



European
University
Institute

MAX WEBER
PROGRAMME
FOR
POSTDOCTORAL
STUDIES

WORKING PAPERS

MWP 2015/12
Max Weber Programme

Western Marxism or Marxism in the “Periphery”? The
cases of Gramsci and Tosaka

Takahiro Chino

European University Institute
Max Weber Programme

Western Marxism or Marxism in the “Periphery”? The cases of Gramsci and Tosaka

Takahiro Chino

EUI Working Paper **MWP** 2015/12

This text may be downloaded for personal research purposes only. Any additional reproduction for other purposes, whether in hard copy or electronically, requires the consent of the author(s), editor(s). If cited or quoted, reference should be made to the full name of the author(s), editor(s), the title, the working paper or other series, the year, and the publisher.

ISSN 1830-7728

© Takahiro Chino, 2015

Printed in Italy
European University Institute
Badia Fiesolana
I – 50014 San Domenico di Fiesole (FI)
Italy
www.eui.eu
cadmus.eui.eu

Abstract

This paper aims to show that two eminent Italian and Japanese Marxists in the 1930s, Antonio Gramsci and Tosaka Jun, shared four important characteristics of so-called Western Marxism. These are: 1) a rejection of crude economism; 2) an acknowledgement of the critical role of civil society in obtaining people's consent for the governance of modern states; 3) a scrutiny of the mechanism with which people were mobilized through internalization of social norms; and 4) the proposition of an alternative reform plan based on the autonomy of politics. Showing that Gramsci and Tosaka shared these four characteristics enables us to revisit the framework of Western Marxism, which confusingly consists of both theoretical characteristics and geographical criteria. The geographical element comes to the forefront in determining what does *not* count as Western Marxism, drawing boundaries behind those theoretical characteristics that were shared beyond these boundaries. As this paper maintains, Tosaka's case may suggest that, during this time, the four theoretical characteristics had simultaneously developed in the "periphery," in the places that were neither central nor remote in glowingly globalized values and problems, which clashed, and were often mixed up with, still-resilient domestic circumstances. This allows us to examine Italian and Japanese Marxists on the same plane, without endorsing the essentialist West–East dichotomy that obscures their shared characteristics.

Keywords

Global intellectual history; Antonio Gramsci; Tosaka Jun; Western Marxism.

Takahiro Chino

Max Weber Fellow, 2014–2015

Department of Social and Political Sciences, European University Institute, Italy.

Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science and Economics, Waseda University, Japan.

Email: takahiro.chino@eui.eu.

Introduction: Four Elements of Western Marxism

This article aims to show that two eminent Italian and Japanese Marxists in the 1930s, Antonio Gramsci and Tosaka Jun¹, provided considerably similar analyses of a series of questions which were central in their time: how the superstructure works, how modern states are organized, how people are mobilized, and how alternatives to the status quo can be proposed. This similarity enables us to revisit the commonly accepted framework of Western Marxism, of which Gramsci is counted one of the foremost members. As the paper points out, those features of Western Marxism that give it its distinctiveness can also be found in non-Western Marxists of the same era, irrespective of mutual contact, as exemplified by the case of Tosaka.

Coincidentally, both Gramsci and Tosaka ultimately died from prolonged incarceration in fascist prisons: Gramsci, the then leader of the Italian Communist Party, died in 1937, shortly after his unconditional release; Tosaka, who led the Research Group on Materialism, died just six days before the end of World War II. Since his death, Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks* have enjoyed worldwide popularity, inspiring the social sciences and humanities with, among others, the ideas of hegemony, passive revolution, and subaltern groups. Tosaka, by contrast, has remained underexplored in and outside of Japan, at least partly because of the triumph of liberalism in the postwar Japanese intellectual and political climate. Recently, however, commentators have revisited Tosaka as a radical social critic whose analysis and theory was groundbreaking in the Marxist tradition.² Harry Harootunian, a distinguished scholar of Japanese intellectual history, propelled the ongoing reappraisal of Tosaka, stating that his *Overcome by Modernity* – Harootunian's masterpiece on interwar Japanese thought – is in a way “an attempt to retrieve Tosaka's powerful critique of fascism and [show] how its ideological appeal to culture and community was sanctioned by a liberal endowment” (2001: xxx). Interestingly, he frequently refers to the similarity between Tosaka and Gramsci, concerning their shared focus on the cultural sphere in modern societies (cf. Harootunian 1994: 105; 2002: 240)³. Although he has not yet provided a deeper discussion on their affinity, it seems that this has greater implications than he may have thought, allowing us to revisit our shared understanding of the uniqueness of so-called Western Marxism, as contrasted with orthodox Marxism.

As Western Marxism as a category is ambiguous by definition, it may include thinkers of various inclinations from the first decades of the twentieth century to the present⁴. In this paper, therefore, with the term Western Marxists I limit myself to referring to Marxists who developed their thoughts in opposition to orthodox Marxism at the earliest stage up until the 1930s when Gramsci and Tosaka also elaborated their thoughts. In this respect, the distinctiveness of Western Marxism can be summarized into four points, all of which can be confirmed in the most basic description of Western Marxism (Jacoby 1991).

First, Western Marxism does not espouse the crude economic determinism of orthodox Marxism (Jacoby 1991: 524). Generally speaking, while Russian Marxism presumes that economic conditions primarily determine the formation of human society, Western Marxism looks at the ways that human agency is exercised on the cultural and political terrain – or, to use a Marxist term, the “superstructure” – which is relatively independent of the economic base. For example, Rosa Luxemburg was the first among these thinkers to stress the autonomy of politics and revolution against economic determinism and Leninist vanguardism. Less related to real politics, though, this critique was shared by later Marxists, who considered the existing array of economic situations could hardly explain the success of the Russian Revolution (e.g. the young Gramsci) and the development of consumer society and mass culture (e.g. Adorno, Holkheimer, and Kracauer).

Next, Western Marxists vigorously scrutinized the distinctive role of ideology as something much more than a mere reflection of the economic base (Jacoby 1991: 525). This entails two distinct questions that I identify as indicating the second and third characteristics, namely: how it is generated and how it affects. Second, then, Western Marxism investigates the way that modern states are organized. From the Russian Marxist perspective, states are nothing but organs of violence that serve

¹ Japanese names are shown according to the surname-name order.

² Tosaka's selected writings have recently been published in German (2012) and in English (2013), in the latter case together with some articles that reassess the significance of Tosaka's thought.

³ See also Hirano (2013: 183) and Schäfer (2013: 173–4).

⁴ Orthodox Marxists in Soviet Russia were the first to label non-orthodox thinkers in the West such as George Lukács and Karl Korsch as “Western Marxists”; yet they then adopted this category to denote their vaguely-shared theoretical inclinations (Kellner 2005: 155).

the interests of the bourgeoisie, best represented by the police and the army. Western Marxism, however, submits that such violence alone cannot preserve the governance of modern states, and examines instead how ideology is generated through the apparatuses of modern states to cement the existing form of governance. Among other things, this element can be thought to be Gramsci's best contribution to Western Marxism.

Third, Western Marxism is thus particularly concerned with how people mobilize. If modern states cannot operate without mass support, then it is critical to governing to make the governed think that they support their government of their own volition; that is, how ideology affects. In fact, Western Marxism was eager to develop a theory of consciousness, or how people actually think and act, in order to explicate how they internalize social norms. In this regard, Lukács uniquely developed the theory of false consciousness; that is, how the consciousness of workers is manipulated differently to their position in the world of production. However, in so doing he employed a dichotomy between true and false consciousnesses within his overly Hegelian scheme. More grounded analysis of how ideology works was provided by Siegfried Kracauer, who pioneered in analyzing how the cinema represents social norms. In addition, Erich Fromm and Theodor Adorno offered social psychological analysis of how the lower-middle stratum had a certain affinity with fascism.

Finally, Western Marxists tried to provide alternatives to the status quo, without expecting changes in economic conditions to simultaneously alter socio-political circumstances (Jacoby 1991: 524). With the assumption that the political and cultural realms are relatively independent and autonomous, Western Marxists considered that it was their task to propose possible remedies to current problems. For example, this varyingly includes Walter Benjamin's alternative historiography and Ernst Bloch's humanistic utopia achieved by truly revolutionary force.

The rest of this paper examines how these four general elements are embodied by Gramsci, as a prime figure of Western Marxism, and then by Tosaka, as a (geographically) non-Western Marxist. Gramsci strongly criticized crude economic determinism while focusing on an analysis of the "hegemony" – the consent of the governed to the governing – upon which, he argued, modern states work. He then recognized the Catholic Church as the institution that exercised this function in civil society, making the governed internalize the social norms of the governing. Observing that Italy's low level of social mobility triggered a stark division between the governing and the governed, and thus also a problem of mobilization, Gramsci proposed that educational reform would reduce the gap between these social strata, enabling inclusion of mass demands in Italian politics. Likewise, Tosaka was reluctant to endorse crude economism on the basis that it cannot account for people's customs that arise within the superstructure, within the relationship between institutions and people's consciousness, and that remain independent of the economic base. Tosaka also conducted a vigorous exploration into how mobilization would occur through reinforced education control promoting Foucaultian disciplines. In his search for a path different to education, which was occupied by nationalist discourse, he then propounded enlightenment through journalism.

Showing that Tosaka shared the four theoretical characteristics above will enable us to revisit the framework of Western Marxism, which – confusingly – involves both theoretical characteristics and geographical criteria. The geographical element comes to the forefront in determining what does *not* count as Western Marxism, drawing boundaries behind those theoretical characteristics that were, as this paper shows, shared beyond these boundaries⁵. If we try to do justice to the theoretical distinctiveness that is contained in the alleged category of Western Marxism, instead of trying to endorse its geographical criteria, Tosaka's case may suggest that during the early twentieth century the four theoretical characteristics outlined above developed simultaneously in the "periphery". Rather than implying inferiority, "periphery" here denotes those loci that were neither central nor remote in the strikingly globalized values and problems which clashed and were often mixed up with still-resilient domestic circumstances. The notion of "periphery" thus allows us to examine Italian and Japanese Marxists on the same plane, without endorsing the essentialist West–East dichotomy that obscures their shared characteristics.

Gramsci (1): Critique of Economic Determinism

In this section, I examine how Gramsci embodies the critique of crude economic determinism widely shared by Western Marxists. In his Marxist framework, Gramsci not only distinguished the economic base from the superstructure, but he also saw civil and political society as belonging to the superstructure (cf. L: 481/ LP2: 67). Rather than focusing on political society (i.e. "the state" in a narrow sense) as violence, he focused on the role of civil society in producing consent among the people. He thought that for modern states to exercise governance, it was essential that they acquire the

⁵ This geographical characterization is, of course, seen in most of the literature. See, as classic and recent examples, Anderson (1976: 24-26) and Linden (2007: 5).

consent of the people, or hegemony. One of the biggest debates in the literature on this framework concerns whether Gramsci was a Western Marxist who explored the unique functions of civil society as the domain of human autonomy regardless of the economic base, or whether he was an orthodox Marxist, explicating human affairs as simple reflections of their economic circumstances. One notable instance of the debate on this issue was that between Norberto Bobbio and Jacques Texier. For Bobbio, Gramsci's notion of civil society included ideological and cultural relations as well as moral and intellectual elements. This stands in opposition to Marx's notion of civil society, which is the ensemble of material relations. Bobbio thus underscores how, for Gramsci, civil society has supremacy over the economic base (Bobbio 1979: 33). By contrast, Texier argues that in Gramsci the superstructure of any particular historical period depends on the degree of economic development. As such, Gramsci's civil society represents "the complex of practical and ideological social relations [...] which is established and grows up on the base of determined relations of production" (1979: 71). Texier thus stresses how for Gramsci the social relations of production exist between the superstructure and the base, and that these relations are the factors determining the possible functions of civil society as the domain of hegemony.

The stark contrast between these two lines of argument was mediated by Joseph Femia. He contends that Gramsci's view of the relation between the base and the superstructure is that "the base constrains what forms of consciousness are possible [TC: in the superstructure]" (Femia 1981: 121). Femia bases this claim on Gramsci being mostly concerned with the kinds of superstructural formation that are possible within the given constraints of the economy, and this does not signify that a particular form of superstructure is automatically determined (cf. Q4§15: 437/ PN2: 157). However, Femia's view does not fully account for Gramsci's awareness of those elements of the superstructure that are survivors of the collapse of the economic base that gave birth to them. In other words, Gramsci was conscious of the non-synchronicity of the superstructure and the economic base, from which the autonomy of civil society emerges:

I do not think that many people would argue that, once a structure has been changed, all the elements of the corresponding superstructure must of necessity collapse. What happens, instead, is that out of an ideology which arose to guide the popular masses – and which therefore cannot but take account of certain of their interests – several elements must survive: natural law itself, which may have declined for the educated classes, is preserved by the Catholic religion and is more alive in the people than one thinks (Q10II§41xii: 1322/ FS: 398).

As thus stated, Gramsci recognized the autonomy of religion working in civil society as a residue of a former structure. This means that even if the economic structure is changed it does not necessarily follow that the corresponding superstructure is therefore simultaneously obliterated (cf. Morera 1990: 74–85). For Gramsci, then, after the collapse of a structure it becomes a task of human agency to critically examine the remaining superstructural elements. As we shall see, the prime example of this is the still resilient influence of Catholicism on Italian society.

Texier's claim that Gramsci too holds that the economic base is the ultimate factor in society may not be wrong, but the emphasis should be put on Gramsci's insistence that the economic base cannot sweep away everything in the superstructure – and particularly in civil society – all at once. Again, it is the role of politics as the exercise of human agency that examines and addresses those problems in civil society that continue to live on, independently of the economic base from which they are born. It is precisely in this sense that Gramsci is categorized as one of the Western Marxists who rejected the crude economism that the Russian Marxists assumed.

Gramsci (2): Hegemony as the Consent of the Governed

At the centre of his analysis of the problems remaining in the superstructure, Gramsci propounded that the governance of modern states increasingly rested on the "spontaneous" consent of the governed (Q12§1: 1519/ SPN: 12; Q26§6: 2302/ SPN: 261). This analysis, employing his concept of "hegemony," leads him to the second characteristic of Western Marxism, about the formation of modern states.

Gramsci expressed his contempt for contemporary dominant understandings of the state that saw it solely as violence, and thus as a night-watchman state (Q26§6: 2302/ SPN: 261). When voicing this contempt, he surely had in mind orthodox Marxists who regarded the state simply as an organ that protects bourgeois interests. As noted above, by dividing political society as the terrain of violence and civil society as that of consent, Gramsci focused on the role of the latter as the very means to maintain modern states (Q6§88: 763–4/ SPN: 263). In modern mass society, he considered it critical that states obtained mass consent if they were to successfully exercise governance. In order to analyze how (or the extent to which) they succeed in obtaining the consent of the people, he adopted

the concept of “hegemony” to denote the situation where consent is properly given to the governing body, allowing the stable exercise of governance (Q8§191: 1056/ PN3: 345). In other words, when hegemony persists, the relationship between the ruling elites and the masses is stable. If it unstable, however, there arises a “crisis of hegemony”, or an “organic crisis” (cf. Q13§23: 1602/ SPN: 210):

[...] this crisis manifests itself in the ever growing difficulty to form governments and in the ever greater instability of the governments themselves, and has its immediate origin in the multiplication of parliamentary parties and in the [permanent] internal crises of each of these parties (that is, there occurs within each party the same thing that occurs in parliament: difficulties of government [and instability of leadership]). (Q1§48: 59/ PN1: 156).⁶

Clearly, here the crisis stemmed from the uneven relationship between the ruling class and the masses, as they lost the stable and hegemonic relationship vital to the governance of modern states: “[i]f the ruling class has lost consent, that is, if it no longer ‘leads’ but only ‘rules’ – it possesses sheer coercive power – this actually means that the great masses have become detached from traditional ideologies [...]. The crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born.” (Q3§34: 311/ PN2: 33, amended TC)

It is noteworthy that Gramsci discerned such a crisis in the contemporary Italian situation.⁷ By explaining that “[d]uring the postwar period, the hegemonic apparatus cracks and the exercise of hegemony becomes ever more difficult,” he described the Italian postwar situation as one in “crisis” (Q1§48: 59/ PN1: 156). I cannot do justice to the Italian postwar situation here, but it suffices to say that it revealed the failure of the Italian state to include the demands of the masses since the Risorgimento, giving fascism the opportunity to obtain large mass support against the liberal government.⁸ In this situation, argued Gramsci, it was a critical task for the Italian state to include the unheard voices of the masses, and to thereby improve its low social mobility. Gramsci explained this as “democracy”, closely related to “hegemony:”

Among many meanings of democracy, the most realistic and concrete one, in my view, is that which can be brought into relief through the connection between democracy and the concept of hegemony. In the hegemonic system, there is democracy between the leading group and the groups that are led to the extent that (the development of the economy and thus) the legislation (which is an expression of that development) favours the (molecular) transition from the groups that are led [*gruppi diretti*] to the leading group [*gruppo dirigente*] (Q8§191: 1056/ PN3: 345, amended TC).

Finocchiaro (1999: 115–6) regards this passage as of utmost importance in terms of Gramsci’s notion of democracy, and argues that it indicates that “democracy”, for Gramsci, lay in the social mobility taking place between the leading group and the groups that are led. Therefore, as we will see, Gramsci’s task was to recover the stable and hegemonic relationship between these groups, and thus improve the rate of social mobility.

At this juncture, Gramsci observed that modern states depend on the consent of the people, rather than on violence, and this enabled him to analyse how Italian politics was destabilized due to the lack of such consent. This observation differentiated him from the orthodox Marxist account of the state as solely a bourgeois means of violence, and he thus appropriated the second characteristic of Western Marxism. It is crucial, here, to note that the Catholic Church helped preserve the actual separation between the political elite and the masses, as well as the mechanism preventing the Italian masses from expressing their demands. Ideological processes – mostly exercised by the Church – made people internalize given social norms as their own.

Gramsci (3): Common Sense and the Catholic Church

In this section, I examine Gramsci’s investigation of the Catholic Church in connection with the issue of the mobilization of people in modern states – a topic explored by Western Marxists. According to Gramsci, since the French Revolution, where various ideological currents both religious and secular emerged, the Catholic Church had adopted a modern ideological strategy by transforming itself into a “party” contesting the validity of its accounts of the world against other currents (Q20§1: 2081/ FS:

⁶ The words in square brackets here are from the revised passage in Notebook 13 (Q13§37: 1639/ FS: 92). The quoted passage remains the same except for these added words.

⁷ Only a small amount of literature has focused on how Gramsci’s analysis of the crisis of hegemony echoed the breakdown of the hegemony of Italian liberalism. See Bracco (1980) and Farneti (1994).

⁸ For a detailed discussion, see Chino (2013: Ch. 4).

29; Q20§2: 2086/ FS: 34). Gramsci observed that this transformation culminated with the Lateran Pacts, ratified in 1929, which enabled the Church to give its teachings access to the "common sense" of the Italian people through non-religious means such as education.

Gramsci defined common sense as the ordinary yet often contradictory view of the world held among the people, in contrast to philosophy, which was a well-grounded and coherent conception (Q11§12: 1375–6/ SPN: 323–4). The inconsistencies of common sense often appear as a separation between thought and action. However, Gramsci did not attribute such inconsistency to intellectual dishonesty. According to him, it occurred due to a conception of the world imposed by intellectuals belonging to other social groups. In cases where contrast between thought and action is observed, Gramsci remarked that:

[it] cannot but be the expression of profounder contrasts of a social historical order. It signifies that the social group in question may indeed have its own conception of the world, even if only embryonic; a conception which manifests itself in action, but occasionally and in flashes – when, that is, the group is acting as an organic totality. But this same group has, for reasons of submission and intellectual subordination, adopted a conception which is not its own but is borrowed from another group; and it affirms this conception verbally and believes itself to be following it, because this is the conception which it follows in 'normal times' – that is when its conduct is not independent and autonomous, but submissive and subordinate (Q11§12: 1379/ SPN: 326–7).

Gramsci described this contradiction between thought and action in terms of an individual having two theoretical consciousnesses, or one "contradictory consciousness" (cf. Femia 1981: 35–50; 218–35). One of them, according to Gramsci, is "implicit in his activity and which in reality unites him with all his fellow-collaborators in the practical transformation of the real world," whereas the other one is "superficially explicit or verbal, which he has inherited from the past and uncritically absorbed." This contradictory state of consciousness in turn produces "a condition of moral and political passivity," allowing little possibility of autonomous decision of action (Q11§12: 1385/ SPN: 333 amended TC). If people's consciousness appears contradictory and thus passive, they can hardly express their concerns. They come to merely repeat what they have taken for granted as common sense.

Crucially, Gramsci regarded religion as a main supplier of common sense (Q11§12: 1375/ SPN: 323). This was a major reason for his vigorous investigation of the role of the Catholic Church in Italian society: he explained how Catholicism permeated the common sense of the Italian people. The prime example of this seems to be his insistence on people's belief in the objectively real world:

The public "believes" that the external world is objectively real, but it is precisely here that the question arises: what is the origin of this "belief" and what critical value does it "objectively" have? In fact the belief is of religious origin, even if the man who shares it is indifferent to religion. Since all religions have taught and do teach that the world, nature, the universe were created by God before the creation of man, and therefore man found the world already made, catalogued and defined once and for all, this belief has become an iron fact of "common sense" and survives with the same solidity even if religious feeling is dead or asleep (Q11§17: 1412/SPN: 441).

As such, once settled in people's minds, common sense appears as the truth, unlike the presupposed fallibility, and thus renewability, of scientific knowledge (Q11§37: 1455-6/FS: 291–2).

It was in this sense that Gramsci paid particular attention to the Lateran Pacts. According to him, the most important part of the Pacts was the Concordat between the Italian state and the Church that acknowledged Catholicism as the official religion, giving official recognition to the religious organization Catholic Action and making religious education mandatory in secondary level education (it was already mandatory at elementary level). He considered the underlying context of the Concordat to not just be the fascist government's attempt to show its political competence by resolving the situation stemming from the Italian state's annexation of Rome during the Risorgimento, but also the Church's intention to permeate people's common sense (Q5§71: 606/ FS: 59–60; cf. Colarizi 2000: 190–1). The then Pope, Pius XI, described by Gramsci as the "Jesuit Pope" (Q20§4: 2092/FS: 81),

⁹ His example of this contradictory consciousness is the young clergymen who held modernist (progressive) opinions and who yet verbally swore an anti-modernist oath (Q20§4: 2090/ FS: 78).

aimed at preventing mass apostasy and at reviving the supremacy of the Church. While the fascist government interpreted the Church's aim in ratifying the Pact as achieving only spiritual supremacy, considered Gramsci, in Pius XI's understanding the Church as the perfect society straddled both the spiritual and earthly domains (Q5§71: 606/ FS: 59–60). With this argument, Gramsci implied that the fascist government failed to understand that, for the Church, achieving its spiritual supremacy necessarily meant achieving its earthly supremacy at the same time. However, much as this may be a "medieval conception," the fascist state and the Church's different understandings of the place of the Church in society underpinned their different understandings of the Concordat (Q6§24: 703–4/FS: 75–6). Drawing on the fascist state's misunderstanding of the Church's aim, the Church exploited Catholic Action and religious education to make the Italian public internalize ideas of a religious origin as their common sense.

Catholic Action and religious education were the chief means by which the Church spread Catholic teachings outside its *own* institutions. After the banning of political parties, Catholic Action enjoyed a privileged status in Italian civil society. Gramsci sought the roots of the Church's strategy in the idea of the "formula of the *indirect power* of the Church over all civil sovereignties" advocated by the sixteenth century Jesuit cardinal Roberto Bellarmino, who was canonized by Pius XI (Q6§151: 809/FS: 21; Q16§11ii: 1871/FS: 67). In fact, in Gramsci's time the Church was managed mostly by those of the Jesuit orientation. Religious education played a part in this strategy. By penetrating Italy's public education system from elementary education to higher education¹⁰, the Church acquired a number of opportunities to maintain the position of the clergy and to disseminate its teachings among the Italian public. As a result, the Concordat weakened the totalitarian character of the fascist state. All in all, by underestimating the Church's "secular" intervention as the source of its popularly grounded strength, the fascist state failed to understand the mechanism through which the Church's alleged spiritual superiority in fact rested on the earthly.

Gramsci explicated the Church's strength in civil society in terms of the relation between two fundamental social strata: the intellectuals and the masses. As stated in the following paragraph, which is worth quoting at length, the strength of the Church rested on its resilience in maintaining a hierarchical relationship, while at the same time avoiding a definitive break between these two strata:

The strength of religions, and of the Catholic church in particular, has lain, and still lies, in the fact that they feel very strongly the need for the doctrinal unity of the whole mass of the faithful and strive to ensure that the higher intellectual stratum does not get separated from the lower. The Roman church has always been the most vigorous in the struggle to prevent the "official" formation of two religions, one for the "intellectuals" and the other for the "simple souls." The struggle has not been without serious disadvantages for the Church itself, but these disadvantages are connected with the historical process which is transforming the whole of civil society and which contains overall a corrosive critique of all religion, and they only serve to emphasize the organizational capacity of the clergy in the cultural sphere and the abstractly rational and just relationship which the Church has been able to establish in its own sphere between the intellectuals and the simple. The Jesuits have undoubtedly been the major architects of this equilibrium, and in order to preserve it they have given the Church a progressive forward movement which has tended to allow the demands of science and philosophy to be to a certain extent satisfied. But the rhythm of the movement has been so slow and methodical that the changes have been unobserved by the mass of the simple [...] (Q11§12: 1380–1/ SPN: 328–9).

The Church as a group of traditional intellectuals provided the people with their view of the world as universal, while keeping people separate from access to contemporary views.

As a result, the Church maintained the hierarchical order between intellectuals (i.e. the clergy) and the masses (i.e. lay believers), thereby preserving the current array of social strata in Italian society. According to Gramsci, Croce the greatest intellectual of the time neither noticed nor addressed this separation as a problem reinforced by the Catholic Church (Q10II§41iv: 1305/ FS: 473). In his critical reply to Croce, Gramsci looked into the structure of common sense, without endorsing the Marxist separation between true and false consciousness. George Lukács famously developed the theory of false consciousness, assuming that people's consciousness should emerge in accordance with the position of their class in the world of production (Lukács 1971). Hence, the proletariat, as the most repressed class, should obtain a true revolutionary consciousness after rejecting the false consciousness that had been imposed by the bourgeoisie. Clearly, Gramsci's view of consciousness did not assume such synchronicity with the class position. Rather, he assumed the very

¹⁰ Gramsci also paid attention to the foundation of the first Catholic university in Italy as early as 1921 which enabled the Church to recruit their intellectuals (Q16§11ii: 1868/FS: 64).

reality of every type of consciousness that people have. This empirical viewpoint sharply differentiated him from those – not just orthodox Marxists, but also Lukács as one of the earliest Western Marxists – who take class position as the determinant of consciousness.

A final problem still remains. If Gramsci's analysis revealed the mechanism through which people are mobilized in modern states as consisting in internalization of social norms, then how did he propose to address this problem? As the next section reveals, unlike orthodox Marxism, which anticipated a change in the economic structure would simultaneously alter the superstructure, Gramsci proposed that educational reform would eliminate the gap of cultural capital between the elite and the masses which had been at the base of the Italian state since the Risorgimento.

Gramsci (4): Educational Reform to Improve Social Mobility

The underlying principle in Gramsci's proposal for educational reform is the relative autonomy of human affairs, as independent from the economic base. The reform proposal thus shows that Gramsci inherently possessed the fourth characteristic of Western Marxism: of seeking alternatives to the status quo without expecting the changes to emerge from the establishment of a new economic structure.

Examining how the Catholic Church informed the common sense of Italian society, Gramsci saw the gap between intellectuals and the masses as the key to Italian society, and began thinking of how to remedy the *de facto* separation between the high culture of the intellectuals and the common sense of the people. He considered it possible to distil from unsorted common sense a "good sense" with a more appropriate grasp of the world (Q11§12: 1378/ SPN: 325–6). In this way, he rejected the epistemological separation between philosophy and common sense. It was from this position that he likewise rejected the sociological separation between intellectuals and the masses. In modern society, the difference between these fundamental social groups is significantly reproduced through educational processes. However, in the first decade of the twentieth century, social mobility in Italy was lower than that of Germany and France (cf. Malatesta 2005: 18–20). This suggests that formal education in Italy at that time rarely remedied the gap between the elite and the masses. It was for this reason that Gramsci called for educational reform to address the tremendous gap of cultural capital that had separated the two since the Renaissance¹¹. He turned his attention to how this gap affected children's achievement at the micro level, in the classroom situation:

Undoubtedly the child of a traditionally intellectual family acquires this psycho-physical daption more easily. Before he ever enters the classroom he has numerous advantages over his comrades, and is already in possession of attitudes learnt from his family environment: he concentrates more easily, since he is used to "sitting still," etc. [...] This is why many people think that the difficulty of study conceals some "trick" which handicaps them – that is, when they do not simply believe that they are stupid by nature (Q12§2: 1549–50/ SPN: 42–3).

What Gramsci here called "advantage", or "trick", would in our vocabulary belong to the concept of "cultural capital." Neither the educational reform resulting from the Lateran Pacts nor the Gentile Reform attempted to close this gap or assumed the possibility of increasing social mobility through education. Quite the contrary, they served to reinforce the given social formation. Gramsci's proposed educational reform aimed at addressing this problem by, for example, educating students up to the age of sixteen in boarding schools – what he called "unitary schools" – and by eliminating the separation between classical and vocational schools (Q12§1: 1534–5/ SPN: 29–31; Q12§2: 1547/ SPN: 40). His aim was to detach students from their family backgrounds and to inculcate a certain habit of concentration in their formative study. The underlying idea of this reform is well expressed in the following passage:

Would a scholar at the age of forty be able to sit for sixteen hours on end at his work table if he had not, as a child, compulsorily, through mechanical coercion, acquired the appropriate psycho-physical habits? If one wishes to produce great scholars, one still has to start at this point and apply pressure throughout the educational system in order to succeed in creating those thousands or hundreds or even only dozens of scholars of the highest quality (Q12§2: 1544/ SPN: 37).

Certainly, Gramsci intended to recruit new intellectuals from the masses, and thereby to increase social mobility. Gramsci's proposal thus marks a stark contrast with the Catholic Church's policy of influencing people's common sense and of maintaining the established restrictions on membership of the intellectual stratum. By contrast, thanks to his empirically grounded perspective, Gramsci

¹¹ For a detailed discussion, see Chino (2013: 194–9).

considered it necessary and possible to remedy this gap between these social groups with his educational reform. This demonstrates his possession of the fourth characteristic of Western Marxism: providing an alternative to the status quo without anticipating that the changes would stem from those in the economic structure.

So far, I have argued that Gramsci possessed the four characteristics distinctive of Western Marxism, namely: 1) rejection of crude economism and acknowledgement of the relative autonomy of the superstructure; 2) recognition of the critical role of civil society in obtaining the consent of the people which makes modern states maintain their governance; 3) scrutiny of the mechanism by which mobilization of people takes place; and 4) the proposal of an alternative reform plan based on the autonomy of politics. All in all, for Gramsci, rather than providing a prediction of the collapse of capitalism, Marxism's very task was to analyze modern states – the characteristics of which were most keenly observed in the resplendent Italian fascist state – and also to provide an alternative picture of the modern state. In what follows, I will explore how, in his vigorous investigation of the problems of the Japanese state at the time, Tosaka Jun also displayed the characteristics listed above, and displayed a considerable similarity to his Italian counterpart.

Tosaka (1): Research Group on “Materialism”?

Like Gramsci, Tosaka Jun has been described as a unique Marxist within his local context. One of Tosaka's unique features stems from the contradiction between the name of the group that he led – the Research Group on Materialism – and the writings produced throughout his relatively short career as a writer, between 1928 and 1937. He wrote extensively on the theory of ideology, space and time, scientific methods, and current affairs. I cannot do justice to all of his unique elaborations on Marxism, yet this list suggests that he wrote little about materialism in an orthodox Marxist sense. As far as I know, the only book of his that discussed Marxism as an economic theory is the instructive book *Lecture on Modern Materialism*. This contradiction raises a question regarding the nature of his theoretical investigations concerning issues in the realm that Gramsci would have referred to as “civil society.” In order to interpret this aspect of Tosaka, we need to briefly look at the context of pre-war Marxism in Japan¹². At the end of this section we will see that Tosaka, like Gramsci, possessed the first characteristic of Western Marxism; namely a rejection of crude economism.

After being disbanded in 1924, the Japanese Communist Party (hereafter JCP) was re-established in 1926, but it had two opposing factions: the vanguardism of Fukumoto, and the populism of Yamakawa. These factions were based on differences in their recognition of the current Japanese situation in relation to the Meiji Restoration in 1868. Fukumoto, having studied under Georg Lukács and Karl Korsch, advocated the two-stage theory of revolution, according to which a proletarian revolution would have to be preceded by a bourgeois revolution – one that Fukumoto was still waiting for. Yamakawa, by contrast, considered the Meiji Restoration to have been a bourgeois revolution and that the next revolution was the proletarian. However, the Comintern's rejection of both factions in 1927 cost Fukumoto his previously enormous influence, and Yamakawa – who did not join the re-established JCP from the outset – organized the *Rōnō-ha* (the Workers and Peasants Faction) outside the Party. In 1930, some JCP theorists, later labelled *Kōza-ha* (the Lecture Faction), edited a series of books entitled *Lectures on the History of the Development of Japanese Capitalism*. Partly inheriting Fukumoto's view, they insisted that the coming revolution would be bourgeois, and that it would bring the abolishment of the monarchy and the large landowning system. As the police severely suppressed Marxism in general, the debate did not last long. However, these factions nevertheless certainly informed the two main strands of pre-war Japanese Marxism, and had echoes in the postwar period.

Apart from these main strands, there were thinkers – often categorized as the Left of the controversial Kyoto School – who aimed to shape Marxism as a new science, beyond Neo-Kantian dichotomy and Heideggerian transcendentalism. Miki Kiyoshi, who studied under Heinrich Rickert and subsequently Martin Heidegger, appeared as the first figure in this trend. He is said to have become a Marxist after returning to Japan, having observed that the vanguardist Marxism of Fukumoto did not reflect the political and economic situation in Japan, due to a lack of empirical and scientific investigation. Together with Hani Gorō, famous as a translator of Croce's historiographical works, Miki founded the journal *Under the Flag of New Science* in 1928, which aimed to develop Marxism as a non-dogmatic science. With the suppression of leftist movements, however, Miki was arrested in 1930 on the allegation of financing the illegal JCP, which brought an end to his engagement in public activities. In 1933, the Alliance of Proletarian Science, established in 1929, was also banned.

¹² The general account of pre-war Japanese Marxism in the following two paragraphs draws on Tairako (2006) and Takeuchi (1966).

It was in this context that Tosaka Jun organized the Research Group on Materialism in 1932, regularly publishing its own journal, *Materialism Studies*¹³. Having studied natural sciences at Kyoto University, Tosaka shared Miki’s interest in developing Marxism as a science – although Tosaka himself was highly critical of Miki. Some members of the group were remnants of the *Kōza-ha*, Hani Gorō among them. However, Tosaka strangely remained silent regarding the debate on Japanese capitalism, at least in his published works¹⁴. As Harootunian (2001: 137) notes, Tosaka’s critical elaboration of Marxism was at odds with the developmental economism shared by both factions, although it is difficult to give a precise answer to what exactly his silence means. It is certain that he submitted that the mode of production is the final determinant of human thoughts and activities. However, at the heart of his theory, he criticized crude economism for being unable to grasp the customs of people in everyday life. In doing so, Tosaka particularly looked at the failure of crude economism to acknowledge the reciprocal relations between institutions and people’s consciousness that exist solely within the superstructure, and how people comfortably internalize the norms upheld by these institutions. The failure results from the ordinary Marxist framework only being able to explain aspects of the superstructure in terms of the economic structure (Tosaka 2001: 16). One of Tosaka’s purposes was therefore to illustrate what was missing in the ordinary Marxist account based on crude economism; namely, to show how people internalize social norms through institutions. All in all, like Gramsci, Tosaka valued the role of the economy as the ultimate determinant of society. However, also like Gramsci, he rejected the crude economism that neglected the superstructural elements that were notably important for modern states in his time. I shall look at these issues in turn.

Tosaka (2): Modernity and People’s “Custom”

Tosaka’s unique analysis of custom rests on two criticisms: one aims at orthodox Marxists neglecting the distinctiveness of people’s custom as it emerges within the superstructure; the other aims at Japanese anthropologists and cultural theorists identifying such customs as the culture of the nation that had existed since the beginning of history. Developing his extensive critique of “Japanism” in his *Japanese Ideology*, Tosaka problematized the blindingly obvious essentialist notion of culture. Harootunian (2001: xxix-xxxi) points out that such Japanism – a prototype of fascism – emerged in reaction to the rapid spread of modern capitalism. Despite its declarations of universality, capitalism necessarily depends on differences in time and place in order to keep producing surplus value, and it is thus connected to unequal development. Fascism mobilizes people’s unsatisfied desire to flatten out the necessary contradictions of capitalism by emphasizing myths and symbols that represent the eternity of the given nation. Tosaka thus diagnosed the “nationalization” of custom in his time as a symptom of fascism, and tried to elaborate how a certain custom actually emerges at a particular time. Like Gramsci, doing this brought him to notice that modern states largely rely on the governed being in spontaneous agreement with the governing. In this sense, Tosaka shows the second characteristic of Western Marxism, which looks at the mechanism of functioning of modern states.

In his *Thought and Custom*, published in 1936, Tosaka examined “custom”, or *Fūzoku*, both as a set of political and legal institutions and as people’s consciousness that they feel comfortable in internalizing the norms upheld by these institutions (i.e. *Seido Shūtoku Kan*) (Tosaka 2001: 15–21)¹⁵. As noted above, Tosaka asserted that the ordinary Marxist framework, looking only at how the economy determines the superstructure, cannot explain the nature of custom since custom emerges in relations *within* the superstructure. According to Tosaka, people feel comfortable in adopting the given social norms simply because conformism is triggered by the fact that the masses share a way of thinking and acting. He contended that taking part in this process of conformism would give people the feeling that they are doing a morally right thing – it is this sense of morality that makes them comfortable (Tosaka 2001: 20–1). Crucially, Tosaka’s theoretical contribution lies in his finding that people adopt the dominant social norms not because of false consciousness, but because doing so provides them with conformity as a justification for their actions, or as a morality that they feel comfortable with.

In her commentary on *Thought and Custom*, Lin Shukumi remarks that Tosaka’s custom overlaps with the idea of overdetermination as proposed by one of the eminent Western Marxists,

¹³ See also Lin (2005) for the general context in which Tosaka’s works are situated.

¹⁴ However, it is assumed that Tosaka wrote some twenty-two articles under a pseudonym, not contained in his collected works (Kitabayashi 2011).

¹⁵ This is a term coined by Tosaka: *Seido* means “institutions”; *Shūtoku* “acquired” or “learned”; and *Kan* “consciousness” or “feeling”.

Louis Althusser (Lin 2001: 410). Althusser defined overdetermination as superstructural elements reproducing themselves in their own right:

[...] a revolution in the *structure* does not *ipso facto* modify the existing superstructures and particularly the *ideologies* at one blow (as it would if the economic was the *sole determinant factor*), for they have sufficient of their own consistency to *survive beyond their immediate life context*, even to recreate, to “secrete” substitute conditions of existence temporarily (Althusser 2005: 115–16).

Lin is right in pointing out that Tosaka shared Althusser’s view that the superstructure–base relationship cannot explain the autonomous reproduction (in Althusser’s term, “reactivation”) of superstructural elements. To understand this process of reproduction, or “the theory of the particular essence of the specific elements of the superstructure” (Althusser 2005: 114), Althusser later developed his theory of the “ideological apparatus of the state.” He thereby specified institutions such as schools, the courts, the police, and so forth, as the apparatuses that maintain and reproduce the given social norms (Althusser 2008: 16–7). It is well known that Althusser considered Gramsci to be the only one who had preceded him in this endeavour (Althusser 2008: 16n7; 18).

In this respect, Tosaka and Gramsci, like Althusser, retained their interest in interpreting this mechanism of modern states, noted as the second characteristic of Western Marxism. Like Gramsci’s notion of consent, for Tosaka, custom represents the link between institutions and people’s consciousness at any particular time, and he thus avoids portraying Japanese culture in an essentialist, and therefore timeless, manner. He was able to find many concrete examples of the current formation of custom in contemporary Japanese society. For instance, he discovered that the ideological control reinforced by the Japanese state in the 1930s informed the public custom, enabling the state to mobilize it.

Tosaka (3): Ideological Control via Schooling

Like Gramsci, who discovered the Church’s mechanism for mobilizing the Italian public, Tosaka scrutinized ideological control as the very means by which the Japanese state made people internalize norms, and thereby mobilized them. It is exactly in this respect that Tosaka possessed the third characteristic of Western Marxism, which probes into the modes of mobilization in modern states.

In the 1930s, many critical events revealed the contradictions in the Japanese state: the gap between countryside and city, and the loosened control over the military were examples of this. Strong nationalism, associated with ideological control, seemed to disguise the anxious atmosphere. It was in this context in 1933 that the Takigawa incident took place, with the Ministry of Education suspending Yukitoki Takigawa from teaching at Kyoto University due to his alleged Marxist inclination. Such suppression culminated in the so-called Emperor Organ Theory Incident in 1935. Ultrationalists and young military officers harshly attacked Tatsukichi Minobe’s theory that identified the Emperor as an organ of constitutional monarchy, arguing that the Emperor was independent of, and superior to, the constitution. This incident was followed in 1935 by an attempted *coup d’état*, known as the February 26 Incident, in which young officers aimed to achieve direct governance for the Emperor.

Reflecting the atmosphere of his time, and clearly inspired by Marx’s *German Ideology*¹⁶, Tosaka’s *Japanese Ideology*, first published in 1935 and then in an expanded edition in 1936, aimed to develop a theory of ideology. He claimed that by its nature ideological control must work with the cultural sphere (JI: 186–7). This included the Foucaultian disciplining of students’ bodies through gymnastics, line-ups, choruses, or bowing to the Emperor’s picture. School principals had to read the Rescript on Education at school ceremonies so as to implant in students a patriarchal hierarchy and thus the sense of the Japanese nation as a quasi-family with the Emperor at its top. Tosaka thus identified schooling as the very means of internalization of social norms (JI: 187–90):

As is known, education control is quite strict in Japan, and among others elementary schools (and junior-high schools as well) have become exemplary exercise areas of such control. Authority over education neither stems from the Analects [of Confucius], Buddhist scriptures, nor Socratic ideals; nor can it stem from Rousseau or Pestalozzi. Instead of seeing these universal and humane cultural authorities, we have to observe the oppressions of the violently constructed *idée* with unilateralistic legal authority (JI: 187).

¹⁶ The Research Group on Materialism translated the Adoratsky version of *German Ideology*, originally published in 1932, into Japanese as early as 1936. Like *Thought and Custom*, *Japanese Ideology* includes many stimulating pieces conveying the thrust of Tosaka’s thought. Yet only three articles from this book are currently available in English and in German (and none from *Thought and Custom*).

Noting that this is “the typical case of control in general in Japan,” he added that education at large – including various types of schools, youth and veteran organizations, and religious groups – involves this control either directly or indirectly (JI: 187). For Tosaka, schooling was the prime example of those institutions that preserve and reproduce the status quo by permeating people’s consciousness. Later, in 1937 when the Second Sino-Japanese War was triggered, the Japanese State, then under the Konoe Administration, started mobilizing the people. Observing the success of the state in controlling people’s custom mostly through education, Tosaka argued that:

[t]hought is [...] a conception that has a certain organized inclination. Mobilization of thought as such, once exercised, cannot be dismissed so easily. Even if mobilization is dismissed, the thought that has developed through mobilization can hardly be dismissed. Moreover, to a certain extent, this thought would achieve a glowingly systematic development in the direction that it was mobilized (Tosaka 2006: 186).

Critically, once internalized, it is no longer necessary to employ external institutions to maintain the norms, simply because they now act in people’s minds by themselves.

Similar to Gramsci’s analysis of the Church’s influence on the Italian public, Tosaka noticed how resiliently internalized the social norms were in people’s minds. By examining the example of schooling in contemporary Japan, he illustrated the process of ideological control as the mobilization of thought necessary prior to that of action. It is in this sense that Tosaka shared the third characteristic of Western Marxism, which explores how the mobilization of people takes place.

Tosaka (4): Enlightenment through Journalism

In this final section, I explore Tosaka’s alternative to ideological control. He shared with Gramsci the idea that alternatives should stem from human autonomy irrespective of the economic base. This qualifies Tosaka as having the fourth characteristic of Western Marxism, which is calling for possible alternatives to the status quo. However, Tosaka lacked the institutional ideals that Gramsci’s educational reform embraced. It is hard to say whether this suggests a lack of institutional perspective in Tosaka’s thought, or the harsh surveillance under which he lived. It is certain, however, that he did not aim to rescue formal education, but that he rather emphasized the possibility of enlightenment through journalism.

Tosaka observed that almost no alternatives were proposed in his time. Notably, liberalism failed to contest the developing fascism: Japanism. He even attributed the quick success of ideological control to the inclination of the liberalism of his time – what he called “cultural liberalism.” In his *Japanese Ideology*, by distinguishing liberalism into three subcategories – namely its economic, political, and cultural variants – he identified cultural liberalism as its latest form, arguing that it fuelled what he called “Japanism” – the ideology of the crystallizing alleged Japaneseness (JI: 17–32)¹⁷. According to Tosaka, cultural liberalism was distinctively idealist – even subjectivist – and rested on the philosophical seriousness of the thought of cultural liberals without taking into consideration the historical development of their subjects. Typically represented by some major thinkers from the Kyoto School, such as Nishida Kitarō, Tanabe Hajime, and Watsuji Tetsurō, Tosaka condemned this inclination as helping scholars and journalists to detach themselves from the world of politics through which control over society was exercised (JI: 361–8). Fuelled by cultural liberalism, Japanism as a type of fascism represented an “ideologically idealistic interpretation of social things,” associated with romantic and nostalgic sentiments for essentialism, exemplified by the portrayal of the paternalistic family as the original image of the Japanese family (JI: 185). All in all, according to Tosaka, Japanism, reinforced by cultural liberalism, only offered empty solutions to existing problems.

In order to propose his alternative for enlightenment, Tosaka, interestingly, focused on the notion of “common sense”, yet in a different sense from that of Gramsci. He started by distinguishing two meanings of common sense: theoretical and normative. As his theoretical definition of common sense signifies the vague understanding of something that ordinary people share, it coincides with Gramsci’s conception of common sense. This theoretical meaning comes to the forefront when one denounces unsophisticated, and normally confusing, conceptions in the lives of ordinary people as those of “common sense” (JI: 80–1). By contrast, Tosaka insisted that common sense also denotes a set of shared normative criteria, or the standard of morality, in the given society. For example, our “common sense” says that we should not throw rubbish in the street, and that we should put it in a

¹⁷ However, his criticism did not discard liberalism in general. He seemed to suggest, although with reservations, that Kawai Eijirō, a radical liberal, was the exceptional example of a “political” type of liberalism (JI: 411–12).

waste bin instead. Put differently, in Tosaka's time, it was common sense not to raise objections to the nationalist education, such as the custom of bowing to the picture of the Emperor. As such, if we scrutinize the normative use of common sense, then we would assume the standard of morality of the society that we are looking at, and how this reflects the underlying array of social institutions (JI: 86). It was this second meaning of common sense that Tosaka thought it possible to elaborate, as resistance to ideological control.

In this context, Tosaka stressed the critical role of enlightenment in "an age of barbarism" (JI: 108) as the concrete project of Marxism to elevate common sense in its normative definition. Apart from formal education, he envisaged how journalism would become considerably influential in the public sphere, since journalism has a close connection to people's actual everyday life, and is therefore likely to grapple with its "actuality." For Tosaka, actuality must be related to "current affairs" (or the "contemporary situation," i.e. *Jikyoku*) (Zenshū 4: 137–9). *Jikyoku*, as a word, clearly refers to Japan's political situation in the 1930s. In this sense, journalism was expected to carry out the enlightenment of the people, rather than serve as a simple proliferation of knowledge (Zenshū 4: 341):

Journalism's mission is to deal with daily, topical, and actual things. Actuality stems from actual reality. And that such actual reality is taking place in activity is an everyday phenomenon [...]. Exact knowledge about how actual reality takes place is nothing but the knowledge and theory about concrete truth. If this accompanies analysis of society, it appears as political and topical. [...] Our everyday life is the most realistic element in the history of society (Zenshū 4: 152).

The people can grasp science as the way through which to obtain true knowledge: this is perhaps the underlying idea of Tosaka's optimistic view of enlightenment (Zenshū 2: 92; cf. Yoshimoto 1966: 42). As noted above, Tosaka's alternative lacked institutional sense in that it emphasized enlightenment and jettisoned formal education. It is difficult, again, to ascertain whether this idea derived from the inclinations of his thought or the circumstances under which he lived. However, it is nonetheless certain that, unlike orthodox Marxists, Tosaka considered it possible and necessary to elaborate alternatives to the status quo by virtue of human agency, and this shows him possessing the fourth characteristic of Western Marxism.

Conclusion: "Western" Marxism?

We have looked at how Gramsci and Tosaka shared the four notable characteristics of Western Marxism. To recapitulate, these were: 1) rejection of crude economism; 2) acknowledgement of the critical role of civil society in obtaining people's consent for the governance of modern states; 3) scrutiny of the mechanism with which people were mobilized through internalization of social norms; and 4) proposition of an alternative reform plan based on the autonomy of politics.

Despite the lack of mutual contact, the parallel between Gramsci and Tosaka urges us to reconsider the distinctiveness of Marxism during this period. Both developed their Marxist ideas against orthodox Marxism, in particular against economic determinism, which neglected the way that the governance of modern states rested on its ideological power to mobilize the masses. Gramsci and Tosaka observed the task of Marxism during a time in which fascism exploited this mechanism both in Italy and Japan.

What is the implication of this similarity in Marxist theoretical formation, considering the differences in their social, political, and geographical circumstances? Western Marxism confusingly entails geographical as well as theoretical notions – as noted at the beginning of this paper. In this respect, Tosaka's theoretical affinity to Western Marxism suggests that the geographical notion attributed to this category might have limited its theoretical fruitfulness, which instead can be discerned beyond the opposition of the geographical West to Soviet Russia, representing the East¹⁸. A small piece of work with a broad perspective such as this cannot do justice to the global development of Marxism during this period. Nevertheless, Tosaka's affinity to Western Marxism might suggest that the global task of Marxism was to analyze the governance of modern states and to propose alternatives to it, following the simultaneous development of modern states occurring at that time, rather than resting on the crude economism of orthodox Marxism. In this sense, it would be necessary to further develop the study of Marxism in non-Western areas during this period. By doing so, it may be possible to suggest that the characteristics now acknowledged as belonging to Western Marxism can also be discerned in Marxism in the periphery, where the emergence of modernity most strongly conflicted with local societies, such as in the cases of Italy and Japan.

¹⁸ The editors of Tosaka's English anthology point out that his works are a "powerful corrective" to the category of Western Marxism (Kawashima, Schäfer and Stolz 2013: viii). However, they could have been more precise by pointing out that Tosaka displayed considerable theoretical similarities with Western Marxism, irrespective of geographical differences.

Abbreviations

- FS:** Gramsci, A. (1995) *Further Selections of the Prison Notebooks*, trans. and ed. D. Boothman, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. □
- J:** Tosaka, J. (1977) *Nippon Ideologieron [The Japanese Ideology]*, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.
- Q:** Gramsci, A. (1975) *Quaderni del carcere*, ed. V. Gerratana, Turin: Einaudi.
- SPN:** Gramsci, A. (1971) *Selections from Prison Notebooks*, eds. and trans. Q. Hoare and G. Smith, London: Lawrence and Wishart.

Quotations from Gramsci’s *Quaderni del carcere (Prison Notebooks)* are, following convention, shown with notebook number, passage number (§) and page number. Quotations from Tosaka’s *Zenshu (Collected Works)* are shown with volume number and page number. Where English translation of the Italian and Japanese materials is available, I quote from both the original and the translation. Otherwise, the translation is my own.

Bibliography

- Althusser, L. (2005) “Contradiction and Overdetermination”, in *For Marx*, trans. B. Brewster, London: Verso.
- Althusser, L. (2008) “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses”, in *On Ideology*, trans. B. Brewster, London: Verso.
- Anderson, P. (1976) *Considerations on Western Marxism*, London: NLB.
- Anderson, B. (2005) *Under Three Flags: Anarchism and the Anti-Colonial Imagination*, London: Verso.
- Bobbio, N. (1979) “Gramsci and the Conception of Civil Society”, in *Gramsci and Marxist Theory*, ed. C. Mouffe, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Chino, T. (2013) “Antonio Gramsci as an Italian Revolutionary: Gramsci’s Marxism and the Crisis of Italian Democracy”, PhD thesis submitted to University College London.
- Colarizi, S. (2000) *Storia del novecento italiano*, Milan: BUR storia.
- Femia, J. (1981) *Gramsci’s Political Thought*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Harootunian, H. (1994) “The Postwar Genealogy of Fascism and Tosaka Jun’s Prewar Critique of Liberalism”, *Journal of Pacific Asia*, 2: 95-112.
- Harootunian, H. (2001) *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Harootunian, H. (2002) *History’s Disquiet: Modernity, Cultural Practice and the Question of Everyday Life*, New York: Columbia University Press.
- Hirano, K. (2013) “The Dialectic of Laughter and Tosaka’s Critical Theory”, in *Tosaka Jun: A Critical Reader*, eds., K. C. Kawashima, F. Schäfer and R. Stolz, New York: Cornell University East Asia Program.
- Jacoby, R. (1991) “Western Marxism”, in *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Kellner, D. (2005) “Western Marxism”, in *Modern Social Theory: An Introduction*, ed. A. Harrington, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kitabayashi, M. (2011) “On the Articles that Tosaka Jun Published In His Late Years Under a Pseudonym”, in *Kagakushi Kenkyu [Journal of the History of Science]*, (50), pp. 194-8.
- Lin, S. (2001) “Kaisetsu [Commentary]” to Tosaka, Jun, *Shisou to Fūzoku [Thought and Custom]*, ed. Lin Shukumi, Tokyo: Heibonsha.
- Lin, S. (2005) “Tosaka Jun, *Japanese Ideology: A Critique of Japanism, Fascism, Liberalism in Modern Japan*”, in *Gendai Shisou [Contemporary Thought]* 33 (7, Special Edition: Bookguide for Japanese Thought): 152-5.
- Linden, M. (2007) *Western Marxism and the Soviet Union: A Survey of Critical theories and Debates Since 1917*, Leiden: Brill.
- Lukács, G. (1971) *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, trans R. Livingstone, London: Merlin Press.
- Malatesta, M. (2005) “Introduction: The Italian Professions from a Comparative Perspective” to *Society and the Professions in Italy 1860-1914*, ed. M. Malatesta and trans. A. Belton, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Schäfer, F. (2013) “The Actuality of Journalism and the Possibility of Everyday Critique”, in *Tosaka Jun: A Critical Reader*, eds., K. C. Kawashima, F. Schäfer and R. Stolz, New York: Cornell University East Asia Program.
- Tairako, T. (2006) “Senzen Nihon Marxshugi no Toutatsuten: Miki Kiyoshi to Tosaka Jun [The Summit of Prewar Japanese Marxist Philosophy: Miki Kiyoshi and Tosaka Jun], ed.

- Yamamuro Jun-ichi, *Kuukan Keisei to Sekai Ninshiki* [*Construction of Space and Knowledge of the World*], Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten.
- Takeuchi, Y. (1966) "Marxism in Japan", in ed. Y. Takeuchi, *Contemporary Japanese Thought (Gendai Nihon Shisou Taikai) Vol. 21: Marxism II*, Tokyo: Chikuma Shobou.
- Texier, J. (1979) "Gramsci, Theoretician of the Superstructures", in *Gramsci and Marxist Theory*, ed. C. Mouffe, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Tosaka, J. (1966-7) *Tosaka Jun Zenshū (Collected Works) 1-5*, Tokyo: Keisou Shobou. Tosaka, J. (2001) *Shisou to Fūzoku (Thought and Custom)*, ed. Lin Shukumi, Tokyo: Heibonsha.
- Tosaka, J. (2006) *Sekai no Ikkan toshiteno Nihon (Japan as a Part of the World)*, ed. Lin Shukumi, Tokyo: Heibonsha.
- Tosaka, J. (2011) *Tosaka Jun: Ideologie, Medien, Alltag*, ed. F. Schäfer, Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag.
- Tosaka, J. (2013) *Tosaka Jun: A Critical Reader*, eds., K. C. Kawashima, F. Schäfer and R. Stolz, New York: Cornell University East Asia Program.

