (in this case economic and social) under which such a wish-fulfilment can at all become operative. The road which leads from the present to this distant goal must also be investigated in order to identify those forces in the contemporary process whose immanent, dynamic character, under our direction, leads step by step towards the realized idea" (241). In short, "socialism, in its analysis of ideology, worked out a coherent, critical method which was, in effect, an attempt to annihilate the antagonists' utopia by showing that they had their roots in the existing situation" (241). The socialist technique of ideology criticism is one that Mannheim embraces—as becomes clear, this is precisely what he means when he writes of the task of the sociology of knowledge itself. And yet, in attempting to go beyond Marxism, Mannheim writes that socialists and communists are particularly prone

to believe that they can somehow exempt their own “scientific” analysis from historical contingency and conditionality (75, 78; also see Berger). This failure to recognize or realize one’s own “situational determinism” (*Seinsgebundenheit*) of one’s own ideas ties directly into traditional Buddhist understandings of no-self, interdependence, dependent origination, and emptiness.

³¹ This aligns with Harry Harootunian’s argument that Taishō period “neo-nativist” critics were in the process of creating a counter-narrative (not necessarily anti-modern) to the Meiji discourse of “bureaucratic rationality” in service of the imperial state. While this new narrative was, like the various Tolstoyan-Buddhist utopian experiments explored above, “critical” in the sense of presenting a distinctive, new, and attractive alternative means to self-expression and communal existence, it relied upon what Harootunian calls a form of “intransitive knowledge” as an alternative to the manipulative (and vulgar) utilitarianism of instrumental rationality and the authoritarian rhetoric of “objective truth.” Here intransitive knowledge refers to: “a mode of knowing that closes the distance between knowing subject and the object of knowing because, it is believed, knowledge is constituted from the life and custom of the knower. As a result, practice and hermeneutic become one and the same things.” Harootunian 1990, 101.

³² In other words, utopia is quite literally an idealized “other” or “higher realm” that inspires us by working on or transforming our moral conscience. Importantly, this liberal-bourgeois drive towards the “middle way” is pursued through a privileging of ideas above the vulgar materiality of “existing reality.” As a result, according to Mannheim: “Elevated and detached, and at the same time sublime, it lost all sense for material things, as well as every real relationship with nature.” Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, 222.

³³ “In this context, ideas are not dreams and desires, imaginary imperatives wafted down from some absolute sphere; they have rather a concrete life of their own and a definite function in the total process. They die away when they become outmoded, and they can be realized when the social process attains to a given structural situation. Without such relevance to reality, they become merely obfuscating ‘ideologies’...” (Mannheim 240–41; 246–47).

³⁴ The ‘material’ conditions which were previously regarded merely as evil obstacles in the path of the idea are here hypostatized into the motor factor in world affairs, in the form of an economic determinism which is reinterpreted in materialistic terms” (Mannheim 242).

³⁵ Here, I believe, Tekirei goes beyond Tolstoy, whose agrarian-socialist vision was arguably limited by a lingering commitment to idealist spirituality. See, for ex-

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ample, Tolstoy's letter to leading Japanese socialists associated with the Heimisha in 1905, in which he criticizes socialism for its tendency towards materialism: "I must tell you that as for myself I do not favor socialism. I would regret it if Japan, one of the most vigorous and progressing sectors of mankind, with all her astuteness, should take from Europe this brittle, visionary, and essentially fallacious thing that is socialism. Europe herself is already abandoning socialism... The goals which socialism maintains (to wit, material welfare) satisfy the basest aspects of human nature. Such welfare can never be attained through the means advocated... The true well-being of man is spiritual, that is to say, moral. Within it, material welfare is also included. This lofty aim can only be attained through the successful organization of all countries and peoples into one religious and moral unit." Cited (in translation) in Akamatsu 1981, 97.

³⁶ Mannheim 243. As Mannheim notes—with Derrida—this historical consciousness is often lost within mainstream Marxism when class itself trumps history (and culture): "If the dynamic conception of time is cancelled out of the Marxian sociological method, here too is obtained a generalizing theory of ideology which, since it is blind to historical differentiations, would relate ideas exclusively to the social positions of those who hold them irrespective of the society in which they occur or of the particular function they may there fulfil" (Mannheim 254).