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CONTRIBUTORS/EDITORS

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the eleventh volume of the *Japan Studies Review* (JSR), an annual peer-reviewed journal sponsored by the joint efforts of the Institute for Asian Studies at Florida International University and the Southern Japan Seminar. JSR continues to be both an outlet for publications related to Southern Japan Seminar events and a journal that encourages submissions from a wide range of scholars in the field.

Appearing in this issue are five articles dealing with a variety of topics on Japan, including Commodore Matthew Perry and Christianity in Japan, analysis of the disaster management of the 1995 Kobe earthquake, the award winning book, *Snow Country*, the debate over the Kurile islands between Russia and Japan, and a look at the establishment of modern Japanese language.

The first article, "The Japanese Fear of Christianity and European Nationalism in the Diplomacy of Commodore Matthew C. Perry" by William J. Farge, looks closely at the changing Japanese view of Christians and Christianity at the time of Perry's arrival in Japan. This article is a product of the Southern Japan Seminar held in Atlanta in fall of 2004.

Following this, "Learning from Kobe: Complexity and Urgency in the Holistic Management Model" by Marilyn M. Helms, Ray Jones, and Margaret B. Takeda, studies the aftermath of the Kobe earthquake of 1995 and critiques the use (and lack) of management techniques and suggests future improvements for the Japanese post-disaster management system.

The third article, "Symbiotic Conflict in *Snow Country*" by Masaki Mori, analyzes the significance of *Snow Country*, one of the most prominent works by 1969 Nobel-laureate for literature Kawabata Yasunari. The article details the particularly unusual literary style of the book and its innovative storytelling techniques and characters.

The fourth article, "Line in the Water: The Southern Kuriles and the Russian-Japanese Relationship" by Thomas E. Rotnem, details the strained relations between Russia and Japan as both sides battle for control over the Kurile islands. Although the islands are quite small, they represent much more than their physical worth: they are symbols of the power of both sides.

The final article, "The *Genbun'itchi* Society and the Drive to 'Nationalize' the Japanese Language" by Paul Clark, focuses on the

Genbun'itchi Society in existence from 1900-1910 that helped reform and define contemporary Japanese language and standardize it for the modern era. The article also describes the socio-historical background for the establishment of the Society.

Also appearing in this issue are four essays. The first essay, "Esoteric Buddhism in the Works of Juan Valera" by Juan Torres-Pou, was originally from a conference in spring of 2006 co-sponsored by the Institute for Asian Studies (IAS) at Florida International University (FIU). The next two essays, "Modern Girls and New Women in Japanese Cinema" by Maureen Turim and "Japan through Others' Lenses: *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (1959) and *Lost in Translation* (2003)" by Frank P. Tomasulo, share the theme of Japanese cinema and are both based on a conference at FIU sponsored by IAS in fall of 2004. The final essay, "Immaculate Confession" by Michael Alvarez details the author Mishima Yukio and his motivation for writing *Confessions of a Mask*, one of his best known works.

Additionally, the volume contains eight book reviews of recent publications on Japanese studies. Ellis S. Krauss and T.J. Pempel's edited volume on U.S.-Japan relations is reviewed by Thomas E. Rotnem of Southern Polytechnic State University; Hamaguchi Eshun and Kaneko Satoru's edited work on Tora-san, the Japanese television and print hero, is reviewed by Kinko Ito of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock; Ayako Ono's examination of *japonisme* is reviewed by Linda Gertner Zatlin of Morehouse College; James L. Huffman's biography of Edward H. House is reviewed by Daniel A. Metraux of Mary Baldwin College; Bruce L. Batten's exploration of the meaning of frontiers and boundaries regarding Japan is reviewed by Yuki Takatori of Georgia State University; and Cristina Rocha's research on Zen in Brazil is reviewed by Ronan A. Pereira of University of Brasilia/Victoria University of Wellington. Also, I reviewed a work by Duncan Ryūken Williams on the history of Sōtō Zen Buddhism (originally appeared in the *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* 12 [2005]: 84-87). Finally, Marie Højlund Roesgaard's book on *juku*, the Japanese cram school, is reviewed by Steven E. Gump.

Please note: Japanese names are cited with surname first except for citations of works published in English.

Steven Heine, Editor

Re: Submissions, Subscriptions and Comments

Submissions for publication, either articles, essays, or book reviews, should be made in both hard copy and electronic formats, preferably Word for Windows on a disk or CD (please inquire about other formats). The editor and members of the editorial board will referee all submissions.

Annual Subscriptions are now $25.00 (US). Please send a check or money order payable to *Florida International University* to:

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Visit our website at **asian.fiu.edu/jsr**. PDF versions of past volumes are available online.

All comments and feedback on the publications appearing in *Japan Studies Review* are welcome.

Articles

THE JAPANESE FEAR OF CHRISTIANITY AND EUROPEAN NATIONALISM IN THE DIPLOMACY OF COMMODORE MATTHEW C. PERRY

William J. Farge, SJ
Georgetown University

The United States ship, *Preble*, under the command of James Glynn (1800?-1871), was in the China seas in February 1849 as part of a large squadron of American ships that was patrolling Asian waters. While off the island of Batavia, Commander Glynn received information that sixteen American seamen, who had been shipwrecked not far from the coast of Japan, were under detention and were being treated with great cruelty. The Americans, already detained for seventeen months by the Japanese when Glynn received word of their capture, had been made to trample on a crucifix (*fumie*).[1] The Japanese guards told the American prisoners that the figure on the crucifix was the "devil of Japan," and that if they refused to step on it, they would be executed. The incident was resolved favorably for the Americans, Commander Glynn eventually being able to negotiate the release of the seamen.

This incident took place three years before Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry (1794-1858) set sail from the United States in 1852 to negotiate trade and diplomatic relations with Japan. It shows that even as late as the 1850s the Japanese were still using pictures of Christian figures to identify adherents of Christianity, a practice that had begun in the 1620s. Suspects were ordered to step on Christian images on the assumption that those who refused or hesitated would reveal themselves to be Christians. The practice was rarely used after the 1660s, and an inquisitor for the office of religious inquisition (*shumon aratame yaku*) was never appointed by the shogunate after 1792, but inquisition by *fumie* continued until 1857 when, under the terms of an agreement negotiated by the Dutch, the Japanese government (*bakufu*) abolished the practice of trampling upon a sacred image. American seamen were among the last to be victimized by the *fumie*

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[1] Francis L. Hawks, ed., Commodore M.C. Perry, *Narrative of the Expedition to the China Seas and Japan, 1852-1854* (Washington: Beverley Tucker, Senate Printer, 1856), p. 48.

ceremony, but Christianity could still not be legally propagated or practiced in Japan in 1857, nor could Christian literature or pictures be imported.[2]

The harassment of American seamen by use of the *fumie* is a reminder that, even though Christianity had been almost totally stamped out two hundred years earlier, the fear of Christianity still remained. The foreign religion was still considered a threat to the peace and well-being of Japan, and the same methods were still being used to root out any vestiges of its influence. When Perry arrived at Uraga in 1853, Christianity was considered a curse, and the fear of punishment for having even the most tenuous connection with the "evil sect" was common.

Peoples' dread of Christianity was not based simply on their fear of punishment by the *bakufu*. The superstitious view of the foreign religion is well illustrated by an incident that has been related by an officer on Perry's flagship. The American officer asked a Japanese visitor who had come aboard the ship to write his autograph in Japanese on the fly-leaf of his book. The book which the seaman held out to him was a Christian prayer book, and when the Japanese guest, with his brush poised to sign his name, saw a Christian cross on the title page, he immediately threw the book down and would not even touch it.[3]

In his negotiations, Perry had to take into account the trepidation with which the Japanese viewed Christianity. He displayed great skill as a diplomat and set in motion the process of putting to rest the concerns that the Japanese had with regard to possible foreign interference, especially the intrusion of foreign missionaries. Perry was well aware that lurking behind the negotiations was a long, unfortunate history of Japanese dealings with Christianity and of Japanese worries about how to contain it in the future. Perry was careful to make it clear that his government had no intention of forcing Christianity on the Japanese and making the same "mistake" that the Portuguese had made three hundred years earlier. In his letter of 7 July 1853 to the "Emperor" [4] Perry writes:

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[2] George Sansom, *Western World and Japan: A Study in the Interaction of European and Asiatic Cultures* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), p. 488.

[3] Ibid., p. 468.

[4] The letter found its way to the thirteenth Tokugawa shogun, Iesada (1824-1858, r. 1853-1858), who followed Ieyoshi (1793-1853, r. 1837-1853). Perry's *Narrative of the Expedition to the China Seas* (p. 11) points out that

[I am] commanded to explain to the Japanese that the United States are connected with no government in Europe, and that their laws do not interfere with the religion of their own citizens, much less with that of other nations.[5]

Perry was well aware of the history of Japanese relations with European countries in the sixteenth century and with the Japanese edicts that forbad Christianity (*kinkyōrei*) at that time. The commodore seemed to understand the Japanese position, and in spite of the history of persecution it was his conviction that the Japanese had always been historically tolerant of other religions and would have been tolerant of Christianity if circumstances had been different. Perry believed that it was the Portuguese and the Spaniards that had turned the Japanese against both Christianity and the West. It was, in fact, Western intolerance, in his view, and not Japanese intolerance that had forced the Japanese to sever ties with the European nations, except for the Dutch. In the *Narrative of the Expedition to the China Seas and Japan 1852-1854* Perry writes,[6]

Indeed, no feature is more striking among the institutions of the [Japanese] Empire than its enlarged spirit of religious toleration. It was extended to Christianity on its first promulgation by the Portuguese; and was not withdrawn until the Japanese supposed that intolerance and treason lurked under the new religion. Christianity was driven from Japan on political not religious grounds….The truth is, that the Japanese government exhibits now, as it always has done, a very remarkable indifference to mere

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"Japan presents the singular feature of having two Emperors at the same time, the one secular, the other ecclesiastical…"

[5] Hawks, *Narrative of the Expedition*, p. 258.

[6] The *Narrative* is actually compiled by an editor who gathered pages from Perry's own journal as well as from the reports of several of Perry's officers. In the *Preferatory Note*, Perry writes: "The *Narrative* here presented…has been prepared under my supervision from materials furnished by me and is authentic. I present it as my official report, and am alone responsible for the statement of facts it contains."

doctrinal points, so long as they interfere not with the public tranquility.[7]

Perry gives sound reasons for his views and does not seem to be influenced by a solely anti-Catholic or anti-European bias. He cited his belief that there were a large number of religions in Japan in the seventeenth century that were able to flourish unmolested, though they were quite distinct from Buddhism. Christianity had been one among the "large number of religions" and had prospered at first. Perry explains how quarrels among the Roman Catholic religious orders were one cause, if not the primary cause, of the expulsion of Christianity from Japan.

> Had the work begun by [Francis] Xavier [1506-1552] and his companions been left in the hands of men like themselves, we very much doubt whether the severe Japanese laws prohibiting Christianity in the Empire would ever have existed. But these prudent, inoffensive, and laborious men were soon outnumbered by swarms of Dominican, Augustinian, and Franciscan friars from Goa and Macao, who were attracted by the flattering accounts of the remarkable success of the Jesuits. They had not labored in making the harvest, yet they were ready enough to go and reap it.[8]

Perry cites as a more immediate cause of the persecution an incident that occurred in 1596:

> A Portuguese bishop was met on the high road by one of the highest officers of the State on his way to court. Each was in his sedan. The usage of the country required that, in such case, the conveyance of the bishop should be stopped, and that he should alight and pay his respects to the nobleman. Instead of conforming to this established act of courtesy, the bishop took not the least notice of the Japanese dignitary but, turning his head away from him, ordered his carriers to carry him on. The insult, evidently

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[7] Hawks, *Narrative of the Expedition*, p. 21.
[8] Ibid., p. 25.

intended, was so gross that the grandee took mortal offence…and presented his grievances to the emperor.[9]

The arrogance of the Portuguese was not only manifest in what might be considered this "minor" insult to a Japanese nobleman. Perry was convinced that the Portuguese had solicited the help of Japanese Christians in their plans to overthrow the government of Japan. In order to back up his suspicions, Perry gives an account of a Portuguese ship on its way from Asia back to Lisbon that was captured by the Dutch. On board was found a letter, written by a certain "Moro," a native Japanese, to the King of Portugal. In the letter Moro reveals himself to be a devout Catholic, a warm friend of the Jesuits, and one of the chief agents and friends of the Portuguese in Japan. From the letter it appears that the Japanese Christians, in conjunction with the Portuguese, were plotting the overthrow of the shogunate. The Christians seemed to be requesting aid, in the form of ships and soldiers, from Portugal. "It may be difficult to ascertain with certainty all the details of the conspiracy," the *Narrative* relates, "but of the conspiracy itself there can be no doubt."[10] Though this account is second hand, Perry himself was convinced that it was proof of a Portuguese/Christian conspiracy against Japan. As he was negotiating with the Japanese, he wanted by all means to distance himself from any suspicion of being involved in similar plots.

Given the history of Japanese-Western relations in the sixteenth century, it is not surprising that the Japanese would be hesitant and suspicious of Perry's intentions. The chaplain on Perry's expedition, with whom the commodore regularly consulted, Mr. Jones, expressed his belief that the unfortunate experience that the Japanese had had with Christianity was now part of the past and would no longer be a reason for them to reject trade and diplomatic relations with the United States. In the chaplain's words:

> I performed funeral services on shore four times: once at Yokohama, twice at Hakodate, and once at Shimoda; in every instance in the presence of the Japanese…they always behaved well. Japanese officers were present. I thus became known among

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[9] Ibid., pp. 25-26.
[10] Ibid., p. 26.

the people everywhere as a Christian clergyman….Instead of this producing a shrinking from me, as I had supposed it would, I found that I had decidedly gained by it in their respect, and this among officials as well as commoners….There was no seeming aversion to me because I was a minister of Christianity.[11]

Mr. Jones acknowledges, however, that there was another side to the impression he had received at these funeral services. The government of Japan was, in his view, "exceedingly jealous about our religion, but the cause of this jealousy was the Japanese's confusing the difference between 'the Romanists' and 'ourselves.'"[12] He was convinced that after that misunderstanding was resolved there would be no difficulty with bringing Christianity into Japan. After discussing this matter with the chaplain, Perry was confident that he could convince the Japanese that his intentions and the policies of his government would be different from those of the Europeans of the past. The letter which Perry carried to the "emperor" from President Fillmore stated:

> The Constitution and laws of the United States forbid all interference with the religious or political concerns of other nations. I have particularly charged Commodore Perry to abstain from every act which could possibly disturb the tranquility of your imperial majesty's dominions.[13]

Perry understood that it was not only the Portuguese and Spaniards who had set back the cause of Japanese-Western relations. The British were at fault as well and could easily jeopardize his sensitive negotiations. Looking back at the recent history of Japanese-British relations, Perry considered the impact that the incident of the armed warship, HMS *Phaeton*, had had on the Japanese in 1808. The British ship appeared in Nagasaki harbor flying the Dutch flag in order to intercept Dutch traders. Japanese authorities were infuriated that the British had perpetrated this deception. As a result, ships that arrived from Britain in 1816, 1822, and 1849 were not welcomed by the Japanese. The *Gaikokusen uchiharai rei*

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[11] Ibid., p. 446.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid., p. 256.

(Order for the repelling of foreign ships) had been promulgated in 1825 because of the understandable anxiety over the foreigners. The shogunate, however, revoked the *uchiharai* order in 1842 and replaced it with the *Shinsui kyoyo rei* (Order for the provision of firewood and water). This newer decree, which Perry took as an indication of Japan's good will, directed that foreign ships be provided with food, water, and other necessities, on condition that they leave Japan immediately after. Perry considered this final condition to be a defensive measure and not a sign of Japan wanting to close itself off from the rest of the world. Once the suspicions were gone, Perry found the Japanese extremely open.

On the morning of 15 July 1853 Perry dispatched a surveying party to the shore. "people greeted the boats with every indication of welcome," Perry writes,

> There were a few government boats lying near, and the officers on board gladly welcomed our people to a visit, in the course of which such a mutual friendliness sprung up that the Americans joined the Japanese in a social pipe or two of tobacco.[14]

Perry had the impression from his own experiences and those of his crew that the Japanese were cautious, but curious and open.

Japan: A "Closed Country"?

In the *Narrative*, Perry does not refer explicitly to a policy "Japanese isolation." A reader of the *Narrative*'s descriptions of both the failures and successes in the long history of Japanese-European relations would not think of Japan as having been closed or isolated from the West in the manner that has sometimes been asserted. The visits of the Dutch had long provided the Japanese with books about Europe that far exceeded the amount of information Europeans acquired about Japan. The *bakufu* also received information from the Dutch through the regular reports (*fūsetsugaki*), which they were required to submit, on what was happening in the "outside" world.[15] Knowledge of Western art, science, medicine, philosophy and other disciplines was available to Dutch studies (*rangaku*)

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[14] Ibid., p. 267.
[15] Marius B. Jansen, "Rangaku and Westernization," *Modern Asian Studies* 18/4 (1984), p. 541.

and Western studies (*yōgaku*) scholars in Japan. Perry's *Narrative* is a reminder of the Japanese interest in the Western sciences, mathematics, and culture in general – an interest which the Europeans had encouraged.[16]

Surprisingly, the Japanese word for "closed country" (*sakoku*), which has commonly been used to describe Japan's political condition during and after the Christian persecutions at the turn of the seventeenth century, was not coined until 1801. Tadao Shizuki (1760-1806), a Dutch translator in Nagasaki, was ordered by the authorities to translate Englebert Kaempfer's (1651-1716) defense of the "closed country" system which appears in a chapter of the Dutch writer's *Amoenitates* (1712).[17] The rather cumbersome title of the chapter is: "An Enquiry Whether It Be Conducive for the Good of the Japanese Empire to Keep It Shut Up, As It Now Is, and Not to Suffer Its Inhabitants to Have Any Commerce with Foreign Nations Either At Home or Abroad." The chapter summarizes the European conception, rather than the *bakufu*'s policy, of Japan's isolation. In this essay, Kaempfer presented two sides of the argument on whether the "isolation" of Japan should continue. He asserted, on the one hand that "closure of a country to the rest of mankind was surely against the will of God, who created a world without boundaries." Kaempfer states that though Japan had already "emerged from its Warring States Period, Europe had so far failed to do so. This essay, written by a European, was to become an important document in the internal debate in Japan on whether to permit the foreigners access to its port cities."[18] Kaempfer's concept of a "closed country" is the conception of Japan that has been held in the West throughout much of the twentieth century. Thus, the term "*sakoku*" is actually a Western influence and translates a Western perception about Japan rather than actual Tokugawa policy.

From Perry's perspective it was Europe and the United States that were isolated from Japan as much as Japan was isolated from Europe and the United States. Though Perry's voyage has been viewed as "the opening" of Japan, Japan had long been open to Europe through the Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, and explorers of other nations. Even after the expulsion

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[16] Hawks, *Narrative of the Expedition*, p. 29.

[17] Jansen, "Rangaku and Westernization," p. 541.

[18] Englebert Kaempfer, *Kaempfer's Japan: Tokugawa Culture Observed*, ed. Beatrice M. Bodart-Bailey (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999), p. 19.

edicts, Japanese scholars were concerned and interested in Japan's relations with the West, Perry tried to acquire an accurate understanding of Japan's past relations with the West. His conclusion is recorded in the *Narratives*:

> the exclusive system of Japan was not the result of any national idiosyncrasy, but was caused by peculiar circumstances, long since passed and was, in fact, in direct opposition to what history proved to be the natural temperament and disposition of the Japanese people.[19]

Perry found that the responsibility for the Western nations' inability to break down the barriers that kept them out did not lie with Japan but with the Westerners themselves:

> Peculiar circumstances in the then political condition of the power seeking admission; the rivalry of different nations striving to thwart each other; the indiscretion, not to say arrogance, of some of those entrusted with the mission, who sought to bully a brave people into acquiescence with their wishes; a misconception of the true character of the Japanese.[20]

According to Perry, in the nineteenth century it was the Dutch, not the Japanese who wanted Japan kept closed. "The Dutch wanted to commit the Japanese to agree to no treaty with any foreign power but such as they prescribed."[21]

Changing Japanese Attitudes and Ideas about Christianity

Japanese discourse on the "problem" of Christianity clearly shows that intellectuals in Japan were not isolated from or ignorant of the foreign religion. Throughout the Tokugawa period (1603-1868), but particularly during the years just prior to Perry's arrival, the dangers and benefits of Christianity were discussed among Mito scholars. The attitude of the Japanese toward Christianity when Perry arrived seems to be one of fear

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[19] Hawks, *Narrative of the Expedition*, p. 76.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid., p. 72.

and suspicion on the one hand, along with respect and admiration on the other.

   Maeno Ryōtaku (1723-1803), a doctor of Dutch medicine who studied Christianity and its potential impact on Japan represented a number of Mito scholars who had, what perhaps awkwardly would be described as a "not unfavorable" view of Christianity. Seeing that Western nations were concerned with the welfare of the commoners in their lands, Maeno concluded that the essence of government in North America and Europe was social concern for the people, and this concern was a direct result of Christian influence. In his understanding, Western nations were governed by officials who were invested with religious authority in order to carry out religious, that is, Christian works of charity. The unity of government and religion in the West enabled officials to rule wisely. Maeno concluded that in a strong nation religion had to be inseparable from government, and the implementation of religious teachings is, or should be, the responsibility of the ruler of the state,

> Christianity, the state religion of Holland, and the teaching of Africa…all have the same aim: to save and nurture widowers, widows, orphans, single persons, the sick and disabled, and the destitute and suffering and to base edification and government on this policy.[22]

   Maeno was not a Christian himself, and was opposed to bringing Christianity into Japan, but he judged that the religious teaching of the "Western sages," that is, of Western government officials, was a teaching that had proven to be an instrument of effective government policy. The proof of this for Maeno lay in the fact that Christianity had spread over far more of the globe than any other religious teaching and would continue to do so.[23]

   It is difficult to gauge the direct impact of Maeno's ideas on other Tokugawa thinkers, but Fujita Yūkoku (1774-1826) was certainly aware that Europeans were spreading Christian teachings in the territories they colonized. The fear that the same thing would happen in Japan affected him profoundly. He learned of Maeno's vision of a Christian-dominated world,

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[22] Ibid., p. 49.
[23] Ibid., p. 50.

and the fears that Fujita held for Japan were intensified when he learned of Russian proselytizing and colonizing in the north:[24]

> Should the Russian barbarians entice our stupid commoners with their wicked [Christian] teachings and sugar-sweet words, we will suffer the same fate as Chou, the wicked last ruler of the Shang.[25]

Aizawa Seishisai (1782-1863), Yūkoko's student, was certainly familiar with Maeno's work[26] and saw Christianity as a powerful tool for government. Christianity was the means that Western rulers used to achieve *jinwa*, or unity and integration of the people. It was *jinwa*, in Aizawa's opinion, that was the key to the national strength, wealth, and expansion of any nation. He conceived of *kokutai* (national polity) largely out of a desire to bring to Japan the same kind of popular unity and integration that, he believed, characterized nations in the West. Aizawa, in concert with Maeno's philosophy, thought that it was Christianity that had inspired Western governments to achieve *jinwa*.[27]

Aizawa not only admired the West, he also feared it and looked on Western nations with deep suspicions. Throughout his life he believed that trade and Christianity were stratagems intended to facilitate a Western takeover of Japan. In *Shinron* (New thesis, 1825), he seems to echo Maeno's thought arguing that the secret of Western strength lies in Christianity. He calls the foreign religion a state cult that Western leaders propagate in order to cultivate voluntary allegiance both in their own peoples and in those they colonize overseas.[28] Aizawa's words almost seem to be a warning given to prepare the next generation of Japanese leaders to meet Perry.

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[24] Ibid., p. 52.

[25] Samuel B. Griffith, trans., *Sun Tzu: The Art of War* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 98.

[26] Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi, *Anti-Foreignism and Western Learning in Early-Modern Japan: The New Theses of 1825* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), p. 51.

[27] Ibid., p. 69.

[28] Ibid., p. 13.

> For close to three hundred years now the Western Barbarians have rampaged on the high seas. Why are they able to enlarge their territories and fulfill their every desire? Does their wisdom and courage exceed that of ordinary men? Is their government so benevolent that they win popular support?…Do they possess some superhuman, divine powers? Hardly. Christianity is the sole key to their success. It is a truly evil and base religion, barely worth discussing. But its main doctrines are simple to grasp and well-contrived; they can easily deceive stupid commoners with it….Once beguiled by Christianity, they cannot be brought back to their senses. Herein lies the secret of the barbarians' success. [29]

Aizawa did not have a fondness for Christianity, nor was he sympathetic toward it. In fact, he viewed Christianity as a hideous religion. More importantly, however, he was in awe of its seeming influence and vitality. For him, it was a belief system that had the power to take over countries and topple governments. He cautioned the *bakufu* that the Westerners who came to Japan did so to trade in order to learn about the country's geography and to test the nation's defenses. Westerners would then bring Christianity as a prelude to conquest:

> They [the Western nations] propagate Christianity to subvert it [i.e. Japan] from within. Once our peoples' hearts and minds are captivated by Christianity, they will greet the barbarian host with open arms, and we would be powerless to stop them. [30]

Like Aizawa and Fujita, other Mito scholars portrayed Westerners as rapacious barbarians intent on capturing the hearts and minds of "stupid" Japanese commoners. They were convinced that commoners could be easily converted to Christianity and induced to forsake their rulers. [31] For Fujita Tōko (1806-1855), the West had always harbored aggressive designs on Japan. The Christianity (*kirishitan*) that had been propagated by the Jesuits during the first encounter with the West (1549-1639) had been an opening step toward conquest. Fortunately, that first step had been averted, but there

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[29] Ibid., p. 200.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid., p. 55.

was no guarantee the Japanese would be as fortunate the second time. These scholars saw that the loyalty of the Japanese *kirishitan* to his object of worship – "the body crucified on the cross" – had taken precedence over his loyalty to his feudal lord, the very keystone of Tokugawa society. One of the arguments they leveled against the opening of trade relations with the United States in 1853 was that broadened intercourse with the West would enable the Westerners to propagate the "Evil Religion" and compromise the loyalty of the people.[32]

A different perspective on the "Christian problem" was offered by Yokoi Shōnan (1809-1869). A low-ranking samurai, Yokoi began to express his thoughts on Christianity in the 1850s, just as Perry was involved in his negotiations.[33] He made a distinction, which the Mito scholars had failed to make, between the Christianity of the sixteenth century; that is, the *kirishitan* religion brought by the Spanish and the Portuguese, and contemporary Christianity. Yokoi did not believe that they were the same religion at all. Contemporary Christianity was not a threat to Japan in the same way that the *kirishitan* religion had been. He rejected the notion, held by Aizawa and Fujita Tōko, that Christianity would weaken the Confucian virtue of loyalty to one's lord. In 1856 he wrote to a friend:

> it appears that so-called Christianity is in harmony with both the will of heaven and the principle of nature.…In countries where this religion is believed there prevails a closeness among the people, from the ruler above down to the lowest commoner. The great virtues of loyalty to the sovereign and filial piety are practiced. The people do not act out of greed…there is a world of difference between Christianity and the *kirishitan* accepted at the time of Ōtomo [Yoshishige, 1530-1587].[34]

Like some Mito scholars, Yokoi believed that Christianity nurtured the benevolence of the Western governments toward their people, and that it

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[32] Richard T. Chang, "Yokoi Shōnan's View of Christianity," *Monumenta Nipponica* 21/3-4 (1966), p. 267.

[33] *Yokoi Shōnan den* [The Life of Yokoi Shōnan], 1942; and *Yokoi Shōnan ikō* [Manuscripts Left by Yokoi Shōnan], 1942.

[34] Chang, "Yokoi Shōnan's View of Christianity," pp. 266-272.

was consistent with Confucian virtue. Christianity also brought development for western countries and growth around the globe.

Yokoi was the *bakufu* representative who negotiated with Townsend Harris (1804-1878), the American Consul general who in 1858 succeeded in having the Tokugawa *bakufu* sign the first commercial treaty between Japan and a western power. From those negotiations, Yokoi gained the understanding, which had been lacking to his predecessors, that in the West there existed a sharp distinction between the political and the ecclesiastical authorities. Since there was a distinction between political and religious interests, Yokoi thought that the Japanese side would be able to successfully argue that Christian missionaries ought to be bared from coming into Japan. Harris, however, informed Yokoi that Christians spread their teachings under the auspices of their respective denominations, and that his government did not have the authority to prevent missionaries from entering Japan. Yokoi accepted this and was resigned to the eventual arrival of foreign missionaries. He believed that Christianity was not the threat that the Mito scholars had considered it to be. In 1864 Yokoi stated to Inoue Kowashi (1843-1895), minister of education from 1893:

> In the past all that Christianity did was teach the ignorant masses. It was a shallow religion. But lately even in the West the government officials do not necessarily believe in Jesus. Rather they have developed disciplines capable of assisting government and science and thereby have benefited greatly from these disciplines. This conforms to the action of the sages.[35]

Many of his Japanese contemporaries believed Yokoi to be a Christian and thought that he looked forward to the spread of Christianity in Japan. Although untrue, it was because of this mistaken assumption that he became the first important leader of the Meiji government to be assassinated. Yokoi was tolerant of Christianity and saw it as a valid ethical system. He was not a Christian advocate, however, and viewed it as inferior to true Confucianism. Christianity was only a dilution of the true Way of the ancient sages, while true Confucianism was a complete embodiment of the Way.

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[35] *Yokoi Shōnan ikō*, p. 903.

Christianity and European Nationalism

The year that Yokoi Shōnan was assassinated, Guido Verbeck, a missionary of the Dutch Reformed Church in America, arrived in Japan as one of the first Christian missionaries of the Meiji period. Describing his missionary experiences, Verbeck reported that whenever he would bring up the topic of religion, he was immediately warned to drop the subject. "The hand [of the Japanese person with whom I spoke] would almost involuntarily be applied to his throat [in a gesture of cutting] to indicate the extreme peril of such a topic.[36] Verbeck reported that Japanese servants in his and in other missionary households were in constant fear of spies who would report any contact with Christianity.

French Catholic missionaries of the French Foreign Mission Society (Société des Missions Etrangères) arrived in Japan a year after Perry. Mermet de Cachon (1828-1879) and Abbé Girard, the first French missionaries to come to Japan, arrived in 1855 with Baron Jean-Baptiste Louis Gros, who would sign France's first treaty of commerce and friendship with Japan. Under the terms of the treaty French subjects would have freedom of religion and were allowed to build churches and establish cemeteries within the treaty ports, but the Japanese made it clear that the terms of the treaty did not allow missionaries to go outside the treaty ports. For two years the French missionaries kept to the terms of the agreement. Girard remained in Yokohama; Mermet taught French in Hakodate; and another missionary, Bernard Petitjean, who came to Japan from the Ryukyus in 1862, worked in Nagasaki.

Girard established a chapel in Yokohama and began to preach in Japanese. One day in 1862 a group of peasants, merchants, and even samurai wandered into his chapel, simply out of curiosity, and listened for a while to Girard's sermon. Thirty-six Japanese who were in the chapel at the time were subsequently arrested. The French diplomatic mission learned that the *bakufu* intended to execute those who had heard Girard's sermon. Eventually, the *bakufu* agreed that if Girard ceased preaching in Japanese the executions would not be carried out. Realizing that as long as the political situation in Japan remained unchanged, Christianity would make no headway, Girard insisted that France take a strong stand. He appealed to the French diplomatic mission, saying it would be to France's advantage and to future trade relations to push the Japanese into an acceptance of

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[36] Sansom, *Western World and Japan*, p. 468.

Christianity. Girard had played into old Japanese fears and the prediction of Aizawa that the West would use trade as a prelude to the propagation of Christianity.

Relations between Japan and the West began to get worse rather than better. The same year (1862) the English merchant, Charles Richardson was attacked by retainers of Shimazu Hisamitsu, daimyo of Satsuma (now Kagoshima Prefecture), in the village of Namamugi near Yokohama. Chōshū batteries were firing on American and French ships in the Shimonoseki straits, and the bombardment of Kagoshima by the British fleet followed in 1863 and 1864. Seeing such incidents, both Petitjean and Girard were of the opinion that the West should punish Japan. In a letter to a friend, dated 14 April 1863, Petitjean wrote in reference to the past Japanese persecution of Christianity:

> Despite an impunity of more than two centuries, Japan has a great debt to repay God for the torrents of Christian bloodshed in the seventeenth century. Who knows whether the hour of punishment is not about to arrive!![37]

In February 1865 the Catholic Church at Oura in Nagasaki was consecrated to the Twenty-Six Martyrs, and the following month, Petitjean, as he was standing near the entrance to the church, was approached by a small group of Japanese who questioned him about his mission. After receiving Petitjean's assurance that he was obedient to the authority of the Pope of Rome, that he venerated the Blessed Virgin, and that the clergy of his church were celibate, the Japanese told him that they were of the same faith. The missionaries had always suspected, or at the very least had hoped, that descendants of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Christians might still exist somewhere; and this meeting was the proof for which they had been waiting for so long.[38] Petitjean learned that there were thousands of other Christians in hiding and quickly informed his colleagues. In their enthusiasm for having found these hidden Christians, the French

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[37] J.B. Chaillet, *Monseigneur Petitjean (1829-1844) et la Résurrection Catholique du Japon au XIXe Siècle* (Montceau, 1919), p. 84.
[38] Jean-Pierre Lehmann, "French Catholic Missionaries in Japan in the Bakumatsu and Early Meiji Periods," *Modern Asian Studies* 13/3 (1979), p. 384.

missionaries completely disregarded the treaties, traveling and preaching in areas outside of the treaty port limits.

By June 1866 the newly-assigned head of the French legation, Léon Roches (1808-1901), began working to mend relations with the Japanese, and it appeared that he would eventually be able to gain the trust of the *bakufu*. When Petitjean visited Roches, the diplomat promised him that the Japanese government might be reasonably well disposed towards Christians when the political situation improved.[39] The situation, however, did not improve.

A missionary at a special inaugural Mass in Nagasaki on 2 June 1866 announced to the congregation how France was "trebly represented at the Mass in Her religious force, in her civilizing power, and in her martial valor, by a bishop, by a minister plenipotentiary, and by an admiral."[40] Understandably, the Japanese extrapolated from the missionary's address that the religious, political, and military authorities of Western nations must be inseparable. No doubt, they were inseparable in the minds of the French missionaries and diplomats at well. This nationalistic frame of mind prevented the Japanese from becoming more favorably disposed toward Christianity.

During the following year (1867) the ban against Christianity continued to be strictly enforced, and some Christians in the Urakami area of Nagasaki, who had attended sermons and services, were imprisoned. Technically, the arrests were not in violation of the treaties. The Japanese agreements with the Western nations specifically forbade missionaries to proselytize outside the port cities, and religious activities were supposed to be limited to the missionaries' own compatriots. The Japanese had been aware of the illegal activities of the Western missionaries for some time; but even if they had enforced the literal terms of the agreements and arrested the missionaries, the Japanese officials would have had no alternative except to hand the prisoners back to their consular authorities. All Westerners in Japan, the missionaries included, enjoyed the protection of extraterritoriality. Although the missionaries were breaking the laws of

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[39] Ibid., p. 384.

[40] F. Marnas, *La Religion de Jésus Ressuscitée au Japon Dans La Seconde Moitié du XIXe Siècle*, 2 vols. (Paris-Lyon: Delhomme et Briguet, 1897), p. 672.

Japan and acting contrary to the stipulations of the treaties that their own countries had signed, they were immune from punishment.

Frustrated in their attempts to make the foreign missionaries respect the terms of the treaties, the Japanese authorities turned their anger against the native Christians. Roches tried to intervene with the Japanese government on behalf of the Christians arrested at Urakami. The *Rōjū* (council of elders) promised to release the Christians if they would not practice their religion openly. At this show of good will on the part of the Japanese, Roches, supported by the British representative, Sir Harry Parkes (1828-1885), urged Petitjean to show good faith as well, to obey the treaty stipulations and not travel or preach outside of the treaty ports. In a long letter to Roches, Petitjean refuted the appeals for moderation and insisted that their mission could not be constrained by the laws of men, as it was directed by the law of God. "The missionaries," claimed Petitjean, "are the glory of France and in the eyes of God the persecutors should answer for their crimes."[41] In 1872 and 1873 the pressure of the Western powers came down hard on Japan and resulted in the French *chargé d'affaires*, Paul de Tureene, reporting to Paris that the Japanese Government would abrogate the edicts against Christianity and release arrested Christians.

The missionaries viewed the lifting of the ban as a victory for France as much as for Christianity. The French identification of religion with nationality, which was passed on to their Japanese converts, is illustrated by the case of a young Christian samurai who was baptized in May 1873 and fell seriously ill shortly after his baptism. Unable either to speak or to write, he made a sign to a fellow Christian who was assisting him to hold his hand so that he could write. It is reported that he wrote two Japanese characters: "God" and "France." He died clutching the paper in his hand.[42] The missionaries who were with him as he lay dying saw this as a sign of his love for the faith and for France. There is, of course, clear ambiguity in their interpretation of the event. The Chinese character for France (*futsu*) is the same as the character for Buddha (*butsu*); and the character for "God" is the same as the character for "the [Shinto] gods." The term *shinbutsu*, which the dying Christian wrote, could very well mean "the gods and the Buddhas" or "Shinto and Buddhism." Rather than professing his love for God and for France, the samurai youth may have actually

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[41] Lehman, "French Catholic Missionaries," p. 386.
[42] Chaillet, *Monseigneur Petitjean*, p. 333.

renounced his new faith and reclaimed his belief in Buddha and in the traditional Japanese deities.[43]

To what extent the Japanese authorities and the Japanese people realized the close link that Christian missionaries established between their religion and their country is difficult to ascertain. The missionaries seemed incapable of distinguishing between the apostolic mission and their nationalism. This was the same mistake that many Spanish and Portuguese missionaries had made in the sixteenth century. American and British protestant missionaries were not entirely free of this mindset either. Perry's efforts to keep trade and religion separate provided an early model for negotiation and diplomacy with the Japanese. To the detriment of Christianity, however, his model was not followed.

Perry's successful diplomacy had gained the trust and understanding of the Japanese; but his efforts seem to have been betrayed or forgotten in the years after his arrival. Contrary to what Perry would have expected, the overthrow of the *bakufu* and the subsequent Meiji restoration brought an intensification, rather than a relaxation, of persecution against Christians. When considered in light of the European linking of trade and religion and the missionaries' recalcitrance, the renewed persecution in the Meiji period was not entirely surprising. Japan's policy vis-à-vis Christianity gradually changed and became more tolerant, but this improvement was not the result of European diplomatic efforts to "open" Japan. It was rather because of the openness of Japan toward the West that the government's anti-Christian stand eventually had to be relaxed. The fifth article of the *Charter Oath* (1868),[44] which stipulated "that knowledge be sought throughout the world," led Japan to further contact with the West.

Commodore Perry wrote that the victims of Western enthusiasm for making Japan Christian at both the beginning and at the end of the Tokugawa era were the native Japanese Christians:

> [I]t is a sad reflection that in the work of excluding Christianity from Japan, Romanists and Protestants alike bore their part. Neither can, with justice, reproach the other. If the worldliness and pride of the Portuguese Christian promoted him to conspiracy and

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[43] Lehman, "French Catholic Missionaries," p. 389.

[44] The *Charter Oath* was the statement of national policy that Emperor Meiji pledged to his imperial ancestors 6 April 1868.

drove him and his companions from the Empire, the avarice and cruelty of the Dutch professed believer finished the work, and extirpated the last remnant of the faith in the destruction of the native followers of Christ. True Christianity indignantly disowns both.[45]

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[45] Hawks, *Narrative of the Exposition*, p. 32.

LEARNING FROM KOBE:
COMPLEXITY AND URGENCY IN
THE HOLISTIC MANAGEMENT MODEL

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Margaret Wheatley argues the vast complexity in the contemporary business environment has forced organizations and institutions to allow for the possibility of "anything" happening.[1] The reality of "anything" happening has given rise to holistic management models requiring a total commitment to the system by all of its individual members and components. The holistic model has proven to be effective in the management of complex environments. The model emphasizes total participation, cooperation and consideration of every possible component. The model considers how the system as a whole can adapt and improve continuous training, learning and sharing of information.

While the holistic approach is often highly effective in enabling organizations and institutions to adapt to uncertain situations, it is questionable whether holistic approaches can effectively react and adapt when there is a vast amount of diversity in a complex environment. The heavy reliance on total commitment, continuous learning and sharing of information makes it difficult for holistically managed crisis control to rapidly incorporate information and resources which are not considered to be "part of the system." This analysis will examine how holistic management systems respond when dealing with the diversity in complex environments by examining the potential flaws which can arise and challenge previously held assumptions. When the environment presents such demands, they generally must be managed by an open approach to varying perspectives and values. As an example, analysis of the responses of Japan's natural disaster preparedness system during the Kobe Disaster will be conducted to show when and how holistically managed systems are not equipped to handle diversity.

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[1] Margaret Wheatley, "Breathing Life Into Organizations," *Journal for Quality and Participation* 18 (1995): 6-9.

The Holistic Management of the Kobe Earthquake

On January 17, 1995, the most powerful earthquake to strike an urban area in Japan in more than 50 years rocked the port city of Kobe, Japan. The Hanshin Daishinsai (Great Hanshin Earthquake) was Japan's first category seven earthquake, responsible for killing 5,300 people, injuring 30,000 and leaving another 500,000 homeless.[2] The disaster relief effort was managed by Japan's natural disaster preparedness system, in which various public and private agencies provide disaster prevention and relief in a holistic manner. The system is driven by Japan's nationwide commitment to make earthquake detection and prevention one of its main national priorities. Because of the dedicated effort, Japan has one of the highest per capita GDP expenditures on earthquake detection and prevention measures in the world. This pledge to be prepared for and manage disasters at the national level can also be seen though the implementation of a rigid building code which emphasizes high strength buildings to withstand low strength quakes. Finally, Japan has held an annual nationwide earthquake drill to simultaneously carry out police rescues, helicopter deployment, seismic monitor testing and emergency train stoppage routines.[3]

Due to this demonstrated earthquake preparedness commitment in Japan, one would have expected Kobe, the "big quake," to be the system's "finest hour." However, the system's response to the Kobe earthquake created the "Kobe disaster." Most notably, in the three days following the quake, thousands of people suffocated under the rubble left by the quake, while thousands more lost their homes to fires.[4] American scholar Gavan McCormack argues as a result of the Hanshin Daishinsai quake:

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[2] Aoki Hidekazu and Kawamiya Nobuo, "Hanshin daishinsai de taoresatta mono," *Tokyo* (April 1995): 97-109; and Glen Fukushima, "Lessons from the Quake," *Tokyo Business Today Special Issue* (April 1995), p. 48.

[3] Kazuo Chinone, "The Tokyo Earthquake: Not 'If' but 'When'," *Tokyo Business Today Special Issue* (April 1995): 8-12; and H. Fukunagawa, "Natural Disaster, Unnatural Consequences," *Tokyo Business Today Special Issue* (April 1995): 4-8.

[4] Sharon Begley, "Killer Quakes: Lessons of Kobe," *Newsweek* (January 30, 1995): 32-33; Michael Hirsh, "Japan: The Agony and the After Shock," *Newsweek* (January 30, 1995): 20-23; "More than 3,000 Dead, Missing: Casualty Toll Rises as Rescue Efforts Gather Momentum, 187,000

> The faith in technology, the trust in the competence of the bureaucracy, the confidence that the authorities would protect people in the event of any crisis, was profoundly shaken. Questions of technology and engineering standards were actually directed toward national identity and direction. The spectacle of bureaucratic and political incompetence was unforgettable, both as to the confidence with which Kobe had been declared earthquake-free and so was unprepared for the catastrophe that struck it, and in terms of the response to the event itself.[5]

Before Kobe, the Japanese government and the Japanese people took pride that the nationwide disaster preparedness system could prevent such a tragedy. After Kobe, it has become apparent that even though Japan's system focuses on a holistic approach to earthquake preparedness, this approach does not necessarily ensure the system can effectively manage a disaster.

Complex Environments
The Nature of Complex Environments
　　　　Complex environments are characterized by rapid change, high volumes of information, high levels of uncertainty, increasing interrelatedness of parts within the whole, diverse assumptions and perspectives, and continuous new information driving changes in the fundamental structure of organizations and institutions.[6] A complex environment is the opposite of a deterministic, predictable and controllable state of affairs. Instead, it is a system of relationships which weave together, merge, change, degenerate and evolve.[7] Complex environments are a state

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Evacuated," *Daily Yomiuri* (January 19, 1995): 1-3; and "Quake Kills Over 1500 in Kansai," *Daily Yomiuri* (January 18, 1995): 1-3.

[5] Gavan McCormack, *The Emptiness of Japanese Affluence* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1996), p. 12.

[6] Richard Cyert and James G. March, *A Behavioral Theory of the Firm* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1963), pp. 100-116; and W. Richard Scott, *Organizations: Rational, Natural and Open Systems*, 3rd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1992), p. 55.

[7] Frances J. Milliken, "Three Types of Perceived Uncertainty About the Environment: State, Effect, and Response Uncertainty," *Academy of Management Review* 12 (1987): 133-143.

of order within disorder or disorder within order. This concept is based on the assumption that the world has become so complex that regardless of how carefully planning is carried out, unanticipated events will occur that will make long term planning virtually impossible.

Components of Complex Environments

Complex environments produce three types of events: continuous, abstract and stochastic. Continuous events are based on Richard Daft and Karl Weick's concept, the reliability imperative, which emphasizes the "shift from efficiency to reliability."[8] The need for reliability is continuous, in that the overriding requirement is to keep the system doing what it is supposed to do. This focus on reliability shows that while efficiency was the hallmark of the deterministic industrial era, reliability is the hallmark of stochastic, continuous process technology associated with the post-industrial era. People confronted with problems of continuity and reliability must manage the system's processes instead of simply trying to achieve discrete and efficient outcomes.

In addition to the reliability imperative, the explosion of new technology in contemporary society has made abstract events an ever present phenomenon in complex environments. Abstract events are those events which demand a great deal of cognitive effort to manage. With technology, a cognitive demand for inference, imagination, and problem solving has increased. Individuals operating in complex environments, therefore, must maintain a large set of cognitive skills, even though they may only be used infrequently.[9] Operators are kept on standby, giving special attention to start-up and to anticipating faults that may lead to downtime. When dealing with abstract events, the differentiation between operations and maintenance is blurred, while the demand for monitoring and diagnostic skills becomes crucial.[10]

The need for response to abstract events fosters mistakes rather than errors, because the vast amount of information present in the complex

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[8] Richard L. Daft and Karl E. Weick, "Toward a Model of Organizations as Interpretation Systems," *Academy of Management Review* 9 (1984): 284-295.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Louis E. Davis and James C. Taylor, "Technology, Organizations, and Job Structure," in Robert Dubin, ed., *Handbook of Work, Organization and Society* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1976), pp. 379-419.

environment is difficult to comprehend, and impossible to fully understand. An error occurs when an individual inadvertently strays from the guide or prescribed course of action, and thus is blameworthy for the outcome of their behavior. A mistake, on the other hand, occurs when there is a misconception, misidentification or misunderstanding due to the vast amount of uncertainty faced by the individual. As a result, the system which the individual uses to process this information, rather than the individual, is responsible for the outcome of the individual's behavior when a mistake occurs.[11] In a system which requires an understanding of the "whole," the occurrence of individual mistakes can hinder the effectiveness of the system and limit its ability to adapt to the rapidly changing environment.

The other type of occurrence which is produced in a complex environment is the stochastic, or randomly occurring and unpredictable event. Daft and Weick argue "a world of alchemy is a world of stochastic events."[12] These crisis events challenge the system and the way it has always worked in the past. A crisis, by its nature, requires the system to rapidly produce changes in behavior, decision making, priorities, structure and process and is often a great challenge to the assumptions on which the system is based. These events test the system's ability to deal with uncertainty by providing incoming data which does not fit with current paradigms and by providing data the system has not addressed before. In addition, a "crisis" creates conditions in which systems have an inability to deal with "certainty," in that during periods of crisis, the system will frequently rely on itself to be able to handle change. This self reliance can have deadly consequences if it is based on false assumptions.

The Presence of Chaos and Its Demand for Rapid Change

In addition to the events identified in the literature, it is important to note systems must be prepared to handle the chaos which often ensues when there is a rapidly occurring sequence of abstract and stochastic events. This mix of abstract and stochastic events presents a unique challenge, since the stochastic nature of the sequence produces a great deal of uncertainty, while its abstract nature requires a great deal of attention to diagnostics and monitoring. In short, such a sequence produces a need for rapid change and

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[11] Paul S. Goodman, Lee S. Sproull and Associates, *Technology and Organizations* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990), pp. 35-57.
[12] Daft and Weick, "Toward a Model," pp. 284-295.

adaptation. These types of sequences are a reality in complex environments and require rapid change and adaptation to be managed effectively.

Holistic Management in Complex Environments

To manage effectively in complex environments, systems have become holistic, in that they operate with the imperative that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Margaret Wheatley believes "we have begun to speak in earnest of more fluid, organic structures, even of boundary-less organizations. We are beginning to recognize organizations as systems, and crediting them with some type of self-renewing capacity."[13] Wheatley adds the only means of dealing with this unsteady state is to design a highly flexible and adaptive decision-making system, while remaining true to the overall mission or goal of the organization.

Ralph Kilmann views the holistic approach as the most effective means of managing the most complex world view of organizations and their environments. He identifies three types of worldviews, the most basic being the simple machine, which argues for single efforts at change, like replacing defective parts. The second, more intricate worldview is the open system, which argues for a more integrated approach in which several parts must be balanced simultaneously to manage the organization. The most sophisticated worldview is the complex hologram, a three dimensional image which includes above and below the surface elements and their integrative relationship. The complex hologram, or holistic system, provides depth and breadth to the environment and organization within which it is a part. Kilmann argues this complex hologram "represents the most compelling approach when complexity, imperfection and uncertainty are the norm – a three dimensional view of life beyond the five senses."[14] The holistic approach is the most sophisticated means of managing complexity in treating the organization and its environment as a complex hologram.

Proponents of the holistic model, including the Japanese, believe the "essence of a thing" is not found in the details but in the "whole." Thus, they are relatively unconcerned about the individual elements of a given

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[13] Margaret Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science: Learning about Organizations from an Orderly Universe* (San Francisco: Berret-Kohler Publishers, 1992), p. 13.

[14] Ralph Kilmann, *Managing Beyond the Quick Fix: A Completely Integrated Program for Creating and Maintaining Organizational Success* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1989), pp. 23-28.

system. Holistic thinking, therefore, focuses on the greater good, meaning the organization or the nation, rather than the individual components of these entities. The key elements of a holistic management system are a focus on the whole and an attention to process over content. Ongoing communication, total participation, sharing of assumptions and ideas, consensus decision making and group-oriented learning are hallmarks of a holistic approach. The existing system is the focus of continuous improvement, adaptation and change to be responsive and adaptive to changes in the environment. Coordination and commitment are the underlying assumptions which drive holistic management systems.[15] Table 1 below shows the attributes of a holistic management system.

Learning in Holistic Management Systems

Holistic management systems are especially useful in managing complex environments because they promote organizational learning. Herbert Simon defines organizational learning as "growing insights and successful restructuring of organizational problems by individuals reflected in the structural elements and outcomes of the organization itself."[16] Organizational learning, concisely defined, consists of the set of cognitive, behavioral, and affective processes within an organizational framework which generate knowledge, innovation, and change driven by and resulting in enhanced organizational performance and adaptation to the environment. It represents processes by which organizations identify, interpret, process, and distribute knowledge to adapt to environmental influences.[17]

Ikujiro Nonaka and Hirotaka Takeuchi have since argued knowledge is produced from a dynamic interaction between tacit (informal, personal, contextual, experience based) and explicit (formal, codified, technical, written) knowledge within a framework of four main phases of activity among groups of individuals in the organization. These four phases reflect the dynamic interaction between and among individuals and groups

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[15] Ishikawa H., *Kaizen* (New York: Penguin Books, 1988).

[16] Herbert Simon, "Bounded Rationality and Organizational Learning," *Organization Science* 2 (1991): 125-139.

[17] N. Adler and M. Jelinek, "Is Organization Culture Bound?" *Human Resource Management* 25 (1986): 73-90; and Chris Argyris, *On Organizational Learning* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1993), pp. 20-24.

Table 1. Attributes of a Holistic Management System

ASSUMPTIONS:	Continuity & Tradition Loyalty to the System & Harmony within the System Short Term Rigidity & Long Term Flexibility Diffusion of Responsibility Low Uncertainty & High Equivocally
COMPONENTS:	The Whole is Greater than the Sum of Its Parts Deals with Massive Amounts of Information Composed of Generalists

PROCESSES:	Focuses on the Whole in Operations &
	    Maintenance
	Long Term System Level Learning
	Training Focuses on Improving the System
	Inter-Relatedness among Components
	Adherence to the System When Facing Adversity
	Minimal Consideration of the Content which
	    Drives Processes

POSITIVE OUTCOMES:	Effective Adaptation & Long Term Evolution Great Capability to Incorporate New Technology High Reliability & Continuity Low Rate of Errors

NEGATIVE OUTCOMES:	Inability to Deal with Problems Not Framed for the
	    "Whole"
	Inability to Deal with Problems which Require
	    Rapid Change
	High Rate of Mistakes
	Escalation of Commitment Due to Total Devotion
	    to the System

at various levels of the organization resulting in a "spiraling effect" of knowledge accumulation and growth from which innovation and learning results.[18]

Holistic learning systems include communities of meaning that allow for common understanding of environmental impacts, enhanced ability to react to changes through rapid sharing of information, diffusion of learning, and quick responses for the system to adapt to new external realities which impact organizational performance. This ability to produce learning when problems occur is one of the most effective ways in which holistic systems manage the complex environment.

Holistic Management in Practice in Japan

The Japanese management model is characterized by the holistic approach, in both business and government.[19] Japan's industrial system is characterized by interdependent relationships among government, private, non-profit and community organizations. The *keiretsu* or "lineage" systems consist of a parent firm and trading company with the main bank as the institutional triumvirate which guides the activities of the entire *keiretsu*. Each of these primary resource and power centers maintains close relationships with counterparts in the non-private sectors. The bank is guided by the Ministry of Finance (MOF), the trading company with the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI, formerly MITI), and the parent firm with other government and non-private institutions (Ministry of Education, major universities, etc.). Companies such as National Telecom (NTT), for example, are closely tied with Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications (MOPT). Other examples of these institutional relationships include the company labor unions and the Keidanren and Nikkeiren (advisory councils) with both public and private sector participants.[20]

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[18] Ikujiro Nonaka and Hirotaka Takeuchi, *The Knowledge Creating Company: How Japanese Companies Create the Dynamics of Innovation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 57-94.

[19] Robert Cole, *Strategies for Learning: Small Group Activities in American, Japanese, and Swedish Industry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989); and Daniel Okimoto and Thomas Rohlen, eds., *Inside the Japanese System: Readings on Contemporary Society and Political Economy* (Los Angeles: Stanford University Press, 1988), p. 254.

[20] Ibid.

In addition to reliance on the interdependencies in the holistic structure of Japanese industry, there are institutionalized practices which maintain the informal ties between government and business. These *amakudari* ("descent from heaven") practices enable government to maintain formal and informal authority and control over business via high level retirement transfers (or *shukkō*) to force transfers out of business and into the public sector.

Japanese organizations of all types are likely to utilize aspects (structures and processes) of a holistic management approach. Some examples include *nemawashi* (the process of preparing others through persuasion and sharing of information for a decision-making process which results in a fait accompli); *ringi* (group decision making through memos, meetings and formalized information and authorization gathering which results in a consensus decision); *habatsu* (informal and formal cliques of people which form to maintain information flows, control and power in stratified cross-sections of the organization); and small group decision making (problem solving via meetings and small group discussions).[21]

The model is characterized by a group oriented learning system called *kaizen*, which consists of continuous improvement and total participation in information gathering and decision making. The *kaizen* approach is based on a long-term commitment to improving organizational performance and a generalist approach to training and development at all levels of the organization.[22] In the holistic Japanese model, successes come from small ideas that are incremental improvements on the existing system.[23]

The Japanese systems of continuous training, education and job rotation provide the "totality" of learning and experience required to survive in a complex environment. Systems are nonlinear and inexact. The more an individual is able to understand the whole by synthesizing the different key

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[21] Thomas Rohlen, *For Harmony and Strength: Japanese White Collar Organization in Anthropological Perspective* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), pp. 236-238; and Cole, *Strategies for Learning*.

[22] Cole, *Strategies for Learning*; and Matthews M. Hamabata, *Crested Kimono: Power and Love in the Japanese Business Family* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 88-94.

[23] Ishikawa, *Kaizen*.

dimensions of a process, the more likely the remedy to a problem will not disrupt the continuity and reliability of outcomes in that process.[24]

Through constant communication, education and training, all individuals in an organization must interpret information with the intent of benefiting the organization, and change their behavior to meet this perception. The necessity of being able to adapt one's individual behavior to benefit the whole shows how the Japanese devotion to determination and commitment underlies the continuous change required by the *kaizen* approach. This group decision-making process then serves as a buffer system to random chaotic events and the uncertainty and stress of the environment. A focus on learning, training, and information gathering provides a solid foundation for learning in complex systems while the need for sensing and redesigning facilitates technological development and value.[25]

The Holistic Management of Diversity in Complex Environments

While the holistically managed organizations and systems can often adapt effectively in complex environments, a further review of the Japanese model reveals a number of flaws which make it unsuitable for dealing with "outside" information and "outside" resources.

Issues of Level in Assessing the Holistic Management of Complex Environments

The system complexity placed similar demands on individuals, organizations and the system as a whole but, an explicit consideration of levels or unit of analysis has intentionally been disregarded. This lack of specification of levels is necessary because each component of the system, regardless of their level within the system, must be able to recognize and respond to such demands. This minimal treatment of levels supports Wheatley, who intentionally does not address level issues in her analysis of leadership and organizations, since she uses chaos theory as an encompassing metaphor for all systems, human and non-human, intertwined within an ordered complex universe.[26]

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[24] Rohlen, *For Harmony and Strength*, p. 238.
[25] Arthur M. Whitehill, *Japanese Management: Tradition and Transition* (London: Routledge Press, 1992), pp. 68-81.
[26] Wheatley, "Breathing Life Into Organizations," pp. 6-9.

Diversity and Holistic Management Systems
Holistic management systems shared traits:

> 1. An emphasis on sharing information via total participation, the development of shared meanings throughout the system and the achievement of a consensus.
> 2. A focus on continuous learning for innovation and adaptation.
> 3. Small group decision making which enhances total commitment to the system.

While these aspects of holistic management systems can help organizations and institutions manage a complex environment, each of these aspects has the potential to have a dysfunctional influence on the system's performance.

Table 2 shows the dysfunctional responses which can occur when holistic management systems face "outside" information and "outside" resources.

Table 2 Normal Responses vs. Responses to Diversity in Holistic Management Systems

Normal Response *Information/Resources*	*Response to "Outside"*
Sharing of Information via Total Participation, Shared Meanings and Consensus	Slow Response Time and Decentralization of Responsibility in Decision Making
Focus on Continuous Learning for Innovation and Adaptation	Adherence to the System's Unchanging Set of Norms, Values and Assumptions
Small Group Decision Making to Enhance Commitment to the System	Escalation of Commitment to the System's Failing Course of Action

The Presence of Diversity in the Kobe Earthquake
Considering the potential flaws of a holistic management system that have been identified, an analysis of how Japan's natural disaster preparedness system responded to "outside" information and "outside" resources during the Kobe earthquake will now be presented.

Even though Japan focuses heavily on its preparations for earthquakes, the Kobe earthquake was an unusual event which shocked the nation and the world. The Kobe quake itself was a stochastic event, in that most Japanese experts had expected Japan's next major earthquake to strike Tokyo.[27] Because of the concentration on preparing for an earthquake in Tokyo, few Japanese experts considered the possibility of a major earthquake hitting Kobe.[28] The impact of this stochastic event was magnified by misunderstandings of the first seismograph readings from Kobe. Even though the earthquake "only" registered a 7.2, the quake itself was unusually destructive for its size.[29] This aspect of the quake was an abstract event, since it challenged the technical assumptions and conclusions of the experts monitoring it. The earthquake itself, therefore, was the first of a rapid sequence of stochastic and abstract events which made the Kobe disaster an unusual event.

The Holistic Nature of Japan's Natural Disaster Preparedness System

Even though Kobe was obviously an unexpected occurrence, the people of Japan trusted that its world renowned disaster preparedness system could manage the events of the quake and its aftermath. The Japanese people had just cause for this high level of trust, because the natural disaster preparedness system in Japan is designed to involve decision-makers, technicians, and community leaders from the public and private sector in a holistic fashion which encourages total participation. When a natural disaster occurs in Japan, the system's initial response is to gather accurate and complete information while providing efficient and effective disaster relief. Local authorities in the cities, towns and villages where the disaster occurs are to inspect the damaged area and alert the prefectural (state) authorities, who are responsible for collating all of the information from the local sources. Once the prefectures have processed the information, they issue reports to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and the Fire Prevention Agency (FPA) in the central government. The MHA and FPA then collate the information and report to the National Land Agency (NLA). Finally, the NLA gives a report on the situation to the

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[27] Gregory Clark, "Japan Fiddles While Kobe Burns," *Tokyo Business Today Special Issue* (April 1995): 23-24.

[28] Fukushima, "Lessons from the Quake," p. 48; and B. Powell, "End of the Age of Hubris," *Newsweek* (January 30, 1995), p. 37.

[29] "Killer Quake," *Time* (January 30, 1995): 24-34.

Prime Minister's Office. A parallel reporting channel also runs from local Police Departments to the Prime Minister through similar channels.[30]

This process follows the classic holistic Japanese small group decision making model at the system level. Vital information is collected and analyzed at different levels and stages of the disaster to identify, distribute, share and create a common meaning before it moves up the hierarchy to the top decision making position. This holistic approach to disaster management was something which the Japanese could rely upon to effectively manage such events, since it emphasizes gathering accurate information and achieving shared meanings of the disaster at every level of the system.

When the earthquake devastated Kobe, however, the system failed to produce the necessary and/or appropriate responses to manage the disaster. For example, even though the system stressed how local authorities should establish and maintain the local water, food and emergency supplies, the local police and firefighters needed to carry out these tasks were almost nowhere to be found after the quake hit Kobe. As a result, the water supply was cut off as fires raged uncontrolled for hours. There was an almost immediate shortage of food and emergency supplies. As the disaster preparedness system crumbled, lives were lost, homes destroyed, and families left homeless in the worst disaster to hit Japan in decades.[31] As Gavan McCormack stated, "No measurement, whether of human lives or of physical damage, can represent the scale of the catastrophe, much less the shockwaves it sent through society."[32]

Slow Response Time and Decentralized Decision Making

Holistic management systems rely heavily on consensus decision making when managing complex environments. In the Japanese management model, the vast complexity of organizations and the need to gather massive amounts of information to make decisions has created a heavy reliance on meetings. While this information sharing helps to reduce uncertainty, it also requires large amounts of time and effort. Meetings are held so decision makers can discuss problems and share ideas. The heavy

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[30] Fukunagawa, "Natural Disaster, Unnatural Consequences," pp. 3-5.
[31] Clark, "Japan Fiddles While Kobe Burns," pp. 23-24; "Killer Quake," pp. 32-38; and "Quake Kills Over 1500 in Kansai," pp. 1-3.
[32] McCormack, *The Emptiness of Japanese Affluence*, p. 10.

reliance on sharing of information hinders the system's ability to take swift and decisive actions.

In addition to the heavy reliance on the sharing of information, the holistic Japanese model is also based on the decentralization of responsibility, in which a large number of people have decision making responsibilities in the system. This decision making system is based on the belief that once a consensus is achieved, implementation will be smooth and timely. In the model, the mechanism used to achieve group consensus is designed to absorb the magnitude of the responsibility for data gathering and processing and to act as a buffer to the threat of random occurrences and operator error.[33] This heavy reliance on the sharing of information in a system which depends on the achievement of a consensus before making decisions, will have difficulty responding to a rapid demand to incorporate "outside" information and resources.

When the system faces such a demand, its continued reliance on consensus decision making and sharing of information throughout the system is likely to produce a slow rate of response to the vital need to change and adapt as quickly as possible. The system is also faced with decentralized decision making, which hinders its ability to rapidly consider "outside" information and rapidly employ "outside" resources. In short, the heavy reliance on consensus decision making and the decentralization of the process are barriers to a swift analysis and implementation of "outside" information and resources.

The Slow Rate of Response in Kobe

The reliance on a multi-layered bureaucratic decision-making process made it difficult for the disaster preparedness system to respond quickly and efficiently in the aftermath of the Kobe earthquake. While a number of agencies had authority over the various parts of the system, there was a heavy reliance on shared information. For the first two days following disaster, the only organizations to mobilize and provide disaster relief were the Yakuza crime syndicate, the Buddhist political movement Sōka Gakkai, and some other minor groups.[34]

The local government, police and firefighters of Kobe, on the other hand, were unable to mobilize effectively to provide relief. A key Hyogo Prefectural police facility, including the emergency command and

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[33] Cole, *Strategies for Learning*.
[34] Hirsh, "Japan," pp. 20-23.

information operation center, had been relocated to make room for land development, and thus was unable to provide any assistance in the aftermath of the quake. This caused some of the confusion and lack of traffic control in the immediate aftermath.[35] In the hard hit center of the Nada-ward, almost 48 hours had passed after the earthquake before the first troops from the national Self Defense Forces (SDF) arrived. Within those 48 hours, most of the area's houses burnt to the ground, while people trapped beneath building rubble suffocated. Because of this inability and unwillingness to take action, there were even reports of large scale dehydration and starvation.[36]

This Kobe example shows how the information sharing and total participation upon which the Japanese holistic management model depends can produce dysfunctional responses to the demands to consider "outside" information. There is no mechanism in the system for rapid decision making at the proper levels of authority. It is interesting to note that in Kobe, the only rapid decisions were made by people, groups and organizations that were virtually outside the system.

Adherence to the System's Unchanging Norms, Values, and Assumptions

Just as consensus and the sharing of information have potential positive and negative effects when holistic systems manage in complex environments, the emphasis on continuous learning also has a number of potential benefits and risks. While learning enables the system to make continuous modifications in response to the changing environment, the emphasis on learning can be dysfunctional when it socializes individuals in the system to adhere to the beliefs, values and assumptions of the system.[37]

Socialization refers to the processes by which individuals acquire positive affective and evaluative orientations toward aspects of a system while acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills to operate effectively in the system. In holistic systems, it corresponds with the continuous learning process in which a variety of manual, interpersonal, perceptual and problem solving skills are developed. When individuals rely heavily on continuous learning in a system, socialization can lead to a high level of understanding

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[35] McCormack, *The Emptiness of Japanese Affluence*, pp. 146-157.

[36] "Killer Quake," pp. 32-33.

[37] Argyris, *On Organizational Learning*, pp. 68-75.

of the system, which in turn causes individuals to adhere to the system's "local" framework of norms, values, and assumptions.[38]

When socialization facilitates a commitment to the system and a commitment to further learning, it can also lead to an inability to properly consider relevant outside information when facing an unusual event. "Relevant outside information" is defined as any information, individual or activity which is not currently part of a system, but relevant to the task(s) faced by the system. This inability to properly consider relevant outside information consists not only of a reluctance to analyze outside information, but also includes a disdain for accepting assistance from actors outside of the system and an aversion to using activities which are not already part of the system.

When the system faces a demand to rapidly consider "relevant outside information," the fact that individuals within the system have been socialized through continuous learning to adhere to the system's local framework of norms, values and assumptions is likely to produce a great deal of reluctance toward the consideration and use of such information when managing the crisis. This negative aspect of a holistic system causes the system to ignore information and/or assistance from sources outside of the system which could potentially help the system respond to the event. It must be emphasized this reluctance exists simply because individuals within the system have been conditioned to adhere to the system's localized framework of norms, values and assumptions.

The Refusal to Consider Outside Information in Kobe

The response of the individuals in the natural disaster preparedness system when presented with "outside" information and the opportunity for "outside" help was predictable in that the system ignored "outside" information and refused "outside" help. Even though there was a tremendous shortage of medical supplies and a great need for medical attention among the victims of Kobe, Japanese bureaucrats refused to accept medicine donated by foreign countries and made it extremely difficult for foreign relief personnel to assist the victims of Kobe. Amazingly enough, as heavily undermanned searches for survivors were being conducted, the Japanese government refused to allow teams of internationally renowned

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[38] Robert J. Smith, *Japanese Society: Tradition, Self and the Social Order* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 165.

rescue dogs from Switzerland to participate in the relief efforts.[39] In the end, of the sixty-two offers of assistance that were made from foreign governments, only twenty were accepted. As McCormack notes in his assessment of the Hyogo Prefectural government's refusal to accept an Okayama businessman's generous offer of a load of tatami mats for the refugees, this same spirit of refusal to accept "outside" assistance even permeated into local levels.[40]

This refusal to accept "outside" help stems from the deeply ingrained national pride and the ethic of self-sufficiency which decision makers in the natural disaster preparedness system were socialized to adhere to and value. The continuous learning which had been facilitated during the system's previous preparations for disasters created an almost unfailing trust and belief in the system which did not fade, even in the face of disaster. This was especially the case when the Japanese absolutely refused help from countries which the Japanese perceived as "less developed."[41] It appears that even though the system did not produce its intended response, it would have been a greater tragedy to accept help from a source that was clearly inferior to what the Japanese system was supposed to provide.

Escalation of Commitment to the System's Failing Course of Action

In addition to the socialization of a powerful sense of loyalty to "the way things are done" by the system, one of the primary structures of holistic management systems produces a dysfunctional response when the system faces a demand to consider and include "outside" information and resources. One of the most significant components of the informal structure in the holistic Japanese management model is its heavy reliance on group decision making. This model relies on the continuous sharing of information, experiences, and opinions of all group members in the decisions which affect the group and the organization. This group decision making structure is driven by a sense of total commitment of group members to their leader and vice-versa.[42]

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[39] Begley, "Killer Quakes," pp. 32-33; Fukunagawa, "Natural Disaster, Unnatural Consequences," pp. 4-8; and Robert Orr, "An Eyewitness Account of Relief Efforts After the Great Hanshin Earthquake," *Tokyo Business Today Special Issue* (April 13, 1995), p. 13.

[40] McCormack, *The Emptiness of Japanese Affluence*, pp. 4-5.

[41] Chinone, "The Tokyo Earthquake: Not 'If' but 'When,'" pp. 8-12.

[42] Ishikawa, *Kaizen*; and Hamabata, *Crested Kimono*.

These groups are bound together by highly emotional and personal ties, in which individual identity is shaped by one's group membership. The fact that individuals are intensely committed to their groups, leaders and organizations makes decision making in holistic systems a matter of obtaining and sustaining the support of the small groups which make up the greater whole. Having the support of the small groups within the greater whole is essential, because they drive the holistic Japanese management model.[43] While this level of commitment and loyalty to one's groups within a system is one of the reasons holistic management systems are able to produce such effects as commitment to the whole and consensus decision making, this absolute loyalty to the greater whole also has the potential to hinder the system's ability to identify and to react appropriately when the system is following a failing course of action.

The idea that extreme loyalty and commitment to a greater whole produce a reluctance to identify or abandon a system's failing course of action is based on prospect theory which holds that people will "throw good money after bad."[44] Prospect theory suggests those "sunk cost effects" naturally occur once an investment in money, effort or time has been made, since individuals are reluctant to halt a failing course of action after they have a "personal stake" in the outcome of the action.[45]

This "sunk cost effect" manifests itself in organizations when individual actors become locked into a costly course of action by beginning a cycle of escalating commitment in an attempt to recoup their losses.[46] When individuals become committed to failing courses of action, negative consequences will actually cause decision makers to increase their commitment of resources and undergo the risk of further negative consequences. While escalation starts because of the individual need to

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[43] Whitehill, *Japanese Management*.

[44] Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky, "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision Making Under Risk," *Econometrica* 47 (1979): 263-291.

[45] Hal R. Arkes and Cynthia Blumer, "The Psychology of Sunk Cost," *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 35 (1985): 124-140.

[46] Barry M. Staw, "The Escalation of Commitment to a Course of Action," *Academy of Management Review* 6 (1981): 577-587.

avoid failure, it actually can evolve into a structurally supported behavior if an individual's group, organization or institution supports their behavior.[47]

While this concept has been studied at the individual and organizational levels, it can easily be argued that the same phenomenon occurs at the system level, particularly when holistic management systems face a demand for the rapid consideration and use of "outside" information and resources. A holistic management system's first response, naturally, is to rely on how the system has worked in the past to deal with such events. This response is natural, because individuals within the system have an intense feeling of loyalty to their groups, organizations, and the system as a whole. As a result, the strong commitment to the whole makes it difficult for the system to change its behavior, even if its response to the presence of "outside" information is a complete failure. Escalation of commitment, therefore, is a naturally occurring phenomenon when holistic management systems must rapidly consider and use information and resources which have not traditionally been considered as "part of the system."

Escalation of commitment is typical to decision making in a number of circumstances. When people make choices under risk and find themselves losing initially, they may tend to choose riskier actions that may even have negative expected gains if there is a chance to make up for some prior losses.[48] For example, this behavior has been documented with losing stock market investors,[49] troubled firms,[50] gamblers,[51] software projects,[52]

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[47] Joel Brockner and Jerry Z. Rubin, *Entrapment in Escalating Conflicts: A Social Psychological Analysis* (New York: Springer Verlag, 1985), pp. 247-266; Jerry Ross and Barry M. Staw, "Expo 86: An Escalation Prototype," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 31 (1986): 274-297; Barry M. Staw and Jerry Ross, "Understanding Behavior in Escalating Situations," *Science* 246 (1989): 216-220; and Glen Whyte, "Escalating Commitment in Individual and Group Decision Making: A Prospect Theory Approach," *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 54 (1993): 430-455.

[48] See Irving L. Janis and Leon Mann, *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice and Commitment* (New York: The Free Press, 1977), pp. 208-216; and Barry M. Staw, "The Escalation of Commitment: An Update and Appraisal," in Zur Shapira, ed., *Organizational Decision Making* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 577-587.

[49] Asghar Zardkoohi, "Response: Do Real Options Lead to Escalation of Commitment?" *Academy of Management Review* 29/1 (2004): 111-119;

workers facing a wage cut,[53] and purchasers who pay full price (or a "sunk cost") for theatre tickets.[54]

Escalation of Commitment in Kobe

The response of Japan's Prime Minister and his cabinet to the initial reports that the disaster preparedness system was failing in its management of the Kobe earthquake is an excellent example of how a holistic management system produces escalation of commitment. A report by the Japanese newspaper, the *Daily Yomiuri*, suggests the cabinet ministers became aware that an earthquake had struck Kobe from television reports during a previously scheduled cabinet meeting which took place shortly after the quake hit Kobe.[55] It is important to note the Japanese television reports, at this time, were emphasizing the mass destruction which had occurred in Kobe, as well as ongoing suffering due to the

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Hersh Shefrin and Meir Statman, "The Disposition to Sell Winners too Early and Ride Losers Too Long: Theory and Evidence," *Journal of Finance* 40 (1985): 777-790; Terrance Odean, "Are Investors Reluctant to Realize their Losses?" *The Journal of Finance* 53/5 (1998): 1775-1798; and Martin Weber and Colin Camerer, "The Disposition Effect in Securities Trading: An Experimental Analysis," *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization* 33 (1998): 167-184.

[50] Edward H. Bowman, "A Risk/Return Paradox for Strategic Management," *Sloan Management Review* (Spring 1980): 17-31; and Edward H. Bowman, "Risk Seeking by Troubled Firms," *Sloan Management Review* (Summer 1982): 33-42.

[51] William H. McGlothlin, "Stability of Choices Among Certain Alternatives," *American Journal of Psychology* 69 (1956): 604-615; and Mukhtar Ali, "Probability and Utility Estimates for Racetrack Bettors," *Journal of Political Economy* 85 (1977): 803-815.

[52] Arjen Wassenaar, "A Cross-Cultural Study of Escalation of Commitment Behavior in Software Projects," *MIS Quarterly* (June 1, 2000): 31-37.

[53] John Shea, "Union Contracts and the Life-Cycle/Permanent Income Hypothesis," *American Economic Review* 85 (1995): 186-200; and David Bowman, Deborah Minehart, and Matthew Rabin, "Loss Aversion in a Consumption-Savings Model," *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization* 38/2 (1999): 155-178.

[54] Arkes and Blumer, "The Psychology of Sunk Cost," pp. 124-140.

[55] "Quake Kills Over 1500 in Kansai," pp. 1-2.

inadequate disaster relief efforts. It can be argued, therefore, that the ministers were receiving information which strongly suggested that the earthquake preparedness system was not responding properly. While the situation in Kobe was not the focus of the meeting, the discussion of who was responsible for handling the disaster suggests the existence of escalation of commitment to the system's failing course of action.

Vice Chief Cabinet Secretary Ishihara Nobuo argued that the direction of relief efforts following an earthquake came under the authority of the Anti-Disaster Bureau of the National Land Agency, which was under the control of Ozawa Kiyoshi. Ozawa's response to Ishihara's claim, as well as the suggestion of another minister who felt that Ozawa ought to be sent to inspect the damage, was "I don't think it's necessary for me to go that far just yet. We have to watch the situation for a little while."

While Ozawa's reaction may be dismissed in other circumstances as an exercise of caution and judgment in support of the way the system works, it is indicative of the manner in which Kobe was handled by the group of leaders who had the most power and authority to make a difference in how it was managed. When Secretary Ishihara revealed the governor of Hyogo Prefecture, where Kobe is located, had issued a request for a dispatch from the Self-Defense Forces, Defense Agency Chief Tamazawa Tokuichiro simply stated he was not concerned about the matter since his agency has not yet received any report. Tamazawa argued "The earthquake occurred at about 6:00 a.m. Why has the notification been delayed for so long? Maybe it's not such a big thing. Can we really dispatch men from the SDF?"

It can be argued the ministers had fallen into an escalation of commitment to the failing effort of the natural disaster preparedness system since Ozawa's evaluation of Kobe essentially became the conclusion of the Cabinet meeting. Even though they had witnessed the mass destruction that was ongoing in Kobe, none of the ministers exhibited a sense of urgency in regard to providing a proper response to the situation. The ministers apparently decided to maintain their belief and trust in the system, even though the system was not providing effective relief as more people were dying and homes were destroyed. Although he was aware that Kobe was in the midst of a terrible disaster, the Prime Minister refused to divert his attention from his normal schedule. Over the course of the day of the earthquake, he canceled only one of his regularly scheduled appointments to deal with the earthquake, apparently preferring to let the system take care of

the disaster, even though it was obvious that the system was not responding properly. By the end of this first day, the death toll in Kobe exceeded 1,000.

The End Result of the Holistic System's Response to Kobe, an Unusual Event

The natural disaster preparedness system's response to Kobe, in which the system faced numerous demands to consider and use "outside" information and resources, shows how and when holistic management systems have difficulty managing in complex environments. Table 3 below shows the types of responses which were both necessary to manage a disaster like Kobe and expected from the holistic natural disaster preparedness system, as well as the system's actual response.

Table 3 An Overall Evaluation of the System's Response to Kobe

What Was Needed to Manage the Disaster	*How the System Managed the Disaster*
Proper Identification of the Impact of the Earthquake and a Swift and Decisive Response at the Local Level	A Mis-diagnosis of the True Magnitude of the Earthquake and an Inadequate Response at the Local Level in Regard to Securing and Maintaining Necessary Supplies
Willingness to Accept All Sources of Aid, Particularly When the Outside Sources Provided Items and Services Which Were Scarce in Japan	Reluctance to Consider "Outside" Sources of Aid and Assistance, Particularly if It Was Offered by a Nation Which Was Perceived as "Inferior" to Japan
Willingness by Decision Makers at All Levels, Particularly at the National Level, to Critically Evaluate the System's Response to the Disaster and Make Necessary Adjustments	Continued Trust in and Commitment to the Natural Disaster Preparedness System at All Levels, Even Though Its Response to the Disaster Was Obviously Inadequate

The system's slow response time and failure to take swift and decisive actions led to mass death and destruction in the aftermath of the

Kobe earthquake. The system's refusal to accept help from any source "outside" of the system caused the Japanese to forgo the use of a vast amount of supplies and services which could have been a tremendous help to the disaster relief effort in Kobe. Finally, the system's refusal to admit the failure of the disaster management effort and make changes led to the unnecessary loss of lives and homes. Quite simply, the holistic natural disaster preparedness system was ill-equipped to handle this demand to rapidly acknowledge and use "outside" information. While the Kobe case and Japanese management models have been emphasized, the theory behind the failure can be generalized to predict and explain how holistic management models produce inadequate and/or inappropriate responses when facing these situations.

Potential Challenges to the Analysis

Due to the intricacy of complex environments and the vast number of interpretations of the Japanese management model and Hanshin Daishinsai, there will naturally be a number of challenges to the claims made in this interpretation. For example, a challenge could possibly be made on the grounds that the use of the Kobe case as an example of a management failure which is the product of an inherent flaw of the holistic management approach was actually the result of a failure in the political leadership of the Japanese politicians and bureaucratic officials. Another lens which could be applied both to our critique of the holistic management model, as well as the Kobe case, is that of administrative ethics. This theory implicitly considers the fair and/or legitimate use of resources; and the Kobe case, in particular, deals with a situation where human life was lost as a result of administrative failure. These are interesting and important ethical concerns to be considered.

An alternative explanation to the idea that escalation of commitment in holistically managed systems leads to paralysis in times of crisis is the phenomenon of "bystander" behavior. According to this approach, an inability to respond in time of crisis is not the product of devotion to the system, but rather the result of an ignorance of or an unwillingness to take responsibility to intervene. In fact, the inaction could be part of the neoclassical behavior of individuals, who in group settings have a diffusion of responsibility for helping along with a diffusion of blame for not helping so they do not behave altruistically. Another possibility is someone unperceived has already begun a helping action so the individual will conform to the group by not helping. In addition, the

conformity to the group can be explained from an economic viewpoint in terms of maximizing individual utility by not going against the group norms.[56]

Differing national culture may also be a reason for agency effects and escalation of commitment. Stephen Salter and David Sharp agree that case evidence indicates apparently small cultural differences, even between the United States and Canada, is noted, and the effect of adverse selection conditions was stronger among managers from the more individualistic U.S. society.[57] Scott Geiger, Christopher Robertson, and John Irwin also studied the impact of cultural values on escalation of commitment and called for further research to study the relationship between cultural dimensions and determine which cultures are more likely to experience escalating commitment.[58] Sharp and Salter point to Daiwa (a Japanese bank in the U.S.) as an international example of escalation of commitment,[59] while other studies provide evidence that Asian subjects demonstrate higher levels

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[56] See for example Bibb Latane and John M. Darley, "Group Inhibition of Bystander Intervention in Emergencies," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 10/3 (1968): 215-221; John M. Darley and Bibb Latane, "Bystander Intervention in Emergencies: Diffusion of Responsibility," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 8/4 (1968): 377-383; Bibb Latane and Judith Rodin, "A Lady in Distress: Inhibiting Effects of Friends and Strangers on Bystander Intervention," *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 5 (1969): 189-202; and Marilyn M. Helms and Ziad Keilany, "Beyond Self Interest: A Reexamination of Neoclassical Economics in Group Settings," *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization* 15 (1991): 187-200.

[57] Stephen B. Salter and David J. Sharp, "Agency Effects and Escalation of Commitment: Do Small National Culture Differences Matter?" *The International Journal of Accounting* 36/1 (2001): 33-45.

[58] Scott W. Geiger, Christopher J. Robertson, and John G. Irwin, "The Impact of Cultural Values on Escalation of Commitment," *International Journal of Organizational Analysis* 6/2 (1998): 165-176.

[59] David J. Sharp and Stephen B. Salter, "Project Escalation and Sunk Costs: A Test of the International Generalizability of Agency and Prospect Theories," *Journal of International Business Studies* 28/1 (1997): 101-121.

of overconfidence in general knowledge tasks and might be expected to be more willing to escalate commitment to risky projects.[60]

Finally, our assessment of the Kobe case did not explicitly consider the behavior of business factors in response to Hanshin Daishinsai. There were a number of examples of businesses which responded in a similarly inappropriate and ineffective manner. For example, a large Japanese bank with outlets in the affected areas implemented relief operations in Osaka dispatching volunteers to Kobe to offer assistance to bank employees affected by the quake. This contributed to the massive delays and gridlock on the national highways going into Kobe that prevented relief workers and supplies from entering the area. In addition, the bank (and numerous other firms) set up phone relays between Osaka and Kobe to achieve constant communication via cellular phone between both offices. This contributed to the already overloaded phone lines and severely hindered communication among relief organizations. The bank even attempted to provide housing and food and medical care for employees affected by the quake. The problem with this well-intentioned effort was that the main Osaka office was located several kilometers away, making it nearly impossible for the employees to reach the desperately needed supplies. This shows how holistically managed business organizations faced the same types of "management problems" as the Natural Disaster Preparedness System in responding to the Kobe quake.

Lessons from Kobe: the Need to Incorporate "Outside" Views

The effective management of diversity is imperative if an organization or system wants to operate effectively in the global business environment. Today's organizations face many difficult and complex issues to reduce uncertainty, to change and adapt rapidly and to increase the organization's ability to compete globally. To survive in such a diverse environment, organizations must be equipped with a management system to

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[60] J. Frank Yates, Ying Zhu, David L. Ronis, Deng-Fend Wang, Hiromi Shinotsuka and Masanao Toda, "Probability Judgment Accuracy: China, Japan, and the United States," *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 43/2 (1989): 145-171; and J. Frank Yates, Ju-Whei Lee and Hiromi Shinotsuka, "Beliefs About Overconfidence, Including its Cross-National Variation," *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 65/2 (1996): 138-147.

support learning and facilitate continuous growth and development, as well as promote flexibility when managing diversity.

The increasing interdependencies among all components of a system in complex environments, has created a management imperative toward more holistic models of management. Recent research, theory development and model application have pointed toward the many advantages of holistic management approaches with a focus on total participation, information sharing, continuous learning, and commitment to the system as ideal for "matching wits" with the complex environment. Margaret Wheatley, Peter Sense, Karl Weick and others have all called for the increased diffusion of information and participation in contemporary organizations, so the effects of the complex environment can be efficiently and effectively managed in a manner which leads to competitive advantage.

The ideal model of holistic management, however, may be unattainable. The Japanese management model presents an excellent example of the practical application of many of the fundamental elements of a holistic model. Yet, the model's application to the Kobe earthquake, revealed certain aspects of the holistic model that hindered, rather than helped, the system's ability to produce rapid change and adaptation. In attempting to achieve totality, sharing of learning, and commitment to the system, the Japanese model actually resulted in a disastrous outcome. Clearly, this holistic management model was not only unable to absorb the initial shock, but was also ill-designed to function effectively in its aftermath.

In theory, a "total" approach to issues of uncertainty may logically make sense. If a system considers and prepares for all possible contingencies, then nothing will be left to chance. The danger in this thinking lies in the belief there is a way to consider and prepare for all possible contingencies. As the Kobe disaster has shown, the misguided belief that the system can and will manage anything can lead to disastrous results.

Areas for Future Research

A comparison of other disasters and large-scale events is needed to further validate the bureaucratic models of management that rely on commitment and the forces that contribute to the escalation of commitment. The war and U.S. occupation in Iraq may be another example of a bureaucratic system with an escalating commitment to a course of action. The September 11 events of 2001 on the surface seem to exhibit an example

of an opposite or entrepreneurial system, which absorbs shock events better. The September 11 events, characterized by fast action, 24 hour work, planning meetings between shifts, central control augmented with volunteers, and control centers to focus briefings as well as debate led to more effective decision making and action than is typically seen in a rigidly controlled system. Also, with no real centralized planning in place for such an unexpected terrorist attack, the response had to rely on entrepreneurial systems and to take gambles and strive to improve upon ongoing conventions. Further study into such events, particularly the idiosyncratic innovative activities, is needed, particularly in times of intense crisis when stochastic events bombard a system.[61]

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[61] See Aviad Heifetz and Yoram Hamo, "An Evolutionary Perspective on Goal Seeking and Escalation of Commitment," *California Institute Of Technology, Division of the Humanities and Social Sciences* 1109 (2001): 1-17.

SYMBIOTIC CONFLICT IN *SNOW COUNTRY*

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The plot structure of *Snow Country* [Yukiguni] (1935-1948 [1971]) by Kawabata Yasunari appears irregular because the story reaches its climax just a few pages into the story with the first mirror scene as an aesthetic moment that at once determines the lyrical nature of the entire work and reveals the author's poetics.[1] Another focal point occurs at the very end in the form of a fire in snow, which critics call the story's only dynamic, sensational scene.[2] In spite of its conventionally climactic position, however, the fire scene has caused authorial uneasiness and interpretative debate. This is partly due to the fact that the story reaches its conclusion even more abruptly than generally accepted with an open ending, and partly to the unreal nature of character portrayals and the scene itself. Unless textual negligence and eventual abandonment on the author's part account for such termination, the last scene has to justify itself with a certain basis for the position it assumes. Symbols centering on the two main female characters, which run entwined throughout the story, give coherence not only to the ambiguous ending but also to the apparently random plot structure.

Kawabata's ambivalence toward the ending is well documented in many of his somewhat inconsistent remarks. For instance, when he was writing the story's early version in 1937, he says that "he has had an idea about the last section [yet to be written after the 'The Pillow of Fire' installment] for quite a long time." But he now finds it "hard to write that part" because he feels that would be "more like a superfluous addition."[3] A

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[1] See Masaki Mori, "Kawabata's Mirrored Poetics," *Japan Studies Review* 8 (2004): 51-68.

[2] Hasegawa Izumi, *Kawabata Yasunari: Sono ai to bi to shi*, Tomo Sensho (Tokyo: Shufu no tomo sha, 1978), p. 106; Hasegawa Izumi, *Kawabata Yasunari ronkō*, Hasegawa Izumi chosaku sen, vol. 5 (Tokyo: Meiji shoin, 1991), p. 310; and Hirayama Mitsuo, "*Yukiguni* no kyo to jitsu," *Kawabata Yasunari: Nihon no bigaku*, Nihon bungaku kenkyū shiryō shinshū, vol. 27, ed. Hatori Tetsuya (Tokyo: Yūseidō, 1990), p. 131.

[3] Kawabata Yasunari, "*Hana no waltz* to *Yukiguni*," 1937, in Inoue Yasushi, Nakamura Mitsuo, and Yamamoto Kenkichi, eds., *Kawabata Yasunari*

decade later after World War II, he states that, "while he was writing the early parts, the materials for the later section were just forming." Calling the piece "a kind of work terminable at any moment," he confesses to the uneasiness he nevertheless felt about the incomplete condition of the prewar version, citing its "ill correspondence between beginning and end." Then, asserting that "he had the fire scene in mind since he was writing a part before the middle," he comments on the newly finished version that "many strains and difficulties were inevitable after a blank of ten years." He even wonders if "it might have been better without a new addition."[4] Toward the end of his career about twenty years later, however, he reminisces, saying that "he had the idea of correspondence between beginning and end before he started writing [the story]." He claims to have made all at once the plan to start with "entering the Snow Country" that is white even at night with snow accumulation and to end with "looking up at the Milky Way at the fire scene in snow."[5] Thus, although the author himself is not certain when he conceived the idea of a fire scene, he stresses the importance of that scene for the story's conclusion. He also repeatedly expresses the necessity of the ending to correspond well with the beginning and a less than satisfactory feeling about the extended, final version.

The entire plot also reveals irregularity. Kawabata often started writing a short story, and, realizing still unexhausted lyricism, he added one sequence after another over years in the form of independent short pieces without necessarily having a structurally solid plan in mind. Taking full advantage of the magazine publication that favors short pieces and a long work in monthly installments, he wrote some of his novels in this manner, of which *Snow Country* is a typical example. As a result, the plot of this novel, which is easy to summarize, sounds haphazard and uneventful. A man comes to a hot spring resort in early winter to see a young geisha while remembering their first encounter the previous spring. After a short stay, he departs. He comes back in autumn, only to leave her again at the onset of winter. Another woman is involved, but her presence is not essential to the chain of episodes. Consequently, Kobayashi Hideo argues that Kawabata

zenshū, vol. 33 (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1982), p. 123. All translations from Kawabata's writings other than *Snow Country* are mine.

[4] Kawabata, "Dokuei jimei," 1949, in *Kawabata Yasunari zenshū* 33: 387-389.

[5] Kawabata, "*Yukiguni* ni tsuite," 1968, in *Kawabata Yasunari zenshū* 33: 195.

"has not written even a single novel" because he is not interested at all in such important, novelistic elements as social reality, its influence on people, and conflict between individuals.[6]

Against this view that deems the opus devoid of a meaningful plot and deficient as a novel, one can attempt to justify Kawabata as not constrained by the Aristotelian plot structure. Conventional reliance on a coherent chain of action has lost its validity in modernism and postmodernism after centuries of experimentation with a novel's story line. Kawabata himself wrote several modernistic pieces, such as *Crystal Fantasy* [Suishō gensō] (1931), that employs a Joycean stream of consciousness. Furthermore, in Kawabata's case, one cannot ignore the influence of the Japanese literary tradition from the Heian period on. In the fundamentally lyric-based literary tradition, a prose piece well structured with a beginning, a middle body, and especially a clear-cut ending appears highly artificial and untrue to life, unlike the drama-oriented Western counterpart. In addition, Kawabata's manner of composition is ascribable to his familiarity with short forms of Japanese poetic tradition, including *tanka*, *haiku*, and *renga*. He wrote a great number of very short stories, which he called palm-of-the-hand stories (*tenohira no shōsetsu*). Because of their extreme brevity, they lack a well-developed plot, often aiming rather at an impressionistic, lyrical effect. In a sense, he made some of his novels by combining palm-of-the-hand-like stories in a *renga* fashion.[7] For these reasons, classical and modern, the lack of a seamlessly developing plot in many of Kawabata's works should be considered not a shortcoming inherent in his writing method but simply an artistic device or a convention tinged with idiosyncrasy.

The view that dwells on the apparently random plot structure of *Snow Country* as defective can also be altered by demonstrating that the story does have coherent inevitability even though it is not based on the action of characters. As Kawabata's remarks cited above indicate, the

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[6] Kobayashi Hideo, *Bungei hyōron*, vol. 2, Chikuma sōsho, vol. 210 (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1974), p. 295. All translations from Japanese secondary sources are mine.

[7] Concerning this point, see, for instance, Anthony V. Liman, "Kawabata's Lyrical Mode in *Snow Country*," *Monumenta Nipponica* 26/3-4 (1971): 271-272; Hasegawa, *Kawabata Yasunari*, p. 107; and Iwata Mitsuko, *Kawabata bungaku no shosō: Kindai no yūen* (Tokyo: Ōfūsha, 1983), p. 184.

author's creative mind felt an underlying necessity that compels the story as a whole to have certain consistency and harmony, but not the oppositions that might appear on the plot level. The domain of symbols that center on the two female characters, Yoko and Komako, offers a possibility of such reading. Concerning them, Kawabata testifies that, while Yoko is a product of his pure imagination, Komako is modeled on someone even though her characterization notably differs from the actual model.[8] Relevant here is not a search for a model's biographical data but the contrast that Komako's physical origin offers with Yoko's un-physical source.

   At the beginning of the novel, the reader finds Yoko's presence on the train that comes out of a long tunnel into a snow-covered region at dusk. At this stage, Komako, referred to only as "the woman" in Shimamura's recollection and for many pages to come, is conspicuously missing, while the assiduous care for a sick, young man by "the girl," that is, Yoko, has been attracting his attention for a few hours. This situation is exceptional. For the rest of the novel, the story unfolds Shimamura's dragging relation with Komako, and Yoko's sporadic appearance tends to incite her displeasure. Nevertheless, the initial scene actually highlights Yoko's segmented beauty and Komako's recollected physicality. During his solitary ride on the train, Shimamura attempts to remember the woman, meaning Komako, in vain. With nothing else to do, he plays with his left hand and thinks that the hand alone, especially its index finger, "seemed to have a vital and immediate memory of the woman he was going to see."[9] In sharp contrast to this implied, keen sensuality of Komako's body, Yoko is viewed as the possessor of beauty detached from the body. Just a few lines after the story's onset, Shimamura is entranced to hear her call to a station master out of a nearby window with a voice that is later described repeatedly as clear and beautiful. Three hours earlier at twilight, she similarly impresses him with a sense of "something coolly piercing about her beauty." Then, surprised to see one of her eyes reflected on the half transparent window, he is even more moved "at the inexpressible beauty," "not of this world," when "a distant, cold light" in the background mountains glimmers through the

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[8] Kawabata repeatedly made this statement. See, for instance, his "Dokuei jimei," pp. 387-388.
[9] Kawabata Yasunari, *Snow Country*, trans. Edward G. Seidensticker (New York: Vintage International, 1996), p. 7. Unless otherwise noted, all references to this text are to this edition.

pupil.[10] Thus, already at the beginning of the story, Komako's tangible being is clearly contrasted to Yoko's aerial nature.

Komako stands for passion of the desiring/desired body, whereas Yoko is a voice or a cold, distant light without a body. Shimamura stands between them at first as an observer of their unresolved conflict concerning Yukio who is the sick young man on the train, then increasingly as the object of their rivalry. In other words, the man with the narrative perspective himself functions as a half-transparent mirror that reflects on his consciousness the evolving dynamism between two female forces, or as a camera lens that selectively determines the framework and all the detail of composition in it.[11] Significantly, however, the two women are closely related to each other rather than being simply contrasted as opposites. Suggestive of their correlation, Shimamura suddenly encounters Yoko's mirrored eye when he wipes the steam-clouded window with the forefinger of his left hand that alone assures him tactually of Komako's existence in recollection. Both Komako and Yoko combine, in reverse proportions, a quality of heat-induced intensity with the snowy nature of coldness. This paradox associating the two women, which can be traced throughout, defines the story's symbolic structure, and the women attract each other toward an eventual convergence, with Shimamura's consciousness positioning itself as a medium for resolving their almost elemental confrontation.

Several levels of this symbolism involve the two females, starting with their names. While the name Yoko (*yō*=leaf) suggests static, fragile, non-animal life, Komako (*koma*=horse), the occupational sobriquet of the other woman whose real name is never given, readily stands for unrestrained vitality in the body and emotions. More important than the names is what the two women are. Komako is a geisha, a professional who performs entertaining arts, and who sells her acquired talents to a customer like Shimamura who can afford her time-measured service. In contrast,

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[10] Kawabata, *Snow Country*, pp. 8-10.

[11] Stating that "[o]bviously, the camera is Shimamura," Richard Torrance discusses Kawabata's interest in cinema, including the usage of "[a] technique resembling montage," in "Popular Languages in *Yukiguni*," in Alan Tansman and Dennis Washburn, eds., *Studies in Modern Japanese Literature: Essays and Translations in Honor of Edwin McClellan* (Ann Arbor, MI: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 1997), pp. 252-254.

Yoko is presented as a girl with no substantial merit. Apart from her claim to have been a would-be nurse in Tokyo, she does not have any specialized skills, intermittently working either in non-field odd agricultural labor or in non-customer-serving functions at a hot spring inn. Unlike Komako who has become a geisha to pay for Yukio's medical bills and might also support her unsteady income, she is free insomuch as she is not bound to any profession by a contract or a debt. Despite little difference in age, Yoko is essentially an artless late teenager whose undeveloped, yet earnest mentality verges on idiocy or childlike simplicity, while Komako is a young adult thoroughly familiar with the way of the world. Many interspersed references, including those to dying insects and a senior co-worker named Kikuyū who quits her job because of trouble with a man, foreshadow Komako's fated maturation as a woman of unfortunate circumstances.[12] Thus, in terms of occupations, financial obligation, and maturity, they stand in sharp contrast to each other.

The difference typically manifests itself in what kinds of songs the two women sing. At one point, Komako performs for Shimamura one of the traditional geisha repertoire that she has practiced all by herself through radio and music scores in the absence of an able teaching master. She accompanies her song with a stringed instrument, the *shamisen*, which is another traditional geisha attribute. She is expected to learn how to play it. Her strong-willed professionalism in a situation where her efforts can hardly be rewarded or appreciated strikes Shimamura as futilely beautiful, a main sentiment he repeatedly feels about her way of life. In comparison, he hears Yoko singing twice in the story: during his walk when she is thrashing red beans on the roadside; and then in the hotel when she helps a child of the hotel owner to take a bath. On both occasions, Yoko's songs are simple folk songs that she supposedly learned artlessly in her childhood and has the habit of singing to herself while engaged in some tasks. In fact, from the very first moment she calls to the station master out of a train window, Shimamura tends to hear her voice as a kind of natural music that does not require any training.

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[12] As to Kikuyū as an adumbration of the future Komako, see Hirayama Mitsuo, "*Yukiguni* nenritsu ron no shiten kara," *Kyojitsu no himaku: Yukiguni, Kōgen, Bokka*, in Kawabata bungaku kenkyūkai ed., Kawabata Yasunari kenkyū sōsho, vol. 5 (Tokyo: Kyōiku shuppan sentaa, 1979), pp. 20-21; and Tsuruta Kin'ya, *Kawabata Yasunari no geijutsu: Junsui to kyūsai*, Kokubungaku kenkyū sōsho (Tokyo: Meiji shoin, 1981), pp. 83-84.

Shimamura gets attracted not to Yoko's physical presence as a whole but to her voice as well as to her eyes. While, as a mode of professional entertainment, Komako's singing presupposes an audience even though a rural resort area does not abound in music connoisseurship, Yoko does not sing on any public occasion. Shimamura overhears her songs that are open to anybody who happens to be nearby. This demonstrates her essential aloofness from others. Even when he finds himself face to face with her, he is at once fascinated and kept away by her eyes that he always feels are piercingly beautiful. In addition to the glimmering eyes, her mask-like, exceedingly earnest face short of expressed emotions helps to keep him at a distance. Her aloofness thus produced is not coincidental. Compared with almost ever-present Komako, Yoko is basically absent from the story except for short, infrequent appearances. In this way, in spite of being an individual character, she is actually represented by two elements of the body alone, a trait that reminds us of one of Kawabata's later works, *The Arm* [Kataude] (1963). But, unlike the detached arm that nevertheless persists to imply the rest of the absent body in the novella, Yoko's voice and the light of her eyes are not body parts but unsubstantial acoustic waves and optical, reflected rays that emanate from the body. Komako's physical features are intimately observed, and even her voice represents "an extended vibration of her flesh."[13] In sharp contrast, Yoko embodies, without a solid body, "the star on the night sky" as a clear light that flickers in the distance,[14] or a haunting echo to which her beautiful voice is often compared.[15] The author perceives her character metaphorically "blinking on

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[13] Liman, "Kawabata's Lyrical Mode in *Snow Country*," p. 277.

[14] Satake Isamu, "Kawabata bungaku ni okeru 'kagami' ni tsuite: *Yukiguni* to *Suigetsu* o chūshin ni," *Kōka joshi daigaku kenkyū kiyō* 19 (1981), p. 63.

[15] Referring to the comparison of Yoko's voice to an echo, Kin'ya Tsuruta points out the etymology of an echo [*kodama*] as an arboreal spirit, in "The Flow-Dynamics in Kawabata Yasunari's *Snow Country*," *Monumenta Nipponica* 26/3-4 (1971), p. 254. Thomas E. Swann agrees, calling her an Oread, in "Kawabata no *Yukiguni* no kōsei," in Matsuura Katsuo, trans., *Kawabata Yasunari: Gendai no biishiki*, in Takeda Katsuhiko and Takahashi Shintarō, eds., Kokubungaku kenkyū sōsho (Tokyo: Meiji shoin, 1978), pp. 20-21. See also Kawasaki Toshihiko, "Yume ka utsutsu ka maboroshi ka: *Yukiguni* to kyōzō no bigaku," Yukiguni *no bunseki kenkyū*, in Hasegawa Izumi and Tsuruta Kin'ya, eds. Kenkyū sōsho, vol. 4 (Tokyo: Kyōiku shuppan sentaa, 1985), p. 21; and Moriyasu Masafumi, *Kawabata*

and off" as a frail light, while Thomas E. Swann thinks that Yoko only represents "celestial beauty or what is unknown and mysterious."[16] Bodiless, she lacks capability to support herself.[17] Her intense earnestness approaching idiocy or infantilism derives from her star-like ethereal intangibility, because such extreme purity and simplicity defy logical argument and self-interested calculation.

Some critics attempt to demonstrate Yoko's physical existence. For instance, Akatsuka Masayuki argues that Yoko "lives in day-to-day reality with one physical body," citing the urinal she carries from Yukio's sickroom.[18] The urinal, however, is utilized as a tool to contextualize her in particular social circumstances on the plot level, and the body part that should hold it is deftly left unmentioned. Likewise, Kawasaki Toshihiko pays attention to Yoko's hand holding Yukio's on the train as an example of her physical reality.[19] But the text actually describes Yukio's emaciated hand tightly holding Yoko's, thereby making her hand covered and much less visible. The plot does demand that Yoko the character possess physicality to interact with her surroundings, but the text carefully avoids making direct references to her corporality. Her figure unencumbered with physical weightiness is thus secured.

If Shimamura's perception reduces Yoko to the purity of light and voice, he invariably views Komako as a presence of cleanness for the better part of the story. As a professional woman of entertaining arts, she cannot

Yasunari: Horobi no bungaku (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1989), pp. 320-321, 334.

[16] Kawabata, "Dokuei jimei," p. 391; and Swann, "Kawabata no *Yukiguni no kōsei*," p. 21.

[17] Ueda Makoto, "*Yukiguni* no sakihin kōzō," *Kyojitsu no himaku*, vol. 5, pp. 82, 89. See also Hasegawa, *Kawabata Yasunari*, p. 105; Tsuruta, *Kawabata Yasunari no geijutsu*, p. 73; Hayashi Takeshi, *Kawabata Yasunari*, Kanshō Nihon gendai bungaku, vol. 15, ed. Hayashi Takeshi (Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 1982), p. 140; and Tsuruta Kin'ya, "*Yukiguni*," *Kokubungaku kaishaku to kanshō* 56/9 (1991), p. 88.

[18] Akatsuka Masayuki, "*Yukiguni* ron," in Shigematsu Yasuo, ed., *Genkei to shazō: Kindai Nihon bungaku ronkō* (Fukuoka, Japan: Genkei to shazō kankōkai, 1986), p. 458.

[19] Kawasaki Toshihiko, "Kawabata Yasunari *Yukiguni*: Yuki to hi to," *Kawabata Yasunari*, in Nihon bungaku kenkyū shiryō kankōkai, ed., *Nihon bungaku kenkyū shiryō sōsho* (Tokyo: Yūseidō, 1973), pp. 188-189.

be pure like the virgin figure Yoko, and he never calls her beautiful in the same way as he does with Yoko. But she is described as exceptionally clean in the impression she gives as well as in the tidiness of her everyday life from the very first moment of their encounter. As Tsuruta Kin'ya points out, the cleanness that defines Komako applies to a solid matter while Yoko's purity does not accompany a body.[20] Shimamura is initially attracted to Komako because he finds her too clean as an object to satisfy his pent-up desires. Kawabata sometimes used this technique to create the cleansed, likeable image of a "tainted" woman figure. For instance, at the end of a palm-of-the-hand story titled "The Morning Nail" [Asa no tsume] (1926), the author implies a fresh start in marriage of a poor, young prostitute by placing her in the midst of a new, white mosquito net that is compared to a lotus bloom.

In *Snow Country*, a device to symbolize Komako's cleanness on the surface is the whiteness of snow that is often associated with her carefully powdered skin. The cosmetic powder is applied on the exposed face and neck in order to cover, in her case, not a dark complexion or a rough skin but fresh redness of the healthy body. The color is inborn to Komako who grew up in the snowy mountain area, often enhanced by drunkenness or a sudden shift of emotions. At their reunion after a lapse of several months, Shimamura finds a part of her face "red under the thick powder," which reminds him of "the snow-country cold," and yet he feels "a certain warmth in it."[21] In fact, aware of her warm bodily temperature, she even calls herself, when heavily inebriated, a metaphorical "pillow of fire."[22] The underlying red visible through a clean white layer is indicative of her robust, unspoiled health that dispels her professional stain and, more significantly, of her intense passion and fundamental life force.[23] Next morning after the reunion, a scene involving another mirror further relates

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[20] Tsuruta Kin'ya, *Kawabata Yasunari ron*, Sekai no Nihon bungaku series, vol. 4 (Tokyo: Meiji shoin, 1988), p. 110.

[21] Kawabata, *Snow Country*, p. 39.

[22] Author's translation of Kawabata Yasunari, *Yukiguni, Kawabata Yasunari zenshū*, vol. 10, p. 99. Kawabata used this phrase as the title of an independently published segment of the story, indicating the importance of this metaphor.

[23] See Kawamoto Kōji, "Geisha no koi: Janru shōsetsu toshite no *Yukiguni*," in Hirakawa Sukehiro and Tsuruta Kin'ya, eds., *Nihon bungaku no tokushitsu* (Tokyo: Meiji shoin, 1991), p. 293.

Komako to snow and the color red. At sunrise, Shimamura sees her face and the snow outside reflected together on a mirror of his room, with her "bright red cheeks" sharply contrasted to the surrounding snow that appears to be "burning icily."[24] Later in the story, the same motif appears once and again in the form of, for instance, colored red leaves covered with the first snow on the mountains. Her occasionally glimpsed undergarment, which is traditionally red under the geisha kimono, might externalize the innate color in her case.

Evidently, the two mirror scenes early in the novel, each of which reveals the reflected image of a female character set against the surrounding landscape, are intended to enhance the two women's marked difference that is hinted in the first mirror scene. Yoko's eye glimmers ephemerally with a superimposed distant fire while the rest of her translucent image floats amidst the indistinct, constantly moving wilderness. Komako's body that exudes vitality with red luster forms a vivid, matching contrast to the radiant snow, thereby emphasizing its solid contour. While Yoko's essence is reducible to a cold, aloof light, Komako stands for the soft, clean, thick layer of snow that covers their village during a long winter. Together, clear, distant light and white, embracing snow constitute a cloudless, serene winter night of the region, such as what the evening in the ending would be like if it were not for the fire. At the same time, like a hot spring in the snowy locale, both cases contain a paradox of inherent warmth in a cold element, dually as characters and symbols of purity and cleanness. No matter how remote and heatless the wild or starry light appears, it originates in fire. As to Komako who "hides a consuming fire within her cool, clean exterior,"[25] redness inherently underlies the white, snowy covering. Because of the vehement passion inside, her initial, strenuous effort to maintain a professional distance from Shimamura fails dismally. For all her isolationist demeanor, Yoko interests Shimamura at first with her tender, undistracted nursing of the sick Yukio on the train, then with her frequent visits to his grave and motherly care of the innkeeper's small daughter in bathing. Komako also likes looking after the same girl and other children.

Although Yoko and Komako exhibit remarkable difference, they are not presented as two opposing incompatibles. They rather share certain traits and complement each other, which the ecological symbiosis on the level of naming hints, with Yoko's formation as "flora in harmonious

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[24] Kawabata, *Snow Country*, p. 48.
[25] Tsuruta, "The Flow-Dynamics," p. 255.

rivalry with Komako as fauna."[26] Despite their strained relationship, they need each other. They live together with Yukio until he dies in the house of his mother who is Komako's palsied music teacher. Komako, who considers Yoko likely to be her future burden, apparently supports Yoko at least partially on a financial basis even when they no longer share a living space. In conversation with Shimamura, each expresses her concern with the other's future welfare, hoping that Shimamura will take good care of the other woman.

The seemingly unrelated episode about *chijimi* linen further reinforces this symbiotic relation. Late in the autumn, before the story's final scene, Shimamura takes a short train ride to a few villages where the special fabric was once produced. The production of fine *chijimi* required both nimble, diligent hands of unmarried girls between fifteen and twenty five and direct exposure to snow in the very cold weather. Shimamura, who wears it as his summer kimono and undershirt, feels a special attachment to this textile because of the young weavers' labor and the sense of coolness it offers. In his associative, dilettantish mind, *chijimi* stands both for Yoko and for Komako. The fabric was woven by young girls like Yoko, whom he actually imagines having sung at work over her handloom if she had been born decades ago. Like Komako's *shamisen* performance, art and nature conspired to create the fabric with an acquired skill in the rural, mountainous environment. A city dweller like Shimamura who can afford and appreciate the fabric wears it only seasonally, as he occasionally visits to enjoy her service at his convenience.

The idea that *chijimi* retains the coolness of snow in summer's heat holds deeper significance. In addition to the paradoxical nature that recalls a similar trait in the two women, the narration explains, citing an old local history book,[27] that *chijimi* involves snow in every process of its production, including spinning, weaving, and bleaching. Shimamura sends his *chijimi* garments to the snow country every winter to have them bleached in a traditional, rigorous method that exposes them to snow and the cold air after an overnight soak and early morning wash for several days. *Chijimi* thus derives its distinct coolness and cleanness from the two women's phenomenal extensions: ground-covering snow and the freezing

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[26] Hasegawa Izumi, "Kindai bungakushi ni okeru *Yukiguni* no ichi," *Kyojitsu no himaku*, vol. 5, p. 103.

[27] Kawabata read *Hokuetsu sekifu* (1836) by Suzuki Bokushi after he wrote the early, prewar version of *Snow Country*.

air that the star-lit, clear night sky brings. In Shimamura's imagination aided by the information that the old book provides, the white linen turns vermilion with the surrounding snow at dawn, similar to Komako's face in the second mirror scene. He naturally compares Komako to the special cloth, feeling her "at center cool" with "remarkable, concentrated warmth."[28] As part of his aesthetic, sentimental indulgence, he even considers his relation with her to be of shorter duration than a piece of *chijimi* worn over decades with care. As the snow that regionally exists during the long winter underlies local people's psyche even in summer, so does Komako's being constantly imply snow, bringing forth his longing for her as well as his dreamy perspective on the snow country when he stays away in Tokyo during warm seasons.

It is evident that Shimamura regards Komako as a kind of human *chijimi*, and that he expects from her not only sensual/sensuous pleasure but also a sense of being cleansed by an embrace that is at once cool and warm. When he wears *chijimi* linen in summer, he relishes visualizing the beauty of *chijimi* spread out and dyed with the color of sunrise, feeling "that the dirt of the summer had been washed away, even that he himself had been bleached clean."[29] He needs that sense, because he is socially useless, considered a critic of the Western dance or ballet, the stage performance of which he has never seen, thereby earning little livelihood and probably living on inherited wealth. Cynically aware of his position, he escapes from the city of dreary married life to a remote hot spring, primarily to enjoy Komako's company. As a man of typical modern sensitivity, however, he has a fundamental urge to be cleansed of self-loathing and regain "honesty with himself," initially by exposing himself to the pristine natural environment through mountain climbing, and later more intimately by way of Komako's healthy, impeccable cleanness.[30] He even receives a cleansing effect from her *shamisen* performance, which, in this sense, is "closer to religious salvation than music."[31] Terada Tōru states that "her cleanness resuscitates him rather than fascinates him" after he has come to physical contact with her.[32] He eventually realizes that he might have unknowingly

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[28] Kawabata, *Snow Country*, p. 154.

[29] Ibid., p. 152.

[30] Ibid., p. 17. See Tsuruta, *Kawabata Yasunari no geijutsu*, p. 87.

[31] Tsuruta, *Kawabata Yasunari no geijutsu*, p. 70.

[32] Terada Tōru, "*Yukiguni* ron," *Kindai bungaku* 8/4 (1953), p. 62.

been using Komako, who now habitually clings to him, like his fantasized ballet and personal *chijimi* linen.

What he does not really understand is that Yoko is Komako's other self, not in appearance or temperament but in their competing yet complementary functions. Because Komako's character endowed with corporal femininity is "by no means compatible with ugliness," Kawasaki calls her "at once the opposite to and an extension of Yoko" and Yoko her metaphorical doppelgänger that reveals both identicalness and heterogeneity.[33] In a similar vein, other critics regard Yoko as Komako's "aspect," "repressed self," and "extension...ghost [of the bygone, lost self], and conscience," while the women are considered "originally one" or "almost tantamount to each other's alter ego."[34] The two of them in tandem form the whole of Shimamura's perceived snow country, the only *locus* that offers the cleansing effect he seeks. He needs not only Komako's exceptional cleanness but also Yoko's influence that lies behind it as a powerful source of purification. In a sense, since the two female characters reveal common elements along with sharply contrasted difference, their symbiotic relationship approaches the yin-yang system, with Komako foregrounded as the principle of light and Yoko mostly latent as the principle of darkness. The old local history book actually mentions yin-yang to explain the cool feeling one can savor in summer's heat when wearing the *chijimi* garment, the crucial symbol that entwines the implicitly paired women. As in the yin-yang symbol, both principles are needed to achieve an entirety of the desired purging of the excessive modern self-consciousness.

In this respect, Shimamura is Yukio's double, for the young man also finds himself placed between the two female competing yet complementary principles, although factual details of their triangular

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[33] Kawasaki, "Kawabata Yasunari *Yukiguni*," p. 190; and Kawasaki, "Yume ka utsutsu ka maboroshi ka," pp. 16-25.

[34] Michael C. Brownstein, "Kawabata Yasunari's *Snow Country*," in Barbara Stoler Miller, ed., *Masterworks of Asian Literature in Comparative Perspective: A Guide for Teaching*, (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1994), p. 489; Tajima Yoko, "Komako no shiten kara yomu *Yukiguni*," in Etane Mitsuko and Shitsuta Kazuyo, eds., *Onna ga yomu Nihon kindai bungaku: Feminizumu hihyō no kokoromi* (Tokyo: Shin'yōsha, 1992), p. 167; Tsuruta, *Kawabata Yasunari no geijutsu*, pp. 82, 84; Hayashi, *Kawabata Yasunari*, p. 140; and Swann, "Kawabata no *Yukiguni* no kōsei," p. 21.

relationship, including Komako's rumored engagement to him, remain ambiguous and fragmentary. She and townspeople, such as a blind masseuse, ascribe his failed health and eventual death at the age of twenty six to his overworking as an evening school student in Tokyo and resulting intestinal tuberculosis. The presence of the two women in his life is supposed to have an effect of sweeping off the city dirt that has accumulated on him. On a symbolic level, however, he cannot sustain the combined intensity of two opposing forces of femininity, which, instead of removing the cause of his damaged health, consumes him gradually to his ultimate demise. After his death, without reflecting on herself, Komako half-jokingly calls Yoko frighteningly jealous by nature to the point of killing the object of her affection.[35]

Yukio and Shimamura are poised in a parallel situation particularly when Yoko rushes to the train station where Komako is seeing off the older man as a customer. Yoko urges Komako to come back immediately to the critically ill young man who wishes to see her for the last time. Either man is departing one way or another, subjected to the power of the two women at once, with Yoko in her simple, intense earnestness and Komako vehemently holding to her principle of cleanness by flatly refusing to witness death. Komako's strong reaction might partially stem from her ambivalence toward the two men,[36] but her almost Shinto-like rejection of death as a source of taint is so psychologically thorough that it causes in her a violent physical reaction of orally purging her interior, albeit without output.[37] At this critical juncture, the two male figures switch their

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[35] Interestingly, she makes this short remark between the two written messages Yoko delivers to Shimamura upon her request, occasioning his only private talk with the younger woman. This illustrates the two women's ambivalent relationship that is at once interdependent and mutually antagonistic.

[36] In *Kawabata Yasunari ron*, p. 112 and *Kawabata Yasunari no geijutsu*, p. 101, Tsuruta ascribes her violent reaction to self-disgust caused by an internal conflict between clean self as Yukio's childhood friend and mature self in love with Shimamura.

[37] Komako is indeed associated with Shinto once when, followed by Shimamura, she walks into a shrine's precincts shortly after their initial acquaintance. According to her, it is the village's coolest place with a soothing breeze even in midsummer, which alludes to her own paradoxical nature as fire in the cold.

positions, with Yukio the passer forever gone as his name suggests,[38] and Shimamura the lone traveler taking the precarious place of converging forces. Afterwards, not to mention Komako who becomes more and more attached to Shimamura against her will, Yoko also shows more interest in him towards the end of the story. What happens at the train station when he is leaving for Tokyo thus foreshadows the ending scene.

In the novel's last scene of a winter evening, Komako and Shimamura rush to a warehouse used also as a theater on fire, and they realize that Yoko is still inside. Calling this scene "a beautiful fiction," "a surrealistic world of recollection," and a "fantastic scene...in daydream-like brightness,"[39] critics regard the ending as unrealistic. This is partly due to the surrealistic merging of the fire with descending stars, and partly to the unnatural action/inaction of the two female characters. Evidently, Shimamura's perception is largely responsible for this unreality. The previous year, during his second night with Komako, he found the star-filled nocturnal sky inharmonious with the dark yet snow-covered landscape. Now, significantly at her beckoning, he looks up at the Milky Way.[40] While the situation is tense with a collapsing building, excited people's commotion, and possibility of a fatal accident, Shimamura is entranced, as usual, to see an illusion of fire, erupted from the thinly snowed ground, merging with the magnificent Milky Way that runs vividly across the sky. Rather than uproar, he senses a kind of quietude immersing the entire, disastrous site.

In this mindset, he feels himself "pulled up" between the Milky Way that "seemed to dip and flow" into the fire and the sparks of the fire that "spread off into the Milky Way."[41] His consciousness is finally being cleansed and purified by the two kinds of flames metaphoric of Komako's

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[38] Tsuruta, *Kawabata Yasunari no geijutsu*, p. 101. Tsuruta also understands Yukio as a character who functions, without a single line of speech of his own, to induce and enhance Komako's cleanness and Yoko's purity based on their unrewarded self-sacrifice to him, in Kawabata, "*Yukiguni*," pp. 89-90; and Tsuruta, *Kawabata Yasunari ron*, pp. 103-115.

[39] Hasegawa, *Kawabata Yasunari ronkō*, p. 342; Isogai Hideo, "*Yukiguni* no shasei," *Kawabata Yasunari: Gendai no biishiki*, p. 37. Needless to say, it is irrelevant here to speculate upon the historical veracity of this fire in Kawabata's life.

[40] See Hirayama, "*Yukiguni* no kyo to jitsu," p. 131.

[41] Kawabata, *Snow Country*, p. 171.

and Yoko's influences. The fire in snow symbolizes an eruption of Komako's passion that, synonymous with underlying red, has largely been suppressed until now. Mishima Yukio, who probably understood Kawabata as a fellow contemporary writer better than anybody else, reportedly made a pointed insight in a dialogue with him, calling the fire "the novel's most basic image" because "Komako herself is something like a fire in snow."[42] Or, as Kawasaki puts it, "her unrequited passion" translates into the blaze, which itself is her "last, and greatest metaphor."[43] In response to the upward outburst of flame, the star dust, vicarious of Yoko's essence as a cold, distant fire, flows down to the mid-air into which Shimamura's imagination lifts itself up. The celestial and earthly flames appear to vie for his floating mind while finally meeting to forge its transmutation from opposite directions.

When the fire in snow externalizes Komako's passion, why does the ultimate metaphor of Yoko, who tends to stay in the background, assume such a cosmic dimension as the Milky Way? This Milky Way, in which Shimamura feels "a terrible voluptuousness," is "clearly endowed with a female persona."[44] Due to Komako's prominence in the last scene, some critics associate her with the Milky Way,[45] which nevertheless fails to prove a sustained correlation between her and stars. It is Yoko who is linked to starry light throughout the story, and a certain parallel in the fire scene can also be drawn between Yoko and the Milky Way, such as linear stretch, descent toward the ground, and the disarrayed hem. The reason, however, lies deeper on three levels. First, her essence of a cold, remote fire clearly corresponds with "the distant, chilly Milky Way."[46] As Richard C. Buckstead states, there is "a direct correlation" of her image on the first mirror with the Milky Way of the concluding scene, because Yoko as a symbol "relates to the stars and planets."[47] In addition, recognizing

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[42] Kawasaki, "Kawabata Yasunari *Yukiguni*," pp. 195-196.

[43] Kawasaki, "Yume ka utsutsu ka maboroshi ka," pp. 24-25.

[44] Kawabata, *Snow Country*, p. 165; and Tsuruta, *Kawabata Yasunari no geijutsu*, pp. 91-92.

[45] See, for instance, Kawasaki, "Kawabata Yasunari *Yukiguni*," pp. 197-198.

[46] Liman, "Kawabata's Lyrical Mode in *Snow Country*," p. 283.

[47] Richard C. Buckstead, "The Search for a Symbol in Kawabata's 'Snow Country,'" *Asian Profile* 1/1 (1973), p. 160.

occasionally "a certain voluptuous charm" in her,[48] Shimamura is attracted to Yoko not for purely aesthetic reasons. His interest is tinged with "something vaguely erotic," and, in spite of her "distant, cold inaccessibility like that of a star...Yoko is symbolically a sexual experience" for him, however sterile that experience might be.[49]

Second, as a symbol of purity with purifying force, Yoko epitomizes the virginal figure that persists in charming male protagonists throughout Kawabata's oeuvre, starting with the eponymous teenager in *The Izu Dancer* [Izu no odoriko] (1926). As Tsuruta states, "the women in *Snow Country* are the manifested images of male desire."[50] If Komako stands for an archetypal female with a matured body accessible to male desire, Yoko typifies the virgin that remains "still unravish'd" as the object of devout, yet sexually implicit adoration, at least until the story reaches the final scene.[51] Yoko is considered a "sacred" or "eternal" virgin that Maria and a bodhisattva represent, even compared to Kaguya-hime in *The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter* [Taketori monogatari] (the late ninth century) whom Kawabata adored.[52] In more human terms, she stands for "the ideal of

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[48] Kawabata, *Snow Country*, p. 57.

[49] Buckstead, "The Search for a Symbol in Kawabata's 'Snow Country,'" p. 160.

[50] Tsuruta, "*Yukiguni*," p. 90.

[51] John Keats, "Ode on a Grecian Urn," l. 1, in Jack Stillinger, ed., *The Poems of John Keats* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1978), p. 372. Mishima Yukio ascribes Kawabata's interest in the virginal figure to "the mechanism in which she is eternally inviolable as long as she remains to be a virgin although, when violated, she is no longer a virgin," in "Eien no tabibito," *Bungei dokuhon Kawabata Yasunari*, Kawade paperbacks, vol. 16 (Tokyo: Kawade shobō shinsha, 1962), p. 10.

[52] See Kobayashi Yoshihito, *Bi to Bukkyō to jidō bungaku to: Kawabata Yasunari no sekai* (Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 1985), pp. 212-214; Ueda, "*Yukiguni* no sakihin kōzō," *Kyojitsu no himaku*, vol. 5, p. 91; Tsuruta, *Kawabata Yasunari no geijutsu*, p. 73; Tsuruta, "*Yukiguni*," pp. 88, 90; Tsuruta, *Kawabata Yasunari ron*, p. 108; Tajima, "Komako no shiten kara yomu *Yukiguni*," p. 151; and Yamada Yoshirō, "*Yukiguni* ni okeru Yoko zō," *Tōhoku daigaku bungei kenkyū* 97 (1981): 50-51.

virginal purity" or "the ultimate of a pure female character."[53] The two female archetypes, however, do not stand on an equal basis in the sense that every woman of the first type once belonged to the second type without exception. In other words, the physical type presupposes the virginal figure, and the latter envelopes the former in its wider base.

As part of their characterization, Yoko and Komako share the motherly tenderness that implies the third female type idealized by male fantasy. For instance, Shimamura would not be attracted to Yoko nursing Yukio "like a young mother" on the train "unless he had a strong, latent desire to be likewise cared for."[54] Similarly, on his first night with Komako, he feels motherly warmth in the palm placed upon her bosom. But motherliness remains a relatively minor element that connects the two women sharply contrasted in terms of physical (in)accessibility.

The third point relates to symbolism in the women's naming. In addition to the horse, Komako is associated with other forms of animal life, especially a variety of insects, such as moths. She is also closely linked to the silkworm or the larva of a domesticated moth from the very first moment of her encounter with Shimamura. Summoned by him for the first time before she becomes a full-fledged geisha, she comes to his hotel room out of a cocoon warehouse used also as the town's theater where a large party is taking place. Later, he visits her room that used to house silkworms. Unsteady as he feels as if suspended in the air, he finds the old attic room to be thoroughly clean like the inhabitant due to her minute care, even directly comparing her to a silkworm whose body turns translucent when it is ready to close itself up in a cocoon. As Swann points out, the cocoonery always has to be kept very clean because "an unsanitary environment is the silkworm's greatest enemy."[55] Here, considering the silkworm clean in association with its habitat and the end product, the traditional Japanese fondness for silk overlaps Shimamura's fascination with Komako. Finally,

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[53] Brownstein, "Kawabata Yasunari's *Snow Country*," p. 489; Yamada, "*Yukiguni* ni okeru Yoko zō," p. 51.

[54] Kawabata, *Snow Country*, p. 6; and Nakazawa Kei, "Shimamura to iu okoto: *Yukiguni*," *Shinchō* 89/6 (1992), p. 281. See also Tajima, "Komako no shiten kara yomu *Yukiguni*," p. 151; Kawasaki, "Yume ka utsutsu ka maboroshi ka," pp. 21-23; Tsuruta, *Kawabata Yasunari ron*, pp. 104-105; Tsuruta, *Kawabata Yasunari no geijutsu*, pp. 71-72, 81-82; and Tsuruta, "*Yukiguni*," p. 88.

[55] Swann, "Kawabata no *Yukiguni* no kōsei," p. 26.

the inflammable film sets the cocoon warehouse on fire when movies are screened, and Komako rushes "back" into the burning structure, like a moth in the wild, to rescue the inert Yoko single-handedly. In imagery, Komako is further connected to the silkworm in terms of the whiteness of thread it produces as well as the delicateness of woven cloth, apart from the material difference from *chijimi*. Similar to the horse/leaf symbiosis, although artificially manipulated, the silkworm requires a large quantity of mulberry leaves to produce thread, while the mulberry tree multiplies as the source of a thriving local industry for the luxury market. Therefore, symbolically as a leaf on the foundation of the food chain, Yoko, whose actual economic basis is never specified, feeds Komako as the growing silkworm that depends on an inexhaustible supply of regenerative vegetation.

By the time of Shimamura's third visit, the two women undergo changes unpalatable to his fantasizing, causing him to feel "anxiety and even a chill."[56] Komako becomes physically matured, emotionally trammeled, preoccupied with monetary concerns, and socially unscrupulous about her liaison with him. Not impressing him with a sense of exceptional cleanness as before, she increasingly gets "soiled" with aging, experience, and his metaphorical use of her as human *chijimi*. At the same time, Yoko no longer stays in the background as a figure to be savored at a distance. She asserts herself in a direct conversation with him, expressing at once her hatred of and sympathy with Komako. She even expresses a request for him to take her to the city, almost like elopement. At the end of the story, the time is ripe for the inherently signifying vehicles of symbolization to be released from the social/physical attributes with which the characters are equipped.

It is the ignited film that unleashes potential forces in the respective women. The silkworm references indicate that Komako as a metaphoric silkworm has always found herself socio-economically encapsulated within such manmade shells as the theater/cocoon warehouse and her first room in which silkworms were raised not long ago. The burning of the warehouse dismantles the confinement, releasing her essence from the artificial shell and metamorphosing her into an unrestrained flame of passion instead of an expected moth. In fact, the fire has a smell similar to the cocoon boiling, with which to kill off the pupa as a process of thread

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[56] Yamada, "*Yukiguni* ni okeru Yoko zō," p. 47. See also Swann, "Kawabata no *Yukiguni* no kōsei," p. 27; Ueda, "*Yukiguni* no sakihin kōzō," pp. 86-89; and Tsuruta, *Kawabata Yasunari no geijutsu*, p. 98.

harvest. This implies the termination of Komako as a grown silkworm as well as the removal of her accumulated stain by fire at the end.[57] At the story's onset, Yoko is caught as a tenuous, intangible image superimposed on a half-transparent train window against the shifting background landscape as part of a cinematic composition. She stays trapped in her own way as "a virtual image" or "a mere image of the body" centering on the eye and the voice within this cinematic framework throughout the story.[58] The accidental ignition of the celluloid film liberates and magnifies her essence of a cold, distant fire into a gigantic arch of stars stretched full across the night sky. As Shimamura observes, it is the bright, untamed, profound Milky Way that Matsuo Bashō views over the rough oceanic expanse in one of his most celebrated *haiku* poems.

On the level of human action, the two women meet for a final resolution. As the Milky Way appears to pour down, so Yoko's horizontally stretched body makes a short fall from the low upstairs onto the ground, and, disregarding her own safety, Komako runs into the building on fire to hold it. Yoko remains unconscious in a transitional state, notably with the piercingly beautiful eyes closed. By coming down to the ground level of ordinary reason, her figure as an embodiment of purity can no longer be sustained in the realm of everyday consciousness. Shimamura thus feels a certain fundamental change, rather than death, taking place in her motionless body. Suggestive of the change, he notices a spasmodic movement in the bared calf as a result of the fall, which is the text's only straightforward reference to her un-abstracted exposed body part, except for the tightly grasped, hardly visible hand in kinetic action. More directly, holding Yoko in her arms, Komako shouts out just a few lines before the story's closure that the girl is going insane. Actually, as her impulsive action like a mad woman suggests, Komako is also losing her old self.[59] By finally accepting Yoko without reservation, she destroys the subtle balance of mutual antagonism and dependence that has defined their identities on both human and symbolic levels.

At the critical moment of two women's lives, Shimamura indulges himself in his aestheticism. As in the first mirror scene, which he recalls with a thrill at Yoko's closed eyes, he finds in her falling body "a phantasm

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[57] See Tsuruta, *Kawabata Yasunari no geijutsu*, pp. 78-81, 87-88, 91.

[58] Tajima, "Komako no shiten kara yomu *Yukiguni*," p. 168; and Ueda, "*Yukiguni* no sakihin kōzō," p. 77.

[59] See Hayashi, *Kawabata Yasunari*, p. 142.

from an unreal world."[60] He further associates the fire scene with the story's beginning by setting his memory of the wild fire flared through Yoko's eye several months ago against the time that he has spent with Komako, that is, the novel's temporal entirety. At the very end, he feels again "the Milky Way flow[ing] down inside him with a roar,"[61] thereby supposedly completing his own inner metamorphosis at the expense of the two women. As Komako mentions earlier about glowing charcoal brought from the sick man's room, fire has the power to keep itself clean and eliminate a tainting source. The open-ended quality of the ending might suggest that, consumed by the two cleaning/purifying flames to a symbolic death as they brought about Yukio's physical end, Shimamura's psyche undergoes the cleansing and rebirth he has always been seeking. With his fundamental wish finally satisfied, he feels that it is time for him to leave Komako and the snow country.

From the perspective of the conventional Western reading of the form, the novel *Snow Country* appears to lack the genre's essential element, that is, a consistently evolving story line based on a series of conflict-fraught actions with a well-defined beginning, a logically following middle, and a clear, unifying ending. When we look into the symbiotic confrontation that involves the two main female characters, however, even apparently disjoined sections, such as the deviational *chijimi* episode and the inconclusive fire scene at the end, prove not only integral but indispensable to the work's formation as a novelistic whole. It is not quite certain whether and to what extent the author himself was aware of this symbolic structure. Dissatisfied with the kind of plot structure terminable at almost any moment, however, Kawabata's creative mind actually demanded a definite, climactic ending that corresponds well with the beginning and gives a final coherent settlement to the gradually unfolded story. It is irrelevant, then, to debate whether the story remains unfinished or to surmise a sequence he might have written after the given closure.[62] In spite of some residual uneasiness due to unsolved details of the characters' fates

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[60] Kawabata, *Snow Country*, p. 173.

[61] Ibid., p. 175.

[62] In "Dokuei jimei," p. 391, Kawabata mentions "Komako who lives nursing the mad Yoko" as an image of their post-factum lives that the ending conjures up on his mind. In his strenuous revision extending over decades, however, he never chose to make any addition to the given ending with this image.

and their unrealistic portrayals, the author sensed that the story is complete with the fire scene where symbols are mobilized on a grand scale, elemental as well as cosmic, to the full realization of their potentiality.

LINE IN THE WATER: THE SOUTHERN KURILES AND THE RUSSIAN-JAPANESE RELATIONSHIP

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Throughout history, the global state system has known no dearth of territorial conflicts. Indeed, disputes over territory have produced horrendous wars with untold millions of casualties. Short of resorting to warfare, such conflicts have also been the most intractable to resolve.

To be sure, among the hundreds of major and less significant territorial disputes present in the world today, Ethiopia and Somalia are engaged in a bloody conflict that is at least partly inflamed by a decades-long territorial disagreement that has its origins in the Western colonization of the Horn of Africa. Similarly, the possibility of a sustainable peace in southeastern Europe depends in no small measure upon which entity will eventually control the long-disputed province of Kosovo, the Serbian government in Belgrade or the Kosovo Albanian authority itself.

Certainly one of the longest-simmering territorial disagreements extant today concerns Japan and the Russian Federation, two powerful countries vying for control of the southern Kurile island chain, known by the Japanese as their "Northern Territories." The origins of the sixty-two year conflict lie in the waning days of World War II, as Stalin's armies belatedly joined the war against Japan in the Pacific, capturing much of the Korean peninsula, the southern half of Sakhalin Island, and the southern Kurile islands of Etorufu, Kunashir, Shikotan, as well as the Habomai islets, located mere miles from Japan's main northern island, Hokkaido.

Since this time, successive Japanese and Soviet governments were involved in negotiations to resolve the issue and to sign a formal peace treaty, but to no avail, as the conflict became embroiled in the developing Cold War confrontation between East and West. With the collapse of communism in 1991, however, renewed interest in resolving the dispute has at times been seen on both sides.

After a fishing dispute in August 2006 left a Japanese citizen dead and brought Russo-Japanese relations to a post-war nadir, both sides attempted to repair their relationship and seemingly entertained a novel resolution to the Kurile conundrum, one that borrowed from Russia's own recent experience in settling its longstanding territorial difficulties with the People's Republic of China.

This essay examines the territorial dispute in its historical context, while discussing more specifically the recent twists and turns in the evolving Japanese-Russian relationship. After evaluating the newest proposal brought forward by Prime Minister Abe Shinzō's government in late 2006, the essay also explains why – although it is increasingly in the interests of both countries to settle their territorial differences – it is unlikely that a resolution to the conflict can be found in the near- or medium-term.

The Southern Kuriles ("Northern Territories") Today and in Historical Perspective

The Kurile island chain, or as the Japanese prefer, the Chishima island grouping, is composed of 56 islands arrayed along the borders of a major tectonic plate intersection that stretches 700 miles from the Kamchatka peninsula to the northernmost Japanese island of Hokkaido.[1] Those islands in question here include the three southernmost islands, Etorufu, Kunashir, and Shikotan, as well as the tiny outcroppings of land comprising the Habomai islets. The closest of these, Kunashir, lies just fifteen miles from Hokkaido. While the Russians regard these islands fundamentally as constituent parts of the Sakhalin Oblast's territorial administrative region, the Japanese claim these islands as their "Northern Territories."

Roughly 30,000 people inhabit the southern Kurile islands today, with approximately 16,800 Russians making up the majority of the residents on the three largest islands.[2] Thousands of ethnic Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Tatars, Koreans, Nivkhs, Oroch, and Ainu make up the remainder of the disputed islands' population.[3] For most of the islands'

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[1] Keiji Hirano, "Residents Still Dream of Return to Russian-held Isles," *The Japan Times* (October 8, 2006).

[2] Only Russian border guards are stationed in the Habomai islet groupings. Anatoly Koshkin, "Kuril Islands Dispute Still Haunting Japan and Russia," *Moscow News* (October 20, 2006).

[3] In particular, the Ainu, considered the original inhabitants of ancient Japan, regard the Kurile island chain (including the southernmost complement that are the subject of this essay) as their indigenous homelands. Indeed, many ethnic Ainu organizations regard both Russian and Japanese claims to the islands as illegitimate. As Akibe Tokuhei, a leader of the Ainu Association of Hokkaido, commented, "It is unacceptable that the four islands are historically Japan's own territory."

inhabitants, fishing is the primary occupation; however, the islands also employ workers in a variety of extractive industries, as significant deposits of sulfur, pyrite, and other metallic ores are found on the isles.

Originally, the Ainu inhabited the islands, though beginning in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Japanese and Russian explorers began to survey and settle the island chain. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the expanding Russian and Japanese empires were coming into more frequent contact, making the delimitation of respective "spheres of influence" in the Far East an increasingly important matter. The Treaty of Commerce, Navigation, and Delimitation (also known as the Treaty of Shimoda) signed by Russian Admiral Yefimy Putyatin and officials in the Japanese government on February 7, 1855 established official diplomatic relations between the two rising powers, while also initiating commercial links and resolving certain navigational and border issues. Among the borders delimited by the treaty were those that recognized Japanese control over all of the southern Kurile islands, placing the southern boundary of the Russian-controlled Kurile archipelago to include the island of Urup.[4] Twenty years later, the two states signed yet another treaty, the 1875 Treaty of St. Petersburg, which, while extending Russian control over Sakhalin island, also reaffirmed Japanese ownership over not merely the southern Kurile islands, but also now the entire Kurile (Chishima) archipelago.

With the turn of a new century, the moribund tsarist state waged war with a renewed, rising, and self-confident nation in the Far East. Russia's poorly equipped army and navy proved to be no match for Japan's military forces on either land or sea. Indeed, the crushing Russian naval defeat in the Straits of Tsushima in May 1905, besides bringing long simmering social and political tensions to the fore in St. Petersburg, forced an obstinate, obtuse Tsar Nicholas II to authorize his emissary to initial the Treaty of Portsmouth. Brokered by President Theodore Roosevelt in New Hampshire during the late summer of 1905, the peace treaty encroached upon Russia's empire in the East, granting to the Japanese rights over

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The organization argues that the southern Kuriles should be turned into an "autonomous area of the Ainu nation"; Hirano, "Residents Still Dream"; and Sergei Mingazhev, "Ainu Nation Claims Kurile Islands," *ITAR-TASS News Agency* (November 14, 2005).

[4] Urup is located just to the north of Etorufu (Iturup), the northernmost of the southern Kurile islands in question.

Russian-controlled Korea, the southern half of Sakhalin island, as well as the entire Kurile island chain.

As Russian White armies under Kolchak, Denikin, and Wrangel fought Lenin's Bolsheviks in 1918-1921, Japan gained strategic outposts in Russia's Maritime Provinces, most significantly the northern remnants of Sakhalin island. When the Communists vanquished their enemies, Japan was forced to relinquish control of these captured Russian lands, finally ceding control over its remaining possession, the northern half of Sakhalin island, by the mid-1920s.

Thus, by the time Josef Stalin and Emperor Hirohito's government signed a non-aggression pact in 1941, the historical record had clearly demonstrated that successive Russian and Soviet governments recognized the southern Kuriles as definitive Japanese possessions.

Spoils of War or Stolen Goods?

As World War II was ending, Stalin made good on statements he had made earlier to Churchill and Roosevelt beginning in 1943 that his armies would not only join the Allies in the war against Japan within three months of the end of hostilities in Europe, but also re-take former Russian possessions in the Far East, including Sakhalin island and the Kurile island chain. As such, on August 8, 1945 – two days after the atomic bombing of Hiroshima – the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics declared war on Japan and began attacking hastily retreating Japanese forces in northern China.

Ten days later, a Soviet amphibious force of 8,300 attacked the northernmost Kurile island, marshy Shumshu Island, located a mere seven miles from the Kamchatka Peninsula. Fierce fighting ensued, as the island was the home of a major Japanese naval base; however, by August 21, Japanese forces surrendered on the island, leaving the way open for a Soviet "island-hopping" advance down the remainder of the Kurile archipelago. By the fifth of September, three days after the signing of a peace treaty between the United States and Japan, the Soviet's Kurile campaign ended with the capture of the southernmost Kurile islands now in dispute. In the aftermath of this invasion, Stalin ordered the immediate deportation of the 17,300 ethnic Japanese inhabitants of the southern Kuriles to Hokkaido. Over time, these inhabitants were soon replaced with primarily ethnic Russian, Ukrainian, and Byelorussian settlers.[5]

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[5] Of those Japanese displaced, approximately 8,000 still reside in Japan. Many of this group remain committed to the return of the isles to Japan,

In the 1951 San Francisco Peace Treaty that Japan signed with all its wartime opponents, save the U.S.S.R., Japan gave up "all rights, titles and claims to the Kuril Islands and the part of the Sakhalin Island and adjacent islands over which Japan acquired sovereignty under the Portsmouth Treaty of September 5, 1905."[6] Although historians are unsure exactly as to why the United States pressured Japan to renounce these possessions in the background of an increasingly tense global inter-bloc rivalry, in the end Japan succumbed to U.S. inducements.[7]

Several problems emerged from these negotiations. Firstly, and perhaps most importantly for the long-term confusion that has eventuated, the 1951 treaty document does not clarify which specific islands are considered as part of the Kurile island chain. This allowed Japan to claim subsequently that Etorufu and Kunashir were not to be considered as part of the 1951 renunciation of claims, as these islands – along with Shikotan and the Habomais islet grouping – had been under Japanese jurisdiction since 1855, the year Japan and Russia first divided the island chain. Truth be told, however, Japan's position on this is not in keeping with the historical record, as even Yoshida Shigeru, the Japanese Prime Minister at the time of the 1951 signing, claimed in his memoirs quite the reverse. John Foster Dulles, the U.S. Secretary of State, agreed at the time that perhaps only the Habomais islets might be excluded from the list of the Kurile islands so renounced by Japan in the 1951 treaty.[8] Regardless, the treaty's failure to enumerate those islands comprising the Kurile chain has brought about the dilemma that plagues the two states to this day.

More immediately, however, the document's failure to designate to whom Japan was renouncing its claims of jurisdiction and ownership

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serving as vocal supporters of nationalist groups who attempt to press irredentist claims upon both the Japanese government and the Russian "occupiers"; Hirano, "Residents Still Dream."

[6] "Treaty of Peace with Japan," September 8, 1951 (downloaded February 9, 2007, http://www.isop.ucla.edu/eas/documents/peace1951.htm).

[7] Some historians claim that the U.S. forced Japan's hand in order to preserve the Yalta framework for the sake of negotiating an eventual Soviet withdrawal from divided Austria; Gregory Clark, "Northern Territories Dispute Highlights Flawed Diplomacy," Glocom Platform, March 25, 2005 (accessed December 26, 2006, http://www.glocom.org/debates/20050325_clark_northern/index.html).

[8] Clark, "Northern Territories."

caused an infuriated Stalin to give explicit orders to Andrei Gromyko, the Soviet emissary sent to San Francisco to negotiate Japan's surrender of these lands, to withhold his signature from the final Peace Treaty. To be sure, the fact that other Soviet demands were not reflected in the document also doomed their participation in the post-war settlement;[9] however, the fact that Soviet de jure ownership was not recognized in the document caused Stalin to feel that the U.S. was attempting to go back on commitments it had made at Yalta in 1945.[10]

Further Japanese-Russian negotiations over the territories would await the passing of Stalin and the evolution of a new Soviet foreign policy doctrine, "peaceful coexistence." By September 1954, the new post-Stalin government of Georgiy Malenkov and Nikita Khrushchev desired to pursue normalization of relations with Japan once again, this time in the hopes of establishing Japan as a neutral power, as was being done with Austria that same year.

According to Clark, the Japanese delegation to the renewed talks had orders in 1954-1955 to demand only the return of the Shikotan and Habomais islands, as – from the Japanese perspective – these were administratively subordinated to Hokkaido, not the Kurile territorial government, prior to 1945.[11] After initially rejecting this demand, the Soviets later agreed to return them, if Japan promised not to enter into an alliance system that might threaten third parties. However, by early 1956 the Japanese delegation hardened their position to include demands for Etorufu and Kunashir, as well.[12]

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[9] The Soviets listed a further thirteen demands at the negotiations, including one sure to draw objections from the Americans, the removal of all foreign troops from Japan; James William Morley, "The Soviet-Japanese Peace Declaration," *Political Science Quarterly* 72 (1957): 370-379.

[10] Koshkin, "Kuril Islands."

[11] Clark, "Northern Territories," p. 1.

[12] Matsumoto Shunichi, head of the Japanese delegation, later blamed conservative Prime Minister Shigemitsu and certain unnamed officials within the Foreign Ministry for these additional territorial demands. As well, Matsumoto indicts Dulles, as the U.S. Secretary of State dissuaded Japan from settling claims with the U.S.S.R. in order to anchor, it is argued, Japan into the Western alliance; Morley, "The Soviet-Japanese Peace Declaration," p. 378.

After initially demanding all of the "Northern Territories" (Japan was only now beginning to refer to the four islands as such) from the Soviet Union and suffering a vigorous Soviet rejection, the Shigemitsu government finally reversed itself again in summer 1956. It was at this time that Shigemitsu was called to London to consult with Secretary Dulles again, this time allegedly to discuss the developing Suez Crisis in the Middle East. At this meeting, Dulles, apparently concerned over the prospects of a sustained Soviet-Japanese thaw, put forward a veiled threat to the Japanese prime minister, arguing that should Japan settle with the Soviet Union over Etorufu and Kunashir, the United States might be granted similar territorial rights to Okinawa.[13] The Secretary of State also pointed out that an assistance program being developed for Japan might be delayed.[14]

Nevertheless, in late 1956 Prime Minister Hatoyama declared his readiness to accept the U.S.S.R.'s invitation to initial a revised agreement. Hatoyama, now in declining health, decided to go forward with an agreement with the Russians, something he had promised the Japanese people he would do upon coming to power in December 1954. Thus, the two parties finally resolved in October to sign a Joint Declaration, later ratified by the two countries' parliaments in December. The Joint Declaration established that the two powers were hereby normalizing relations and ending the state of war that existed between them since August 8, 1945. In addition, the Soviet government waived Japanese war reparations, resolved to return Japanese prisoners of war, and backed Japan's bid for membership in the United Nations. Most importantly, the statement promised further talks on a formal peace treaty and, after successfully concluding and signing such a treaty, the Soviet government promised to return the Shikotan and Habomais islands to Japanese jurisdiction.

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[13] Dulles was alluding to Article 26 of the 1951 Peace Treaty, which reads in part, "Should Japan make a peace settlement or war claims settlement with any State granting that State greater advantages than those provided by the present Treaty, those same advantages shall be extended to the parties to the present Treaty" ["Treaty of Peace with Japan"]. Dulles later wrote that the 1951 Peace Treaty signed by Japan doesn't give Japan the right to transfer "sovereignty over the territories renounced by it therein"; Matthew J. Ouimet, "The Stalemate North of Hokkaido," *SAIS Review* 26 (2006): 93-108.

[14] Koshkin, "Kuril Islands."

The Joint Declaration appeared to be a breakthrough of sorts, but for the remainder of the year the Soviets failed to respond to Japanese overtures for early treaty negotiations.[15] When newly-inducted Prime Minister Kishi later suggested a peace treaty was not in the offing unless all four islands, including Etorufu and Kunashir, were returned to Japan, no further progress on the issue was possible for the remainder of the 1950s.[16] With the signing of the U.S.-Japan Mutual Security Treaty in 1960, Japan was brought fully into the Western military alliance; as a result, the Soviets abrogated the 1956 Joint Declaration, thus leaving the status of the south Kuriles in legal limbo for the remainder of the Cold War.

Post-Communism and the Elusive Deal

It wasn't until Mikhail Gorbachev came to power and enunciated his "New Thinking" that the frost overlaying the Soviet-Japanese relationship began to thaw. Understanding that economic reform at home could not be pursued successfully without an end to the global arms race and a reduction in tensions between East and West, Gorbachev sought to gain the support of the Western bloc – including the Japanese government – for his perestroika reform program. As such, he became the first Soviet leader to visit Japan in 1991 and set the ground for "people-to-people" diplomacy by authorizing visa-free travel between the Japanese mainland and the southern Kurile islands.[17] However, Gorbachev made little headway over the territorial issue, as criticisms of weakness by hard-line communists and nationalists undermined his negotiating position.

Throughout his tenure as President, Boris Yeltsin suffered from many of the same nationalist and communist criticisms as had General Secretary Gorbachev. Yeltsin was viewed by many of his opponents as more accommodating to the West than was his predecessor;[18] to be sure,

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[15] Morley, "The Soviet-Japanese Peace Declaration," p. 379.

[16] Kishi's new condition brought the Japanese negotiating stance in line with the United States' legal finding (held since September 1956) that all four islands "have always been part of Japan proper and should in justice be acknowledged as under Japanese sovereignty"; Ouimet, "The Stalemate North of Hokkaido," p. 98.

[17] Since then approximately 12,000 citizens from Japan and Russia have made visa-free trips; Hirano, "Residents Still Dream."

[18] At least Gorbachev had not *purposefully* destroyed the Union, as had Yeltsin in December 1991.

Yeltsin's own Foreign Minister, Andrei Kozyrev, had publicly denounced the Soviet abrogation of the 1956 Joint Declaration.[19]

At the same time, President Yeltsin was also faced with an equally dysfunctional economy, a fact that in part compelled his administration to curry favor with the Japanese. Indeed, the Japanese government, certain that they held the upper hand in view of Russia's dire economic and political straits, continued to link economic assistance to progress on the territorial issue[20]. As a result, Yeltsin met Prime Minister Hosokawa Morihiro in Tokyo, Japan in October 1993 and initialed the Tokyo Declaration, a landmark document of sorts that gave greater leverage to Japan in its quest to pry the "Northern Territories" from Russia's grasp.

In the document, the two governments pledge themselves to undertake "serious negotiations on the issue of where Etorufu, Kunashir,

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[19] Kozyrev offered the Japanese a deal along the lines of the 1956 Joint Declaration, i.e., a formal peace treaty in exchange for the Shikotan and Habomais islands. After the Japanese responded with demands for Etorufu and Kunashir as well, the Russian administration was forced to retract their proposal; Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, "Why Did Russia and Japan Fail to Achieve Rapprochement?" in Gilbert Rozman, ed., *Japan and Russia: The Tortuous Path to Normalization, 1949-1999* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), p. 146. In order to placate his enemies, Yeltsin ultimately would be forced by an intensifying opposition to sacrifice his pro-Western foreign secretary.

[20] Although the dismal state of the Russian economy is often regarded as the chief motivating factor for the document's signing, it should be recognized that the Tokyo Declaration was signed less than two weeks after the parliamentary rebellion (*miatyezh*) took place in Moscow and Yeltsin fervently desired international support for his actions in the events. Indeed, the very first principle discussed in the Tokyo Declaration conveys a "message from the leaders of the G7 countries and the representatives of the European Community" that declares "[w]e regret that the armed clash in Moscow which was provoked by the supporters of the former parliament resulted in many victims. We nevertheless welcome the fact that the situation has ended and law and order is being restored including respect of human rights. We reconfirm that our support remains unchanged for democratic reform and economic reform pursued by President Yeltsin"; Tokyo Declaration on Japan-Russia Relations, October 13, 1993.

Shikotan and the Habomai Islands belong."[21] By succeeding in enumerating all four islands – and not merely Shikotan and the Habomai grouping – in the joint statement, the Japanese government believed it had scored a diplomatic triumph, as the document explicitly recognizes that both countries view the two larger islands of Etorufu and Kunashir as part and parcel of the ongoing territorial row. As such, whenever the two sides have since returned to negotiations over ownership of the southern Kuriles, the Japanese trumpet loudly the significance of the 1993 Tokyo Declaration.

At various levels, Japanese and Russian government officials met between 1993 and 1999 to try to hammer out a deal. Though both sides repeatedly confirmed their resolve to bring about an early conclusion to peace talks, frequent government changes on Russia's side and Japanese insistence for the return of all of the "Northern Territories" doomed these consultations. Although by 1997 the two sides agreed to set the year 2000 as the ultimate deadline for the signing of a peace treaty (while agreeing to pursue joint economic development of the disputed territories as the negotiations went forward), the Japanese final proposal for Russia to renounce sovereignty over the islands, while allowing it to administer the territories for some years to come, was ultimately unworkable from the Russian perspective. The Yeltsin administration came to a close on December 31, 1999, bequeathing to its successor the task of resolving the thorny predicament.

Soon after becoming President, Vladimir Putin signaled that he viewed the 1956 Joint Declaration as "the key" to resolving the ongoing dispute; this position ultimately stymied negotiations during his first visit to Japan in September 2000. At their meeting in Irkutsk in mid-2001, President Putin and Prime Minister Mori signed a compromise communiqué that, while defining the 1956 Joint Declaration as the "basic legal document" that would function as the foundation for the peace treaty negotiations, also agreed the sovereignty issue involving the four islands should be determined "on the basis of the 1993 Tokyo Declaration." Opposition howls regarding a "sell-out" greeted the young Putin

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[21] They further "agree that negotiations towards an early conclusion of a peace treaty through the solution of this issue on the basis of historical and legal facts and based on the documents produced with the two countries' agreement as well as on the principles of law and justice should continue, and that the relations between the two countries should thus be fully normalized" (Tokyo Declaration on Japan-Russia Relations).

government in parliament, causing the administration to back down and hold back on additional negotiations.[22]

The deadlock was broken in April 2002 when the reform-oriented Koizumi Junichirō emerged as Japan's new Prime Minister, signaling early on his intention to improve relations with Russia along a broad spectrum of issues.[23] In particular, Koizumi was interested in improving the prospects for fossil fuel deliveries from Russia to Japan, especially given the growing instability brewing in the Persian Gulf region. President Putin responded by announcing 2003 as the "Year of Japan," sponsoring numerous cultural exhibits and activities throughout Russia.

For the next two years, the territorial row took a back seat to a calculated broadening and deepening in the Russian-Japanese relationship, something the Japanese had not permitted during the previous decade as – from their earlier perspective – the territorial issue trumped all other interests. Motivated in part by Koizumi's desire to establish for his government a foreign policy legacy and his belief that a strategy of meaningful engagement would prompt Putin – once reelected in 2004 – to reciprocate by compromising over the territorial dispute, the new relationship was exemplified best with the signing in Moscow of the 2003 Plan of Action, a comprehensive agenda that included not only peace treaty and territorial negotiations, but also anticipated cooperative developments in the security, trade, and energy arenas, in particular.[24]

In the aftermath of an election that garnered Putin 70% of the vote, the Japanese believed the President now had the freedom to maneuver to deliver the goods. When the Russian government failed to respond throughout the summer of 2004, the Japanese ratcheted up the pressure, with a planned "inspection" of the southern Kuriles by Koizumi in

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[22] Ouimet, "The Stalemate North of Hokkaido," p. 100.

[23] The optimism surrounding the new Japanese government's ability to establish better relations with Russia was dampened in June 2002 with the arrest of Suzuki Muneo, an important member of the Japanese House of Representatives, who was in charge of Tokyo's policy towards Russia. Ultimately charged with corruption and sentenced to two years in prison in 2004, Suzuki had actively taken part in searching for a far-reaching compromise with Russia over the peace treaty and the territorial dispute; Vasily Golovnin, "Maker of Russia Policy Sentenced in Japan," *TASS* (February 17, 2005).

[24] Ouimet, "The Stalemate North of Hokkaido," p. 101.

September. Ignoring warnings from the Russians that the expedition would harm bilateral relations, Koizumi viewed the islands from a coastguard vessel, remarking that the islands were "native Japanese territories."[25]

True to their words, and buffeted by resurgent economic growth and windfall natural resource profits, the Putin administration responded negatively to Koizumi's provocations. Since then, the Russian government has vigorously insisted that the 1956 Joint Declaration – and not the 1993 Tokyo accords – be the basis of continued negotiations over the fate of the southern Kuriles. Apparently not wanting to needlessly irritate the Koizumi administration further, however, Putin took pains to reiterate in December 2004 that a pipeline route to Japan was still in the offing, although a firm timeline for the project was not established.

From here, relations soured further. Parrying Putin's remarks, Chief Cabinet Secretary Hosoda Hiroyuki pointed toward the Tokyo Declaration of 1993 as the only way forward toward "solving the problem of ownership of all the four islands."[26] To this challenge, Putin responded that the "1956 Declaration was ratified by both the U.S.S.R. and Japan and Russia is the U.S.S.R.'s legal successor and will fulfill all its international obligations." He further expressed astonishment that Japan was now raising questions over a document its parliament had ratified, stating "it is incomprehensible that Japan is now seeking the return of the four islands."[27] He further alluded to a possible postponement of his planned state visit to Japan in early 2005. Furthermore, during his speech at the Japan Institute of International Affairs in February 2005, Russian Ambassador to Japan, Aleksandr Losyukov, argued that the President's visit would not produce a resolution to the territorial dispute in any case. Soon thereafter, Putin's visit to Japan was put on "indefinite hold." In the weeks that followed, both houses of the Japanese parliament unanimously endorsed a resolution that expanded territorial claims against Moscow; in addition, Japan's Education Minister, Nakayama Nariaki, publicly

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[25] Vladimir Solntsev, "Japan Minister Travels to South Kuriles," *TASS* (July 7, 2005).

[26] Andrei Antonov, "Japan to Settle Territory Issue with Russia on Tokyo Declaration," *TASS* (December 24, 2004).

[27] Keizo Nabeshima, "A Return to Northern Basics," *The Japan Times* (January 24, 2005).

demanded that textbooks use the word "occupied" when referring to the Soviet Union's acquisition of control over the "Northern Territories."[28]

In advance of an eagerly anticipated, albeit now postponed, summit meeting in Japan, Koizumi apparently sought to mollify the Russian President by his arrival in Moscow for 60th anniversary V-E celebrations in May. Koizumi waxed expressively regarding the potential for a "strategic relationship" between Japan and Russia; however, the Russian leader, seemingly aware that the advantage now lay with Russia, did not respond, even failing to confirm a date for his eventual arrival in Japan. To this, Aleksandr Losyukov added further fuel to the fire in the Japanese-Russian relationship, by stating in early June that Tokyo "insists on talks only on its own conditions, which is unacceptable for the Russian side….We believe that this provision of the declaration of 1956 on the islands is just a step towards a compromise in solving the problem. If this is unacceptable for the other side, then such a proposal is recalled. And we end up in the situation that exists, that is, we control these four islands and there is no question about the turning over of any islands."[29]

Chief Cabinet Secretary Hosoda reacted to the troubling signals coming from Moscow, by stating unequivocally in July, "We will determinedly continue the talks maintaining our fundamental attitude envisaging the solution of the problem of ownership of the four islands that are our original territories."[30] Along with this, it was announced that Japan's State Minister for Okinawa and Northern Territories Affairs, Koike Yoriko, was visiting the disputed territories, calling for the "consolidation of the Japanese society" for the sake of resolving the escalating conflict.[31]

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[28] Losyukov stated, "As there is no base on which both sides can make concessions at the moment, I am afraid we have no other choice but to accept the fact that the possibility of us reaching any agreement on the issue in the near future does not exist"; "Russian Envoy Says Japan Makes No Concessions on Territorial Dispute," BBC Worldwide Monitoring (February 9, 2005). Also, Artur Blinov, "A Loser's Ultimatum," *Nezavisimaia Gazeta* (March 10, 2005).

[29] Vasily Golovnin and Vladimir Solntsev, "Old Promise of Islands to Japan Not Binding – Ambassador," *TASS* (June 3, 2005).

[30] Sergei Mingazhev, "Japanese to Continue Territorial Dispute Talks with Russia," *TASS* (July 8, 2005).

[31] Vladimir Solntsev, "Japan Minister Travels to South Kuriles," *TASS* (July 7, 2005).

In the tit-for-tat, verbal exchange that had been evident ever since Koizumi's own inspection of the "Northern Territories" the year prior, senior Russian military officials, including Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov, spoke out in late July for the continued presence of military units on southern Kurile bases, while calling for major improvements in military and civilian infrastructure to be made in the region.[32]

At approximately the same time, however, it was announced that the 2005 Putin state visit to Japan was scheduled for late November. In the weeks before the meeting, Putin nonetheless made clear during an appearance on Russian television that the four-island group existed now under Russian sovereignty and there was no intention to discuss the issue at the upcoming summit, until the dispute had been settled under international law.[33] Apparently not wanting to scuttle the upcoming talks, Prime Minister Koizumi took a softer line, arguing that he did not "take the position that it is impossible to develop bilateral relations without the resolution of territorial problems."[34]

In the end, the 2005 Summit came and went without much discussion of the territorial dispute, although twelve other bilateral agreements were signed on issues ranging from Russia's accession to the World Trade Organization and the decommissioning of Russian nuclear submarines to the Pacific Pipeline Project and an anti-terrorism action plan.[35] At least one major Japanese newspaper placed partial blame for the lack of an islands agreement at the doorstep of the prime minister's office; the editorial concluded that Koizumi's Foreign Ministry had sent "confusing signals" to Russian diplomats in recent years over an acceptable formula for resolving the dispute, while arguing that the prime minister's office had failed to properly recognize new realities on the ground, that is, Russia's enhanced economic and political leverage and Japanese firms' heightened interest in the Russian market, despite the enduring territorial row. The authors maintained that such realities should have long ago compelled the government to rethink and discard its longtime (and

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[32] Alexander Konovalov, "Russian Minister Calls for Adopting Federal Program for Southern Kuriles," *TASS* (July 29, 2005).

[33] "Japan-Russia Relations," *Asahi Shimbun* (November 23, 2005).

[34] Hiroko Tabuchi, "Japan Says Better Ties with Russia Not Dependent on Disputed Islands," *Associated Press* (November 14, 2005).

[35] "Japan, Russia Adopt 12 Documents Including Anti-Terror Package," *Japan Economic Newswire* (November 21, 2005).

increasingly outdated) strategy in dealing with the Russians, that is, leveraging Japan's economic power against Russia's territorial intransigence.[36]

Thus, no major breakthrough on the territorial issue was initiated, nor would one occur during the remainder of Koizumi's tenure as prime minister.[37] To be sure, the waning days of the Koizumi government were beleaguered by a fishing dispute near Habomais islands that led to the Russian capture of a Japanese crab fishing trawler and its three crewmen and the shooting death of another.[38] This incident garnered wide coverage in both Japanese and Russian media, bringing the Russian-Japanese relationship to a new post-war low.

Abe's New Deal?

With his election as leader of the Liberal Democratic Party, former Chief Cabinet Secretary Abe Shinzō formally took the reins from Japan's most popular post-war prime minister on September 26, 2006. Although possessing little foreign policy experience, Abe signaled from the start a desire to put his own imprint on Japan's foreign relations. As Chief Cabinet Secretary, Abe had previously discussed his intentions to revisit Japan's pacifist constitution; once in power he has sought to gain popular support

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[36] "Japan-Russia Relations," *Asahi Shimbun* (November 23, 2005).

[37] Indeed, before long the conflict heated up again, as in early 2006 the Russian Foreign Ministry issued a "stern warning" to the Japanese government concerning its territorial claims and "interference in Russian domestic affairs"; "Russia's Foreign Ministry Warns Japan," *RFE/RL Newsline* (February 22, 2006).

[38] Two crewmembers were released from Russian authorities by the end of August. However, the captain, Sakashita Noboru, was held until October 3, when he admitted his guilt and paid an $18,500 fine for illegal entry into Russia's territorial waters and "harm caused to the environment"; "Russian Patrol Guards Kill Japanese Fisherman," *EuroNews* (August 16, 2006); "Russia Tells Japan it Will Release Detained Boat Skipper Tuesday," *Japan Economic Newswire* (October 2, 2006). Since then, two additional incidents – ending with Russian seizures of Japanese fishing vessels – have occurred in the region, as Japanese authorities argue that Russian border patrol ships have stepped up harassment of fishing boats that have operated in these waters without incident for many years; "Russia Seizes Japanese Fishing Boat," *RFE/RL Newsline* (January 22, 2007).

for revising Article IX, thereby allowing Japan to assume its rightful place as a major power in world affairs. Abe also signaled his intention to establish greater comity with China by completing a successful visit to Beijing in autumn.[39]

Abe's new government also made an important overture to Russia in autumn. After the Cabinet's first session ended, the newly reappointed Foreign Minister, Asō Tarō, stated that Tokyo was ready to modify its "tough stance" on the "Northern Territories" issue, arguing, "We must not keep saying that we will win if we get the four islands, or they will win if they get two. If there are no mutual concessions, the two parties will never be able to secure advantages for them."[40] Three months later, Asō backed up Tokyo's words with a suggestion to divide the southern Kuriles based upon the "Chinese model."[41] Using this area-based approach, Japan stood to gain the uninhabited Habomais island group, Shikotan, Kunashir, as well as 25% of the largest island, Etorufu.[42]

Whether or not Asō's move was an officially sanctioned government proposal or a probe designed to reveal Russia's flexibility on the issue, the approach was met with considerable interest by Russian

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[39] This development was made possible by a decision to eschew visits to the controversial Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo. At the summit meeting, President Hu and Prime Minister Abe agreed to establish a joint academic commission to undertake a study of the historical relationship between the two countries and certain historical questions of great import.

[40] Andrey Ivanov, "Tokyo Moved A Little," *Kommersant* (September 28, 2006).

[41] In 2005, the Russian Federation and China resolved their remaining territorial differences by calculating the square mileage of three disputed islands and dividing these possessions equally. It was this method that Asō was proposing, declaring that "If we continue to debate over the 'two islands,' or 'three islands' or 'four islands' without taking into consideration their actual size, these discussions will never get anywhere"; Velisarios Kattoulas, "Split Kuriles in Two, Says Minister," *The Times* (December 14, 2006). Another source claims that the impetus for the "equal shares" approach initially came from the Russian side in late November; "Russia Said to Offer Japan New Formula on Territorial Dispute," *RFE/RL Newsline* (January 3, 2007).

[42] The line dividing Etorufu was proposed as the boundary between the two states; Kattoulas, "Split Kuriles in Two, Says Minister."

authorities and experts.[43] While warning Japan's government from sending "mixed messages" to its Russian counterpart, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov did raise expectations that Russia's "strategic dialogue" with Japan – top-level negotiations covering an entire gamut of issues – would begin in earnest in 2007.[44] By January's end, both sides claimed to have been satisfied with the outcome of high-level, "intensive meetings" held in Moscow; indeed, the talks ended with an announcement of an upcoming visit to Russia by Prime Minister Abe in early 2007.[45]

Prospects for Resolution

As this article goes to press, there appears to be a very small window of opportunity for Japan and Russia to achieve a breakthrough over the territorial row. If struck, such a compromise could lead to further important agreements in the economic, energy, and security arenas. Indeed, a Kurile compromise would altogether transform the existing bilateral relationship, perhaps finally adding substance to the "strategic dialogue" that has been entertained for the better part of the last decade. Yet, while certain common interests encourage moderation on either side, others constrain the two actors from making meaningful, historic concessions.

For the Japanese, paramount among the former are concerns over obtaining access to long-term supplies of energy resources, particularly in view of the mounting instability in the Middle East. Japan imports roughly 5.5 million barrels of oil per day (bbl/d), with approximately 4.2 million bbl/d arriving from the destabilized Persian Gulf region; indeed, Japan's dependence upon Persian Gulf oil deliveries has increased from 57% of its oil needs to a high of 78% in 2003.[46] Diversifying energy imports is,

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[43] "Japanese Foreign Minister Calls for Dividing Kuriles with Russia," *BBC Monitoring* (December 14, 2006); and "Update: Aso's Kurils Proposal Unrealistic, But May Spur Talks – Experts," *RIA Novosti* (December 14, 2006).

[44] "Russia Plans to Open Strategic Dialogue with Japan Next Year," *RIA Novosti* (December 16, 2006).

[45] Jonathan Eyal, "Russia-Japan Relations Set to Improve with Visits," *The Straits Times* (January 26, 2007).

[46] C.I.A. World Factbook (http://www.cia/gov/cia/publications/factbook/print/ja.html). Also, "Persian Gulf Oil and Gas Exports Fact Sheet,", E.I.A. Country Analysis Briefs (September 8, 2004, http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/pgulf.html).

therefore, an important strategic goal of Japan, leading the government to support – both symbolically and financially – the construction of a costly, $10 billion, 4,200 kilometer Russian pipeline from Taishet near Lake Baikal to Nakhodka on the Pacific coastline. Thus, energy is one arena in which Russian and Japanese interests arguably coincide; however, since the Pacific Pipeline Project was announced in 2002, Russia appears to have left undecided the pipeline's initial destination – either to Daqing, China or Nakhodka on the Pacific – as a tactic to squeeze the best deal from either Beijing or Tokyo.[47] Finding the middle ground in the southern Kuriles dispute may permit Japan to diversify oil imports while allowing Russia to diversify the costs of a pipeline that could ostensibly deliver oil to not only Japan, but also to other Pacific Rim importing countries, China included.[48]

In the backdrop of a comprehensive territorial agreement, the budding bilateral trade relationship would also be enhanced and expanded. Indeed, the past several years have witnessed considerable trade growth; the volume of trade between the two countries has increased from $6.4 billion in 2003 to well over $10 billion in 2005.[49] At the same time, however, even though trade grew almost 60% over the period, the aggregate bilateral trade numbers pale in comparison with the value of that between either Russia and China or China and Japan, in particular.[50] To be sure, the removal of the Kurile controversy would also eliminate a major barrier to improved

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[47] Kozo Mizoguchi, "Japan Official Urges Russia on Pipeline," *Associated Press* (April 21, 2005); Kaori Kaneko, "Pipeline Takes Center Stage Between Japan, Russia," *Agence France Presse* (November 22, 2005); and Peter Harmsen, "Ukraine Row Has China, Japan Worry About Over-Reliance on Russian Energy," *Agence France Presse* (January 8, 2006).

[48] To the author's knowledge, there is presently no plan to extend the "China spur" beyond Daqing; if constructed first, this spur destination would leave the volume of Russian exports wholly dependent upon domestic Chinese demand.

[49] Dmitry Kosyrev, "Japan and Russia," *The Statesman* (November 19, 2005).

[50] In 2004, Russia accounted for only 0.7% of Japan's foreign trade. Trade between the two countries in 2004 was a mere 4.5% of Japan's trade with China. Vladimir Solntsev, "Russia-Japan Trade Turnover May Reach 8,000 Million USD – View," *TASS* (October 20, 2004); and Sergei Mingazhev, "Talk About Border Delimitation with Japan Premature – View," *TASS* (November 2, 2004).

economic ties, opening Russia fully to Japan's formidable electronics and automotive industries while securing for Russia's extractive industries an additional market.

In the Northeast Asian geo-political realm, the interests of Russia and Japan also converge over North Korea, as well as the growing political, economic, and military influence of a resurgent China. Japan, in particular, is concerned about the illicit drug trade that Kim Jong-Il's regime engages in, while both powers have substantial cause to worry about North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile production programs.[51] In the absence of any lingering territorial dispute, Japan and Russia working closer together in the context of an ongoing Six-Party Process may help to avert the worst excesses of Kim's maladministration. Above all, though, both Russia and Japan have reason to be troubled about an emerging, expansionist China. On the Japanese side, recent polls indicate the number of citizens who felt fearful of China has hit the highest level in 30 years.[52] Especially with Japan paring back its military expenditures over the next decade, the government of Japan would like to develop a closer relationship with Russia to counter-balance China in Asia. As a Teikyo University expert in defense matters stated, "As long as Japan and Russia are in cooperation, China would not be able to move against us."[53]

As for Russia, the government is extremely concerned about the "economic isolation" of the Far Eastern provinces from the rest of the country, worried that a depopulated East could encourage bordering states to encroach upon Russia's sovereignty in the region.[54] Since 1990, for example, the Far Eastern provinces' population has declined by over 20%, while Chinese immigration – both legal and illegal – has increased by over half a million annually.[55] Such developments have caused President Putin

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[51] North Korea's communist regime is reportedly the source of much of Japan's methamphetamine troubles. As well, Russia has expressed reservations concerning the increasingly close connection between Iran and North Korea's nuclear and medium-range missile experts.

[52] James Brooke, "Quietly, Japan and Russia Build Closer Ties," *The International Herald Tribune* (January 11, 2005).

[53] Ibid.

[54] Oleg Shchedrov, "Putin Hopes Giant Resort will Revive Far East," *Reuters* (January 29, 2007).

[55] "Population of Russian Far East Shrinking by Almost 300 a Day – Envoy," *Interfax* (December 20, 2006).

to convene a series of high-level Security Council meetings to discuss the Far Eastern region and to establish a special governmental Commission on the Socio-Economic Development of the Far Eastern Federal District, which will reportedly consider measures to revive the region's dilapidated transport infrastructure and encourage the development of extractive-based industries.[56] Putin believes that, without an increase in population levels brought about by an improvement in the overall socio-economic development of the region, a "serious threat to our political and economic positions in the Asia-Pacific region, and to Russia's national security, without exaggeration" will develop.[57] Thus, substantial Japanese investment into the region – ushered in by a lasting territorial agreement concerning the southern Kurile islands – could assist the Russian government in reversing the socio-economic decline in the Far East, while averting growing Chinese influence.

While Japan and Russia share certain economic and strategic interests, one cannot deny the existence of still other economic and political barriers that serve to limit movement forward toward substantial territorial concessions. For one, the interests of Japan's vital fishing industry would best be served by obtaining an exclusive right to angle in the lucrative waters surrounding the "Northern Territories."[58] As well, for any Japanese government to consider a territorial compromise, it has to deal with a small, but very vocal refugee community, that is, those 8,000 living Kurile islanders who were exiled from their homeland at the end of World War II. Since the average age of this cohort in early 2006 was 73.5 years, to avoid opposition from this quarter it may be prudent for the Japanese government to eschew an agreement with the Russians for another decade.[59]

Political pressures from the outspoken and overtly nationalist extreme right in Japan also may leave the present government with little room to maneuver. The "Northern Territories" has become a cause celebre for nationalists, who were angered by former Prime Minister Koizumi's initial overtures to the Russians in 2002 but were ultimately placated by him

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[56] "Isolation of Russian Far East Threat to National Security – Putin," *RIA Novosti* (December 20, 2006).
[57] "President Warns of Far East's Isolation," *RFE/RL Newsline* (December 21, 2006).
[58] Others claim rich oil and natural gas deposits are located in the immediate environs of the southern Kuriles.
[59] Hirano, "Residents Still Dream."

in part due to his controversial visits to the Yasukuni Shrine.[60] In view of the considerable degree of maneuver that will be required to reach a Kurile settlement, one wonders whether Prime Minister Abe would be able to withstand the political mudslinging from this important electoral constituency, particularly in view of his recent visit to China.[61] In the final analysis, Abe's own plummeting poll numbers may scuttle the chance for a desired breakthrough. As his approval ratings have slumped by 30 points since taking office, the Prime Minister's policy response will perhaps become more cautious and conventional, especially in view of his party's defeat in the upper house elections of summer 2007.[62]

At the same time, Russia's hand is today perhaps more constrained than Japan's to offer major concessions in the Pacific. Indeed, as a result of important domestic economic and political considerations, Russia under Putin is unable to give Japan more than that offered in 1956. Added to these pressures, too, is the necessity for Putin (and his chosen successor) to project Russia as a rising global power that is reclaiming its once vaunted position of influence on the world stage.

First off, Russia's empowered military continues to view the southern Kuriles as important geo-strategic possessions. By retaining control over them, Russia's navy, in particular, can check access to the Sea of Okhotsk, effectively preserving it as an internal "Russian lake."[63]

Also, due to Russia's phenomenal economic growth of the past eight years, as well as record high oil and natural gas prices that have contributed to a $300 billion stabilization fund, Russia's government is aware it holds the economic upper hand vis-à-vis the Japanese. Thus, the "investment card" – once bandied about by successive Japanese governments as an incentive to previous Russian governments to grant territorial concessions – has much less leverage today than it did prior to 1998. Furthermore, with Japanese business interests making major

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[60] David Pilling, "Japanese in Push to Get Islands back from Russia," *The Financial Times* (February 8, 2005).

[61] Although Abe's proposals to revisit Article IX of the Japanese Constitution and promote greater patriotism have garnered him the support of the nationalists, his recent overtures to China and South Korea have not played well in nationalist circles.

[62] David Pilling, "Budget Boycott Puts Abe under Pressure," *The Financial Times* (February 5, 2007).

[63] Konovalov, "Russian Minister Calls."

investments in Russia's economy, Japan's economic leverage is further undermined.[64]

Furthermore, Russia's leaders are cognizant of Japan's overwhelming energy vulnerability, in particular since the 2003 Iraq invasion. Indeed, the recent Sakhalin-II imbroglio between the Russian government, on the one hand, and Royal Dutch Shell and its Japanese partners, Mitsui and Mitsubishi, on the other, conveniently demonstrates that on energy matters, Russia once again holds all the cards.[65]

Certain political factors also may preclude a comprehensive territorial settlement. For one, domestic public opinion is solidly against returning the southern Kuriles to Japan, with few believing the issue to be an urgent one. Recent opinion polls have shown that at least 73% of Russian respondents have gone on record as opposing their return, while another 64% stated that they would take a less favorable view of the President if the Kuriles were returned.[66] At the same time, Japanese officials and commentators – and at least one noted Russian analyst – believe that, were President Putin to spend some political capital and persuade the Russian public how territorial concessions would benefit the

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[64] For example, Toyota Motor Corporation, Japan's largest automobile manufacturer, is building a manufacturing plant in St. Petersburg that will have the capacity to make 15,000 vehicles per year; Kozo Mizoguchi, "Japan Says it will Endorse Russia's W.T.O. Bid," *Associated Press* (April 22, 2005).

[65] Russia's Gazprom acquired a majority stake in the massive Sakhalin-II natural gas project, formerly controlled only by Shell, Mitsui, and Mitsubishi, in late 2006. The Russian Environmental Ministry charged the foreign operators were damaging the region's environment, although many critics claim the government's real intentions were to both assert state control over important natural resource deposits and to use "energy supply as a diplomatic card" with Japan; "Russia Ready for 'Fair' Energy Deals with Asia: Putin," *Agence France Presse* (November 17, 2006); Arkady Ostrovsky, "Russia Seals Deal for Shell Project," *The Financial Times* (December 22, 2006); and Abraham Lustgarten, "Shell Shake Down," *Fortune* (February 5, 2007).

[66] "Focus: Japan, Russia Avoid Islands Dispute," *TASS* (November 23, 2005); and "Public Opinion in Russia, Japan Reject Any Compromise on Territorial Dispute," *BBC Monitoring* (November 18, 2006).

country, ultimately Russian society would accept a territorial compromise that would redraw the borders.[67]

Still, this argument disregards other important factors constraining Putin's maneuver: the rising influence of the "siloviki" under Putin and his own concerns for his "legacy." Should Putin step down from a position of real influence in Russian politics after 2008, it appears probable he would want to safeguard his record for history as the first Russian leader in the last quarter-century who has restored Russians' self-confidence and re-established Russia as a major world player.[68] Also, if Putin were to grant Japan significant territorial concessions this would place him at odds with a core group of supporters he has successfully promoted to positions of power throughout his tenure, the "siloviki." The "siloviki" (from "silovye struktury" or "power structures") are high-ranking members of the intelligence, law enforcement, and armed services bureaucracies who are centralizing statists, economic nationalists, and "great power" conservatives.[69] During the last three years, this group has increasingly held greater sway over Russian policy, as privately-held natural resource monopolies have been taken over by the state. As evidenced in a recent foreign policy briefing, the "silovik" line also appears to eschew compromise where issues of sovereignty arise:

> Foreign policy autonomy for Russia is an unconditional imperative. In the modern, increasingly globalized world, by no means everyone can afford that. But for us it is a key issue, a question of sovereignty. Our country is not suited to being managed, or having its foreign policy managed, from outside. We

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[67] Rustem Falyakhov, "Continuing the Old Dispute Deprives both Sides of Potential Benefits," *Gazeta* (November 18, 2005). The Japanese, in particular, believe that with 70% approval ratings, President Putin now has a political opportunity that certainly his predecessor did not.

[68] Many experts believe that Putin may stage a "constitutional coup" to remain as Russia's leader after 2008. Such scenarios include either inaugurating a constitutional amendment that would remove the present two-term limit or re-establishing Russia's regime as a parliamentary republic, with Putin holding executive power as prime minister.

[69] Ian Bremmer and Samuel Charap, "The Siloviki in Putin's Russia: Who They Are and What They Want," *The Washington Quarterly* 30 (2006-07): 83-92.

do not try to please everyone – we simply proceed from our own clear and pragmatic interests. Let me remind you that our country tried particularly hard to 'please' others in the age of Czar Nicholas I and in the last Soviet years: we know what that led to.[70]

In addition, President Putin and the siloviki would probably not countenance a Kurile turnover for the precedent this might set for other territorial-based conflicts with which Russia is currently engaged, such as ongoing discussions with the Baltic states, Ukraine, and Georgia over disputed territories and access to Russian military bases, as well as, of course, the Chechen armed conflict.

It appears, therefore, that from the Russian perspective a breakthrough in the negotiations along the lines of the "Chinese model" has limited chances for success. The opportunity that exists, such as it is, grows ever more remote the closer Russian parliamentary and presidential elections come.[71] It is surely not Putin's intention to saddle his Unified Russia party and his chosen presidential successor with controversial and potentially unpopular concessions in the immediate run-up to the elections; to be sure, opposition communist and nationalist parties have not hesitated to take advantage of the issue in the past.[72]

Conclusion

The southern Kurile or "Northern Territories" issue has plagued the Russian-Japanese relationship for over sixty years. Movement toward a permanent resolution early on was frozen by an ensuing Cold War. In the 1990s, a deal again seemed possible, yet in hindsight it appears the Japanese asked too much of a weakened Yeltsin administration, criticized by opposition forces for being far too compliant to the West.

Circumstances have changed: Russia is now led by a popular politician, who has restored the country's equilibrium, both in terms of Russia's domestic economic footing and its international standing. And, both Russia and Japan have certain mutual economic and political goals in

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[70] "Foreign Minister Lavrov Argues Foreign Policy Autonomy 'Imperative' for Russia," *Moskovskiye Novosti* (January 19, 2007).

[71] Parliamentary and presidential elections are to be held in December 2007 and March 2008, respectively.

[72] Yulia Petrovskaya et al., "Kremlin Isn't Giving Islands to Japanese Yet," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (November 16, 2004).

common, particularly in view of increasing global natural resource vulnerabilities and opportunities, as well as a resurgent China. It may appear to some, therefore, that the time for a comprehensive territorial agreement has come, with the broad outline of the eventual compact within view.

In the final analysis, however, certain critical factors work against this territorial understanding. For one, Japan's leverage has been unquestionably weakened since Putin first met Prime Minister Mori in 2000, while domestic political interests continue to constrain an enfeebled Abe administration. Also, the reinvigoration of Russia's economy and the revitalization of its oil and natural gas industries strengthen Russia's hand in the dispute, while domestic political considerations also reduce the maneuverability of even an extremely popular and altogether dominant president. Thus, for a successful territorial deal to be brokered – and, consequently, for a full flowering in a potential Russian-Japanese "strategic relationship" to transpire – actors on both sides of the dispute would have to transcend such overwhelming obstacles and offer greater flexibility than it appears is currently possible.

THE *GENBUN'ITCHI* SOCIETY AND THE DRIVE TO "NATIONALIZE" THE JAPANESE LANGUAGE

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The *Genbun'itchi* Society was established in 1900 and disbanded in 1910. In the first few years of its existence, it was the single most important and influential organization championing the cause of language development in Japan. It was responsible for defining issues of language reform, making them a primary concern of the ruling elite and providing an ideological framework for educators, intellectuals and policy makers as they considered the future of the Japanese language. Though opposed by representatives of more traditional elements of society such as the *kangaku* (Chinese learning school), the members of the *Genbun'itchi* Society persevered in their quest to rationalize the written forms of Japanese. Without the support of the *Genbun'itchi* Society, modern Japanese (*kokugo*) would not have come into existence when it did – and certainly not in the form that it did. In spite of its importance, the role of the *Genbun'itchi* Society in the formation of modern Japanese has not been fully illuminated. Most often, Japanese language scholars have characterized the Society as just one more of many language-reform groups in the Meiji era.[1] This perspective obscures the value of the work its members completed. My primary objectives here are to illustrate the motivations of Society leadership and to demonstrate how it was able to finish the task that so many other Meiji-era language organizations left undone.

The Japanese word *genbun'itchi* means "unity of the spoken and written language." The spoken forms of all languages are organic, however, and evolve at a much faster rate than their written forms. Thus, no written language is in complete accord with its spoken form. Nonetheless, the leadership of the *Genbun'itchi* Society wanted to transform written Japanese into something that more closely resembled the spoken form and which could be used as a tool for the continued development of a more cohesive nation. Indeed, the movement which supported the *Genbun'itchi* Society is best characterized as a central component of the nationalizing campaigns of the 1890s. In particular, the *Genbun'itchi* Society is linked to

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[1] See Nanette Twine, *Language and the Modern State: The Reform of Written Japanese* (New York: Routledge Press, 1991).

the resurgence of the *kokugaku* (nativist school), the discourse of primacy of state, the divinity of the Emperor and absolute devotion by Japanese subjects to the Imperial Household.

Language Reform and the Imperial Society for Education

The *Genbun'itchi* Society was established by and responsible to Meiji Japan's most prestigious body of educators, the *Teikoku kyōikukai* (Imperial Society for Education). In the late Meiji era, the Imperial Society for Education was without peer among pressure groups interested in educational pursuits. Indeed, it has been characterized as something of a semi-governmental body because of the influence it exercised over education policy and the eminence of its members. The organizers of the Society were focused on the task of building a first-rate education system for Japan and wrote into their charter: "the aim of the Imperial Society for Education is, through the cooperative agency of our society, to reform education and to plan for its advancement."[2] Its president and sponsor was Prince Konoe Atsumaro (1863-1904), President of the House of Peers and highest ranking noble in the land outside of the primary Imperial household.[3] Other leaders included Tsuji Shinji (1842-1915), Director of Educational Affairs in the Ministry of Education and former *Meirokusha* member; Sawayanagi Masatarō (1865-1927), Vice-Minister of Education in 1906 and future president of Kyoto Imperial University; and Izawa Shūji (1851-1917), who is perhaps most well known for his contributions to music education through the publication of Japan's first music textbook.[4] Izawa sought to develop "national music" (*kokugaku*) for the purposes of "moral education," which he believed was insufficient in Japan at that time.[5] Izawa also was one of the first to make known his opinions on language education in the colonies when he was appointed by the first Governor-General of Taiwan to the position of Head of the Bureau of

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[2] *Shin kyōikugaku dajiten*, vol. 5 (Tokyo: Daiichi hōki, 1990), p. 231.

[3] Prince Konoe's renown was eclipsed by that of his son, Konoe Fumimaro, Prime Minister of Japan from 1937-1939 and 1940-1941.

[4] Tsuji and Izawa were influential leaders of two education organizations, the *Dainihon kyōikukai* (The Greater Japan Education Society) and the *Kokka kyōikukai* (National Education Society), which merged in 1896 to create the Imperial Society for Education.

[5] Ury Eppstein, "Musical Instruction in Meiji Education: A Study of Adaptation and Assimilation," *Monumenta Nipponica* 40/1 (1985): 13, 28.

Educational Affairs. Only two days after taking control of the Bureau, he reportedly stated that the primary function of education in Taiwan was to "make the new citizens learn Japanese."[6] Sawayanagi, Tsuji and Izawa, were all adherents of *kokugaku* philosophy.[7]

In general, the Imperial Society for Education's main goal was to promote state education. In order to achieve that goal, they delineated their assignments into eight tasks:

> 1) To hold meetings on various kinds of short training courses.
> 2) To publish education textbooks and a society bulletin.
> 3) To recognize individuals with the Distinguished Men of Education Service Award.
> 4) To become associated with a library.
> 5) To study and investigate various (educational) issues.
> 6) To hold general meetings of educators from all over the nation.
> 7) To endeavor to fund fully education.
> 8) To sponsor and to participate in international education conferences.[8]

It is not surprising that the Society should turn its attention to the development of a national language, since its purpose was to reform and develop state education. In contrast to the advocates of the *genbun'itchi* style in literature, however, the Imperial Society for Education was interested in how education might become a more effective tool for the inculcation of state values if a colloquial form of the language were to be used. As indicated by several of the most prominent members of the Society, education was intended to serve the interests of the State. For men like Tsuji, Sawayanagi and Izawa, a standard language written, read and understood by all Japanese was intended to both facilitate communication between teacher and student and to be a means through which state values could be more effectively conveyed in the education system. The Imperial Society for Education thus served to legitimize the efforts of intellectuals

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[6] Si Cheng Hong, ed., *Linguistic Politics and Policy* (Taipei: Chian Ui, 1996), p. 115.

[7] Sawayanagi Masatarō, *Sawayanagi zenshū*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Sawayanagi zenshū henshū iinkai, 1925), pp. 430-431.

[8] *Shin kyōikugaku dajiten*, vol. 5, p. 231. Information contained within parenthesis has been inserted for the sake of clarity.

such as Shiratori Kurakichi (1865-1942) and linguists such as Ueda Kazutoshi (1867-1937) who sought to cast language reform issues in the education reform paradigm and as an issue worthy of attention at the highest levels of government.

The *Genbun'itchi* Society was not the first organization related to language reform that the Imperial Society for Education sponsored. That honor went to the *Kokuji kairyōbu* (Script Reform Section), which had been established in 1899. The Script Reform Section of the Imperial Society for Education was led by Maejima Hisoka, who by that time had devoted over thirty-five years of his life to various Meiji reform efforts. His long history of activism had afforded him status as one of the most prominent members of the Imperial Society for Education. Incidentally, his first petition to the Tokugawa shōgunate regarding language reform in 1866 was finally published in 1899 and likely coincided with his appointment as the head of the Script Reform Section of the Imperial Society for Education. Other members of the Section were Katō Hiroyuki, Tokyo Imperial University professors Inoue Tetsujirō (1855-1944), Ueda Kazutoshi and Yatabe Ryōkichi (1851-1899), and future Gakushuin University professor Kanō Jigorō (1860-1938) among others. The Script Reform Section's task was limited in scope. Rather than looking at the various ways in which the language might be reformed on a broad scale, the Script Reform Section considered how characters should be systematized, limited, simplified or abolished.

The Imperial Society established other language investigation groups including the *Kana chōsabu* (Kana Investigation Section), which was instituted in May 1900, the *Gaikokugo kyōjuhō kenkyūbu* (Foreign Language Teaching Methods Study Section), which was established in July 1902, and the *Kanbun kyōjuhō kenkyūbu* (Classical Language Teaching Methods Study Section), which came into existence in December 1902. In addition, the Imperial Society for Education also sponsored the *Kokubun chōsabu* (Language Investigation Section). This section of the Imperial Society was instructed to investigate the colloquial style and to refine the colloquial speech of upper-class Tokyo residents in order to make it capable of becoming the national standard. Later when the Imperial Society determined to afford greater status to the colloquial form, its members established the *Genbun'itchi* Society. Through the work of this last society and its members, the *genbun'itchi* form of Japanese began to take shape as

the national, standard language of modern Japan.[9] However, before the various Sections of the Imperial Society had time to complete their mandates, the Meiji leadership decided to create an organization within the government to research and codify a colloquial form of the Japanese language. This organization would become the *Kokugo chōsa iinkai* (National Language Research Council).

The *Genbun'itchi* Society: A Portrait of the Membership

In March 1900, the Imperial Society for Education launched the *Genbun'itchi* Society for the purposes of promoting the colloquial style in fields other than literature. In doing so, the Script Reform and Language Investigation Sections of the Imperial Society were disbanded and their function and membership brought under the administrative umbrella of the *Genbun'itchi* Society. In previous years, the Imperial Society for Education had sanctioned the groups outlined above to study other facets of the language in an effort to determine how the language might be reformed. Their suggestions had helped lead the Imperial Society to consider *genbun'itchi* as the most promising form. Maejima Hisoka, formally chair of the Script Reform Section of the Imperial Society, was named head of the *Genbun'itchi* Society.

The *Genbun'itchi* Society had 223 members, and like its parent organization, counted among them some of the most influential members of society in late Meiji Japan.[10] The majority of the members were either educators or associated with education in some way. In addition to those with a long-term interest in language reform such as Yano Fumio, Ueda Kazutoshi, Haga Yaichi, Inoue Tetsujirō, Ōtsuki Fumihiko, Miyake Yonekichi, and Shiratori Kurakichi, others who held (or would eventually hold) positions of middle to high rank within the government such as Tsuji, Izawa and Sawayanagi were members. Senior statesmen such as Maejima, Prince Konoe, Kikuji Dairoku and Katō Hiroyuki were among a select few who would vie for power on the cabinet level and who were active members as well. Other prominent scholars who were just beginning what would become illustrious careers included Nitobe Inazō (1862-1933), who was to

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[9] *Teikoku kyōikukai gojūnunenshi* (Tokyo: Teikoku kyōikukai hen, 1933), pp. 118-121.

[10] *Genbun'itchikai no kaishi* (Tokyo: Genbun'itchikai, 1903), pp. 45-53. This collection was published in incomplete form in 1903 and can be found in the National Diet Library.

become a Professor at both Tokyo and Kyoto Imperial Universities and eventually Assistant Director of the League of Nations from 1920-1926, Shimonaka Yasaburō (1878-1961) founder of Heibonsha publishing and editor of Japan's first modern encyclopedia, Kanō Jigorō and Tsuboi Shōgorō (1863-1913), first professor of Anthropology at Tokyo Imperial University and founder of the Japanese Anthropological Association. Finally, there were future scholars such as Hoshina Kōichi and Yasugi Sadatoshi who, while still graduate students, were also members of the Society.[11]

A large number of journalists also served in the *Genbun'itchi* Society. This is significant because for the first time since language associations began to form in the middle Meiji years, members of the press, who would be greatly influenced by the creation of a new writing style, began to discuss issues of language reform. Fifteen members of the Society identified themselves as journalists and worked for seven different companies. Perhaps the most prominent journalist who was a member was Nakai Kitarō, editor-in-chief of the *Yomiuri* newspaper. Nakai, who had long been interested in the development of an acceptable colloquial form, reported widely on the activities of the Society. The *Nihon*, *Kokumin*, *Hōchi*, *Niroku* and *Jiji* news organizations were also represented. The newspapers or journals of these organizations all reported, to one degree or another, on the deliberations of the Society. No fewer than forty-eight articles appeared regarding language reform in either newspapers or general reader magazines just between 1899 and 1902. This indicates that not only were non-specialists developing an interest in language reform, but that the general public was also becoming informed about language reform issues and the steps being taken to create a new form of Japanese.[12]

The *Genbun'itchi* Society offered various levels of membership: ordinary, special and honorary. Dues were assessed depending on the level of membership. Many of the ordinary members were teachers and administrators in primary, middle and higher schools. The Society also had a broad membership geographically, with members generally living in the Tokyo or Osaka areas, but extending to other areas of Japan as well. Members even corresponded from locations in Europe and South East Asia. For example, Shiratori, Haga, and Suejima Yasomu, were allowed to maintain membership. It is also significant to note that a number of women

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[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid.

were also members of the Society. While they do not appear to have been very active, that they were permitted to join at all is indicative of the importance of reform issues in both education and language nationwide. Among the female members of the Society were Kiyofuji Akiko, Yamawaki Fusako, Tanahashi Ayako, Hatoyama Haruko and Hamao Sakuko. In addition, Prince Konoe's spouse was also a member.[13]

Purpose, Rules and Structure

The Imperial Society for Education had made a bold statement in establishing a language reform advocacy group with the name "*Genbun'itchi.*" Indeed, as the appellation indicates, the members of the Imperial Society had already chosen to forsake one of the traditional forms such as *kanbun* or *sōrōbun* in favor of the colloquial form. Most were convinced that even *futsūbun*, the classical standard agreed upon by a consensus of intellectuals and linguists in the early 1890s, needed to be abandoned. The Imperial Society, in sponsoring the *Genbun'itchi* Society, was to act in an oversight capacity, to ensure that the proper steps were taken to develop the new form of the language. Accordingly, the rules and guidelines set forth by the *Genbun'itchi* Society acted as a roadmap which both directed its course and set its boundaries.

At one of the first meetings of the *Genbun'itchi* Society, the goals of the Society were made known. In general, the members were to promote and investigate the colloquial form and to use the colloquial form in writing. They were to use colloquial characters and were free to decide, according to personal preference, what syllabary they would employ as they wrote. The policies of the Society with regard to language were to "rewrite difficult language in the *genbun'itchi* style," to "review *genbun'itchi* styles published in newspapers and magazines," and to "invite authorities on the *genbun'itchi* styles to tell of their experiences."[14] After deciding on a standard language, they were to help diffuse the *genbun'itchi* form by "writing contributions to newspapers and magazines using the colloquial style," by "using the colloquial style in all correspondence," and by "recruiting new members."[15] The order of language investigation was to proceed from a study of ordinary correspondence news editorials, literary

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[13] Ibid., pp. 1-53.
[14] Ibid., p. 1.
[15] Ibid., p. 2.

writing, textbooks, official terminology and finally, public notices.[16] Many of the other rules were procedural in nature, setting forth when, where and how meetings would be held, how members would be admitted, membership dues and how officers would be chosen.

Perhaps as important as the rules which actually governed the *Genbun'itchi* Society were the guidelines not expressed in any official communication. Indeed, the tasks of the Society were very limited. The members of the Society were not instructed to investigate any form of Japanese other than *genbun'itchi* nor were they to determine the most pure or most efficient means of communication. The *genbun'itchi* form of the language they were to investigate and study was limited to that spoken by upper-class residents of Tokyo. They were not given the task of deciding upon or codifying grammar nor of determining standard orthography. For all practical purposes, the *Genbun'itchi* Society was to act as a high-powered advocacy group and not to actually determine the specifics of the new language. It is in this capacity as a lobbying organization that the Society had its greatest influence. Secondarily, because of the prominence of Society members, it could direct how issues of language reform came to be expressed, to control discourse and to organize the agenda of this reform movement.

Some Presentations, Discussions, and Findings

Many of the themes and ideas found in the lectures, presentations and deliberations of the Society were well known among long-time advocates of language reform in the Meiji era and had been under consideration for at least two decades. The presentations can be grouped into three categories: authors writing about the general development and history of the colloquial language; practitioners delineating the minutia of specific grammatical points; and *kokugaku* activists writing to promote the colloquial language as yet one more step to strengthen Japan and contribute to efforts to build a more cohesive, unified state. Many of the contributions found in the *Minutes of the Genbun'itchi Society* were short presentations and lectures and of no great original value. The findings of the Society served to reinforce existing models of language reform. Indeed, even though the members of the Society were dedicated to the establishment of the *genbun'itchi* form of the language, there was still some reluctance among several members of the Society to abandon totally the classical

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[16] Ibid., p. 4.

forms. For example, in an October 15, 1901 lecture to the *Genbun'itchi* Society, author Ozaki Kōyō (1869-1903) asserted that the colloquial form should be the basis of communication in Japan. He persisted in emphasizing, however, that after mastering this basic form, those with academic, intellectual or literary aspirations should then continue on and become skilled in one of the classical styles. Since for him the colloquial style lacked beauty and grace, this was a compromise he could countenance. In addition, Ozaki, like most authors of the era, was interested in the development of the language, not necessarily for the purposes of advancing a state agenda, but in order to facilitate effective communication. In this lecture, Ozaki also revealed the power the *Genbun'itchi* Society had to initiate the attributive process and to establish a provenance for the language reform movement. Ozaki did not ascribe to Futabatei Shimei the honor of having been the first to create and use the colloquial forms in a significant work of fiction. Instead, he suggested that Yamada Bimyō and Tsubouchi Shōyō were responsible for originating the form.[17]

In a series of short presentations at the November 15, 1901 meeting, three other language reform advocates expressed their opinions. Shimamura Hōgetsu (1871-1918) a scholar and novelist, like Ozaki, was most interested in the general health of the language used in works of fiction. The greatest problem he saw with the colloquial form, other than its lack of clarity, was the choice of copula.[18] Shimamura sought to limit the number of possible verb endings. He outlined the most prominent, attributing to Yamada Bimyō the *desu*, to Futabatei the *da*, and to Ozaki the *de aru* forms. Furthermore, he asserted that *de aru* form originated among fishermen in Yokohama. If true, the written form most prominent today originated not, as expected, among upper-class Tokyo residents, but among poorly educated laborers in a small seaside city. Later, Yokoi Tokio, a well-known Christian of the "Kumamoto Band" and older cousin of Tokutomi Sohō, lectured on the spiritual components of the language. He compared Martin Luther to Confucius, and asserted that since Luther had been able to translate the Bible into the vernacular of the day, and that Confucius had most likely written in the colloquial, Japanese should not be held strictly to outdated modes of communication. Indeed, if the spiritual examples of Confucius and Luther were to serve as a guide, then it was the duty of all

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[17] Ibid., pp. 5-6.

[18] The copula is a part of speech in the Japanese language which comes at the end of a sentence and generally indicates tense and level of politeness.

educated Japanese to use a colloquial form of the language.[19] In the same series of meetings, the historian Shiratori Kurakichi outlined how language and the strength of a nation were interconnected. Using the Uralic-Altaic family of languages as an example, he asserted that the decline of the Manchu, Mongolian and Korean societies, among others, stemmed from a slavish devotion to older forms of their languages and an inability to allow their languages to evolve so that the actual thoughts of the people could be expressed. It was after this series of presentations that the *Genbun'itchi* Society decided, as an entity separate from the Imperial Society, to petition the national legislature to immediately establish a governmental agency to investigate issues of language reform and to implement a national language.

Most members of the *Genbun'itchi* Society were already convinced that the Japanese language was in need of reform and that the *genbun'itchi* form was the most promising style. Thus, most of the substantive lectures and presentations focused on how best to mobilize government support for reform. The most influential members of the Society who spoke at meetings did not always direct their message to members, but rather to the public as a whole and, more specifically, to Meiji government officials. For example, Tsuboi Shōgorō presented a lecture entitled "A Petition on the Realization of *Genbun'itchi*" in a February 13, 1901 meeting.[20] This presentation was among the longest found in the *Minutes of the Genbun'itchi Society* and addressed a number of topics related to language reform. Tsuboi asserted that the use of the classical forms of the language contributed to a lack of social cohesion and hindered Japan from fulfilling its "national destiny."[21] Accordingly, he asserted that there must be unity between the written and spoken forms of the language. Maintenance of the status quo, Tsuboi stressed, would leave Japan at a strategic disadvantage with the European powers and result in the continued decline of the nation's fortunes. Tsuboi argued that the root of the problem was the enormous outlay of time and energy in the classroom necessary to gain mastery of *kanbun*. Unlike many of his predecessors, he characterized *kanbun* as one of the reasons for the decline of the nation, and not as one of the "traditional" art forms which must be protected in order to maintain the identity of the Japanese people. Tsuboi was not pleased that the Imperial Society had for years considered language reform just one more component

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[19] *Genbun'itchikai no kaishi*, pp. 6-8.
[20] Ibid., p. 12.
[21] Ibid.

in education reform. Instead, he believed language reform should be the highest priority in education, the centerpiece of a series of reforms in the educational system. In order to carry out these initiatives, Tsuboi proposed the establishment of a government body to investigate and oversee language reforms.[22]

The *Genbun'itchi* Society itself also formally addressed some specific issues regarding language and education. At the February 1901 meeting, these directives were made public:

1) The standard language will be based on that spoken by Tokyo residents and the proper accent should be used.
2) All other forms of *genbun'itchi* will be abolished.
3) There will be compliance with the rules on spelling and orthography decided upon by the *kana* section of the Imperial Society for Education.
4) There should be decisions on *okurigana* rules.
5) Spoken and written vocabulary should have nationwide uniform meaning.[23]

In an April 1901 meeting, the Society published papers on primary school education. Among the opinions, which originated in an unnamed investigatory section of the Imperial Society for Education, was that both *sōrōbun* and *futsūbun* should be immediately discarded. Another of the findings was that a policy should be developed to ensure the use of *genbun'itchi* style Japanese in primary school textbooks. In particular, with regard to spelling and orthography in these textbooks, all spelling conventions related to *sōrōbun* should be abolished and *genbun'itchi* adopted.[24] Most of these findings handed down by the *Genbun'itchi* Society were implemented in later years by government agencies entrusted with the task of reforming the language and the educational system. If the *Genbun'itchi* Society had succeeded in these ways alone, it would have met its goals and would have been an effective association. However, the ultimate success of the Society rested in its lobbying prowess and its ability to influence government officials to act in establishing a national language organization.

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[22] Ibid., pp. 12-14.
[23] Ibid., p. 17.
[24] Ibid., p. 21.

The Calls for Action

On January 26, 1900, even before the establishment of the *Genbun'itchi* Society, the Imperial Society presented a petition entitled "A Written Petition Concerning the Reform of our Script, Language and Style" to both houses of the Diet, the Ministry of Education and the staff of all government ministries calling for government sanction of a body to investigate the Japanese language. It was endorsed by Tsuji Shinji, president of the Imperial Society and read, "the government should immediately commence investigations for the purposes of implementing the reform of our script, language and style."[25] The initiative was well received and both houses passed a resolution supporting its establishment. However, in part due to monetary concerns, the government did not establish an actual body to investigate the language. Instead, an advisory committee composed of seven men was created to investigate the future direction of a government-sponsored agency. Many members of the committee were familiar names among language reformers: Maejima Hisoka (chair), Ueda Kazutoshi, Naka Tsūsei, Ōtsuki Fumihiko, Miyake Setsurei, Tokutomi Sohō and Yumoto Takehiko.

Partly as a result of Shiratori's and Tsuboi's addresses described above, and the actions of the Diet regarding the advisory committee, a petition was drawn up which was to be presented to the Diet. This petition from the Society echoed the opinions found among many of the members and was similar in many respects to the earlier petition of the Imperial Society. It was endorsed by twenty-seven other members of the Society, signed by Prince Konoe, President of the Upper House, and sent to Prime Minister Itō Hirobumi. The petition was relatively short, but was nonetheless descriptive of the goals of the *Genbun'itchi* Society. It is unclear what Itō's position on language reform was, but given the prominence of the signatories of the petition, it had to be afforded serious consideration. The petition was entitled, "*Genbun'itchi no jikkō ni kansuru ken*" (Matter(s) Relating to the Realization of the Colloquial Style) and is below:

> The lack of unity between the written and spoken languages has sapped the strength of the nation. There are many examples of this in the past and present. Our nation's written and spoken languages

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[25] *Kokugo kyōiku kenkyūkai*, ed., *Kokugo kokuji kyōiku shiryō sōran* (Tokyo: Hōki shoseki, 1970), p. 107.

are difficult and complex to master and, in comparison with other places in the world, our students' energy is consumed in vain. There (needs) to be reform of the nation's written and spoken languages, especially since reform of the educational system needs to be addressed. Opinion in the Upper House indicates that a national language investigation committee should be established quickly for the purposes of implementing the colloquial form for the good of the State.[26]

No action seems to have been taken as a result of this petition.

In February 1901, another Society petition was drafted by journalist Nakai Kitarō entitled "*Genbun'itchi no jikkō ni tsuite no seigansho an*" (A Petition Regarding the Implementation of the Colloquial Style). In this petition, similar calls were made for the establishment of an advisory council. It is strikingly analogous to Tsuboi's presentation and may have been based on his work. Many themes already introduced in the public arena by the Society appeared a second time. The petition read:

> The development of a nation's language is intimately connected to both the unity and destiny of that nation. The fact that the written form of European languages was based on the contemporary speech of the country was one element contributing to the degree of civilization and strength attained in the West, contrasted with the horrible example of certain Oriental countries whose failure to take steps to strengthen and develop their own language was linked with their eventual political decline. Japanese children must not only master their own very difficult language, but also Sino-Japanese and various European languages in order to proceed to higher education. The time and energy thus wasted in struggling with these forms before being able to extract content constitutes not only a personal loss but also a serious economic threat to Japan, now in the arena of world competition. It is therefore both urgent and imperative that the colloquial style be brought into use so that students can divert the time thus saved into attaining other valuable knowledge. The implementation of such a style must be achieved before other educational reforms could be carried out. Previous representations concerning the setting up of a national

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[26] *Genbun'itchikai no kaishi*, pp. 14-15.

> language research council have been made without success. *In the belief that there is a strong connection between the state of the language and the fortunes of the nation, and that the implementation of the colloquial style is a matter of the utmost urgency*, *this present petition renews the request for the formation of such a body and urges that style reform be made a national enterprise.*[27]

The response to this petition, however, was more positive and promising. In March of 1901, the Lower House approved the petition. It was then forwarded to the Upper House where it was scheduled to receive consideration later in the summer of 1901.

The ideas contained within this petition demonstrate the motivation of its authors. Having made the connection between ease of communication and the "fortunes" of a nation, advocates of language reform had succeeded in portraying their struggle as crucial to the future development of Japan. In so doing, they had completed the process of discrediting the classical forms and had attributed to the old forms some of the fault for the present weakness of their nation. Indeed, advocates of language reform even suggested that the relative weakness found among several of the nations of East Asia could, in part, be attributed to the slavish devotion by the ruling elites of those nations to outdated traditions embodied by the classical forms of the Chinese language. For the authors of this petition, only the establishment and implementation of a colloquial form of the Japanese language could remedy the situation. This was to be conducted through the education system. This blueprint, which they sought to carry out with the creation of the National Language Research Council, would lead Japan back to her roots, to the language actually used by Japanese and away from the discredited traditions which emanated from a past age and from a nation recently vanquished in the Sino-Japanese war by the forces of the Imperial Army. For *kokugaku* adherents advocating language reform, only when the Japanese had rediscovered their identity would they be able to compete economically and militarily with the nations of the West.

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[27] Italics are mine and have been inserted to demonstrate the significance of certain passages in this lengthy quotation. Found in Twine, *Language and the Modern State*, pp. 168-169.

Toward Language Nationalization

  Ueda Kazutoshi is often described as the "father of *kokugo*" by contemporary linguists and *kokugo* specialists. As a member of the *Genbun'itchi* Society, he worked tirelessly to promote the *genbun'itchi* form and played a prominent role in the establishment of the National Language Research Council. Though engaged full-time as a professor at Tokyo Imperial University, acting as primary editor of the *Gengogaku* Journal and maintaining his position as head of the Education Ministry's Special Education Bureau, he also defended the *Genbun'itchi* Society's initial petition in the Lower House regarding the establishment of a government-sponsored organization to reform the language in his capacity as Ministry of Education Parliamentary Councilor.[28]

  During the crucial years leading up to the founding of the National Language Research Council, Ueda lobbied with great zeal for the government sanction of language reform. The targets of his energies were, by and large, high government officials. Ueda focused particularly on Kikuchi Dairoku, founding member of the Math Department at Tokyo Imperial University, President of Tokyo Imperial University from 1898-1901 and Minister of Education from 1901-1903. He did not have a difficult task. Like many other cabinet-level officials, Kikuchi was a *kokugaku* adherent, though his ideological and nationalist fervor was tempered by a Cambridge education and many years of living abroad. Kikuchi had even written commentaries about the Imperial Rescript on Education and had attempted to explain it to foreign audiences. For example, he addressed the issue directly in a speech to the Civic Forum in New York's Carnegie Hall on February 1, 1910. He explained:

> Yamato Damashii (The Soul of Old Japan) means that we Japanese respect the Imperial household and love our country. It is made up of these two elements. Our deep reverence for and loyalty to the Emperor has been handed down over 2500 years. The bond between the Emperor and the people is not just a recent one, but has existed since ancient and mythical times...which has no equal in the world. This is the essence of our national polity.[29]

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[28] Nanette Twine, "Standardizing Written Japanese: A Factor in Modernization," *Monumenta Nipponica* 43/4 (1988): 447-449.
[29] Kikuchi Dairoku, *Shin Nihon* (Tokyo: Fuzanbō, 1910), pp. 5-8.

Kikuchi had also long been interested in the reform of the Japanese language and was a member of the *Genbun'itchi* Society. He delivered the opening address at the first meeting of the *Genbun'itchi* Society in January 1901. In his address, which was heard by over one thousand attendees, he stressed the importance of the link between the reform of the Japanese language to the development of excellence in the Japanese educational system.[30] Ueda, aware of the influence Kikuchi would wield as Education Minister, sought to convince Kikuchi of the importance of promoting language reform among his cabinet-level peers.

After the February 1901 petition from the *Genbun'itchi* Society to both Houses passed the Lower House in March, the lobbying efforts by Society members were intensified in the Upper House. Ueda and his colleagues had convinced Kikuchi to attend the June 1901 meeting of the *Genbun'itchi* Society in which Kikuchi was implored to vigorously defend the petition among his colleagues. Kikuchi, aware of funding limitations, pledged to do his best. Later, another meeting was held with several members of the Society and both Kikuchi and the new Finance Minister in the Katsura cabinet, Sone Arasuke. For nearly a year, no decision was made in the Upper House. However, in the spring 1902 session of the Upper House, the issue was brought to a vote and was passed in March. The Upper House had approved funds for the immediate establishment of a body to investigate thoroughly the Japanese language.[31] This agency was to be called the *Kokugo chōsa iinkai* (National Language Research Council, or NLRC) and was to answer to and report its findings to the Education Ministry.

For linguists such as Ueda and Ōtsuki, intellectuals such as Shiratori, and high government officials such as Maejima and Katō, the establishment of the NLRC represented a major victory for the *kokugaku*. Even the use of the name *kokugo*, rather than *nihongo*, reflected *kokugaku* ideology. Yet, much of the work remained to be completed. The decision to create the colloquial style and the early attempts to make sense of the various orthographical systems and pronunciations had to be followed up by a more complete, systematic interpretation of the *genbun'itchi* form. It comes as no surprise that *kokugaku* adherents such as Katō, Ueda, Ōtsuki and Sawayanagi would dominate the NLRC as they set about creating modern Japanese.

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[30] Twine, *Language and the Modern State*, p. 168.
[31] Ibid., pp. 168-169.

Conclusion

With the establishment of the NLRC in 1902, the struggle to determine the direction language reform would take had ended. Henceforth, the strategic ideological framework would be that embodied by *kokugaku* philosophy. Gone were the attempts to characterize *kanbun* or *sōrōbun* as the key Japanese traditions which needed to be protected and propagated in order to maintain the essential Japanese identity. In its place was to be a new, unified national language, one capable of contributing to the continued development of the nation's "fortunes." The vision of the ruling elite was to build a nation capable of not only fending off the imperialistic advances of the Western powers, but also prepared to compete on an equal basis in the imperial game. For advocates of language reform, modern *kokugo* would become the embodiment of "traditional" Japan, taking its place among the pantheon of civil deities such as Shintōism, reverence for the Emperor and primacy of the state. A nation, however, is only as strong and as unified as its people. Any difficulty with communication would hinder the development of national cohesion and affect the proper functioning of the state. Thus, in the final two petitions from the *Genbun'itchi* Society to the Diet, the reform of the Japanese language and the creation of a colloquial style were characterized not in terms of modernization, but rather, the development of a stronger, unified nation.

What set the *Genbun'itchi* Society apart from most other language-related societies was its determination to use the power and influence of the state to develop and codify a written form of Japanese which more closely resembled the spoken forms. Using this strategy, the leadership of the *Genbun'itchi* Society was able to succeed when so many other language-related organizations failed. Of course, it would take several decades to teach the new form of the language to Japan's students after it had been properly standardized. Nonetheless, the prototype which the *Genbun'itchi* Society championed would go on to become modern Japanese because the government had the ability to follow through in a way that no independent language or literary organization could hope to match. This movement did more than create modern Japanese, it made possible many of the nationalizing movements embodied in the continued reforms in education, communication, transportation, the economy and the military.

Featured Essays

ESOTERIC BUDDHISM IN THE WORKS OF JUAN VALERA

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In 1887, Juan Valera (1824-1905) writes a letter entitled "El budismo esotérico" to his friend Marcelino Menédez Pelayo (1856-1912).[1] In this letter he talks about Theosophy, a doctrine with which he had come into contact during his recent journey to the United States, where it was fashionable at the time. He also declares his purpose to write a novel in which supernatural elements would play a major role. Although this novel was written twelve years later, the author's interest in esoteric knowledge and Theosophy was clearly apparent in many of the works that he produced in the meantime.

Valera became familiar with Theosophy in the two years he spent working for the Spanish Embassy in Washington. Those two years were difficult for numerous reasons: the depression and illness that he experienced following his son's death, the loneliness he may have felt far from his friends and relatives, and an unfortunate incident involving Katherine Lee Bayard, a young woman who fell in love with him and committed suicide on the Embassy's gate. I do not wish to imply that Valera sought consolation in Theosophy. Probably the reasons for his curiosity were that he shared many interests with those who adhered to this doctrine, and that he felt attracted by the aura of paranormal phenomena that surrounded the group.

At the turn of the nineteenth century, Theosophy was a spiritual development similar in some ways to what is now called *New Age*. Its founder, Helena Petrovna Hahn (1821-1891), also known as Madame Blavatsky, was born in the Ukraine and since childhood believed herself to be endowed with supernatural powers. She married at 17, but being restless and rebellious left her husband and started an unconventional and rather nomadic existence. In 1873 she went to the United States, where she became well known as a medium. Blavatsky claimed that she had trained in Tibet for seven years and said that she kept in touch with her "mahatma"

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[1] Juan Valera, "El budismo esotérico," in *Obras completas*, vol. 3 (Madrid: Aguilar, 1958), p. 646.

either telepathically, via the materialization of writings, or by means of the mahatma's spiritual apparitions.[2] Besides the usual communications with the beyond, people could witness acts of levitation, clairvoyance, telepathy and the materialization of objects during her séances.

During a séance in 1874, Blavatsky met Henry Steel Olcott, a former colonel of the United States Army who held a degree in law and agronomy and published occasional newspaper articles dealing with spiritualism. Soon after, Blavatsky and Olcott moved in together to a house they called *Lamastery* where, helped by the messages supposedly sent by Blavatsky's mahatma, they began to write *Isis Unveiled* (1877).[3] Prior to the publication of this book, which was a best seller, Blavatsky, Olcott and a group of their followers founded the Theosophical Society, a universal brotherhood that did not distinguish between races, ethnic origins or religions. Its goal was to promote the study of Aryan writings and various religions and sciences, and claim the importance of the ancient Eastern literatures and philosophies, especially those of the Brahmans, the Buddhists and Zoroaster. They also intended to investigate the deep mysteries of Nature in every aspect, including psychic and spiritual powers among humankind.

In 1882, Olcott and Blavatsky traveled to India and established the society's headquarters in Adiar. Three years later, Blavatsky left India, settled in London and published *The Secret Doctrine* (1888) and *The Key to Theosophy* (1889). Olcott stayed in India where he opened new theosophical centers, wrote a Buddhist catechism, which is still in use today, and contributed to the renaissance of Buddhism in the Far East.[4]

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[2] The term Mahatma means a "great soul" in Sanskrit, but the popular connotation of the term as used by Thesophy had to do with a sort of saintly guru imbued with an occult wisdom. Mme Blavatsky used to say that the source of her knowledge originated in two Tibetan mahatmas (Koothoomi and Morya). By the same token, her detractors claimed this statement as proof she was lying, since at that time the term Mahatma was not even known in Tibet.

[3] A "lamastery" or "lamasery" is a monastery of Lamas. The fact that Blavatsky gave such a name to the house in which she settled down with Olcott reveals her wish to link her doctrine to Oriental religions, in particular to Buddhism, and to create a connection with Tibet.

[4] To this day the Society of Theosophy has its headquarters in India, where both its philosophy and the Centers themselves attracted from their

Valera had always felt attracted to Vedic literature and to the origins of languages and religions.[5] Like many others of his time, he believed in the Aryan origins of the Indo-European nations and argued that the key to modern Western civilization was to be found in the old Eastern cultures. Also, he confessed to Menéndez Pelayo that he was mesmerized by any doctrine and amused and enchanted by all sorts of spiritual mysteries. Therefore, it is not surprising that he should find a friend in the Theosophists, many of them influential people and famous intellectuals. At a time when science was at the intellectual forefront, the paranormal was a subject of profound interest and spiritualist séances abounded, attracting people from all social classes and backgrounds.

Valera tells Menéndez that he has many friends among Blavatsky's followers and that, out of respect for them, he refrains from characterizing the so-called prodigies of the lady theosophist as a scheme. Some people thought that this attitude indicated feelings that went beyond friendship. Regarding this, Emilia Pardo Bazán (1851-1923) says:

> I would not say that Valera – whose great judgment I respect – believed in those legends of Indian Mahatmas that Theosophist and dubious miracle worker Madame Blavatzky disseminated throughout Europe. However, I do think they had a profound impact on his imagination and his thinking. To my criticisms Valera always responded with a "who knows?" that question usually presented in defense of the imagination that longs to free itself from reality.[6]

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inception those wanting reforms or opposing the Raj. Olcott founded several Buddhist schools in Sri Lanka and he is still recognized there as a defender of Oriental cultures and as someone who campaigned enthusiastically to spread Buddhism to other parts of the world.

[5] In a letter from Russia dated March 5, 1857 Valera writes to his friend and superior, Leopoldo Augusto Cueto (1815-1901), that some fanatic Russian sects were closely tied to the ancient Oriental religions and then goes on to write about his interest in Hindi and Vedic texts. See Juan Valera, *Cartas desde Rusia* (Barcelona: Laertes, 1986).

[6] In Emilia Pardo Bazán, "Don Juan Valera: la personalidad, el crítico, el novelista," *La lectura*, VI, 3, 1906, p. 289.

The fact is that Valera was considered an expert on the subject and he was eventually commissioned to write the entries on "Theosophy" and "Magic" in the *Diccionario enciclopédico Hispanoamericano* (1887-1898).[7] In addition to this and the aforementioned letter "El budismo esotérico," Valera wrote a long note on Blavatsky and Theosophy in his book *La metafísica y la poesía* (1891).[8]

In spite of Pardo Bazán's observation and Valera's statement that he treated this subject "with impartiality, without approving or disapproving, without being positive or ironic,"[9] his writings at times seem insincere, with a tone of irony and mockery.[10] Moreover, the treatment given to this subject in *Morsamor* (1899), the supernatural novel to which he had referred in his letter "El budismo esotérico," is clearly a parody.[11]

Morsamor is a confusing novel within Valera's literary corpus, one which would be impossible to understand if the author had not expressed his intention to write a novel with a supernatural theme. *Morsamor*'s plot involves an elderly monk living in a Spanish sixteenth century monastery who feels bitter about having wasted his life. Another monk is able to restore his youth through a magic spell and, under his old name of Morsamor, he is allowed to returned to his life as a knight-errant. He travels to Asia, where he participates in several military campaigns, falls in love with numerous women and makes a journey around the world with the purpose of becoming the first man to arrive to Europe traveling from the

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[7] Juan Valera, *Obras desconocidas de Juan Valera* (Madrid: Castalia, 1965).

[8] Juan Valera, *La metafísica y la poesía* (Madrid: Saénz de Jubera, 1891).

[9] Valera, *Obras desconocidas*, p. 551.

[10] It is interesting to note the hint of mockery Valera conveys in the following excerpt from his article on Theosophy destined to the *Diccionario enciclopédico Hispanoamericano*. He is referring to Blavatsky's marriage and says:

> Although it escapes our understanding, it seems that in the course of the wedding night the lady got so upset with the general that she lost control and hit him with a silver candlestick knocking him unconscious. Then, believing the man was dead, Blavatsky got on a horse and rode into the night. The general survived the attack but refused to get back together with such a dangerous partner, and from then on both spouses lived apart. (347)

[11] Juan Valera, *Morsamor*, in *Obras completas*, vol. 1.

East. At the end of his adventures, Morsamor is the victim of a shipwreck and as he is about to drown, suddenly wakes up to find himself back at the monastery.

This plot is obviously quite extravagant and critics, not accepting Valera's claim that he did not have anything in mind but to entertain, have occasionally tried to find a deeper meaning in the novel.[12] However, the novel only seeks to distract, even if such a distraction centers on a journey through Eastern beliefs and ends with the pseudo-ancient Theosophical doctrine and a discussion on the essence of religions. In other words, Valera entertains but teaches at the same time, and invites his readers to reflect on things that are far from superficial.

Morsamor's journey starts in Melinda, a city on the African coast where the protagonist finds a group of people of Persian origin whose religion goes back to Mazdeism. In Ceylon the narrative voice reflects on the virtues and errors of Buddhism and in India it deals with Brahmanism. Finally, in the Himalayas, the protagonist gets to know a strange society of long-lived mahatmas who talk to him about Theosophy.

In each encounter with a new religion, Morsamor studies the strong and the weak points of those beliefs. He always seeks to establish a parallel with Christianity, with the intention of discovering a link between Christian dogma and ancient Eastern doctrines. Such a similarity would be based on the supposedly common origin of the Indo-European nations, whose doctrine, according to Valera, evolved into new creeds alienated from the truth the religion possessed in ancient times. Theosophy is thus presented as the highest degree of such a religious deviation.

To understand Valera's point it is necessary to place his novel in the context in which it was written. Theosophy had appeared at a moment when scientists were debating the origins of man and when it was believed

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[12] The novel was published shortly after the end of the Hispanic-American war, when the Spanish government had been forced to accept the loss of Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and its colonies in the Pacific. This loss meant that Spain was no longer one of the great European powers. Thus the general tendency among writers of the time was to produce texts in which they offered words of advice aimed toward the revival of Spain. This was probably why the critics, in spite of Valera's prologue stating that the Spanish *Regeneracionismo* was a matter to be left to politicians, insisted on interpreting *Morsamor* as an allegorical novel that depicted the Spanish situation.

that the key to the mystery of life was soon to be discovered.[13] Blavatsky and her followers were self-proclaimed initiates in the occult. They promised in their books a revelation that, after pages of allusions to legends, myths, history and beliefs, ended on a more fictional note than a real one, and of course short of the revelation that they had announced. As Valera put it, Theosophists had been initiated, but only a little:

> It is evident that Madame Blavatski does not know a tenth of what the Reverend Mahatma Koot-Hoomi does, and to whom Sinnet dedicates his work *El mundo oculto.*
>
> I confess that I have not read Madame Blavatski's book by the title *Isis sin velo,* but I have read a book by her disciple Sinnett called *El budismo esotérico* and it seems to me that any mahatma knows as much as they do, and furthermore, they don't say much of what they know and leave us half way through their knowledge. Of course, that is their way to make initiation a must. Were they open to divulge what they know, an initiation would certainly be useless.
>
> Theosophical societies do not promise to automatically make a wise man out of an iniated. On the contrary, they preach the need to work diligently, to prepare oneself, to do penance and to purify oneself in order to attain, finally, what purports to be the first degree of initiation.[14]

Following this line of thought, in *Morsamor,* Valera tries to present the fallacy of the theosophical religion, and consequently he offers us a parody of a conversation between an initiate and someone who is not.

Morsamor and his men go deeply into the Himalayas and, after a long journey, arrive in a valley where they are greeted by an old man who has the capacity to read their thoughts and transmit his own to them, thus

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[13] In the prologue to his *Leyendas del antiguo oriente*, Valera insists on the common Asian origin of the religions and the languages that shaped European civilization. No doubt, he is under the influence of Friedrich Max Muller (1823-1900), a professor of Comparative Theology at Oxford University, frequently quoted by Valera, who would insist on a common origin of all civilizations.

[14] Valera, *La metafísica,* p. 235.

communicating without the need for words.[15] This old man takes them to a retreat for men and explains that, thanks to a diet based on herbs and a strict practice of hygiene, the inhabitants of the valley enjoy longer lives than the rest of the world, counting their years in dozens instead of decades. In spite of the Asian location and the allusion to the longevity of the Tibetan people, the place has nothing to do with Buddhist monasteries but, with its automatic baths, health food and exercise regime, it closely resembles a nineteenth century American spa like that of Dr. John Harvey Kellogg (1852-1943), the *Battle Creek Sanitarium*, frequented at the time of Valera's visit to the United States by the rich in search of physical and spiritual well-being.

At this retreat, Morsamor is introduced to Sankaracharia, an elderly man who stood out among his peers as a talented writer who produced volumes to impart knowledge to laymen. However, he warns Morsamor that this knowledge is not intended to reach Europeans since they are not mature enough to grasp their true meaning. Morsamor then asks him how he can justify the occult side of a science that he supposedly intends to divulge, and Sankaracharia answers that the essence of his knowledge cannot be transmitted. It can only be reached once the soul is purified and accesses the sanctuary of supreme conscience, something that requires several reincarnations and opens the doors to Nirvana. Morsamor wants to know more about Nirvana, but the old man tells him that he cannot say more since, in order to do so, it is necessary to have reached a particular stage and he himself still needs a couple of additional lives. He goes on to say that even at that perfect stage an explanation would have not been possible since no human words could relate such an ineffable experience. Morsamor, astonished by the advanced technology and the way of life of the inhabitants of the valley, asks the mahatma why, if they are actually so

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[15] The legend of a valley hidden deep in the Himalayas, made popular in the twentieth century by James Milton (1900-1954) in his novel *Lost Horizon* (1933) and subsequently by the films based on the novel, was not new in Valera's time. The first information we have in the West concerning this valley is found in the chronicles of a Jesuit priest from Portugal by the name of Estêvão Cacella (1585-1630), but it must be noted that Buddhist texts such as *Zhang Zhung* and *Kalachakra* already mention the mythical kingdom of Shambhala. Nazism believed that in this kingdom they could find a Nordic race that antedated Buddhism and Hitler sent seven expeditions in search of it.

concerned about the welfare of humanity, they do not share their knowledge with the rest of the world instead of keeping it to themselves. Sankaracharia replies that Morsamor is wrong, that although they do not leave their community, they have kept and still keep in contact, either telepathically or by way of soul traveling, with a great number of chosen followers, while they all await the future coming of a woman who will spread the knowledge in the Western world:

> It is prophesied that this woman will come to us, will captivate us, will learn many of our secrets, and will reveal them in enlightening treaties that will teach a science modestly called Theosophy. That will be just the foundation of our discipline, but even so, the world will be taken aback by what she will have to say, and will read her books, and theosophical schools will appear in every nation.
>
> You likely have guessed by now that Sankaracharia, even if he does not call her by name, is referring to Madame Blavatsky.[16]

In fact, as previously mentioned, Blavatsky bragged about her trip to Tibet, which by then was considered a forbidden kingdom, and claimed to have remained there for seven years, that is, the period of time required of lamas in order to be initiated. It is impossible to prove or disprove the things her theosophical biographers claim about their leader, but the most impartial research casts doubt on these claims and considers such a trip highly improbable.[17]

The dialogue between Morsamor and Sankaracharia goes on with the account of the Aryan origin of the mahatmas, who are described as spirits that, after a series of reincarnations, refused to be reborn in the bodies of black men, Chinese or Mulattos and thus became the first white men. This group was supposed to have established their headquarters in the Tibetan valleys and from there they had spread to the rest of the world,

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[16] Valera, *Obras completas*, vol. 1, p. 256.

[17] It must be noted that Tibet kept its frontiers closed to the British from 1792 to 1904. Several explorations were carried out by groups from different nationalities, but there is no proof that Blavatsky took part in any of them. She could have tried to get in disguised as a Hindi, but this is not very probable. The first woman known to have arrived in Tibet was the missionary Annie Taylor in 1892.

leaving behind only one untouched community in the hidden region where Morsamor found these old men. The absurd story about the origins of humanity alludes to Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine*, the book in which Blavatsky links the Aryans to the dwellers of the lost continent of Atlantis and which was later used to support Nazism, in spite of the universality of races it proposes.

In the end, the mahatma tries to explain the laws of Karma, the characteristics of the seven elements configuring the human body and the purpose of white magic or rajah yoga. The protagonist does not make much out of these explanations and when he asks his attendant his opinion about the wisdom and power of the mahatmas, the attendant only smiles and says he does not believe the old man's knowledge is based on any of that. However, he does not elaborate further and never reveals what he really thinks. In other words, in the face of theosophical claims, skepticism and confusion prevail.[18]

It is evident that Morsamor's episode in the Himalayas probably reproduces Valera's questions in the United States and the disappointing answers he received from his friends within Theosophy. In fact, the dialogue between Morsamor and Sankaracharia is described by Valera with the term "interview" in English, a usage which contextualizes it clearly within his own experience in the United States. The scrubs and mechanical brushes in the mahatmas' monastery, the cinematographic technique to show from the Himalayan valley Morsamor's Spanish monastery, and the flying machine used by Morsamor upon his departure, all point to Valera's experience with modernity and Theosophy during his stay in America. Thus, this combination of magic and technology seals Valera's story which in turn vents the author's feelings of surprise before the technological innovations he found in the different cities he visited and the hotels where he stayed. Moreover, he is reacting to the paranormal phenomena and the spiritual beliefs based on Eastern doctrines he had witnessed in a society which, overwhelmed by modernity, had the need to take refuge in a spiritual

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[18] Morsamor's servant personifies mistrust and malice in the novel and very often the protagonist identifies him with the Devil. Nonetheless, throughout the story, he shows great deal of prudence in acting to restrain the outlandish behaviors of Morsamor. His disbelief, followed by silence, as the protagonist tells him about the Mahatmas' wisdom, thus seems to suggest that Valera felt that the prodigies of Theosophy were not to be trusted.

haven. The fast pace of transformation, contrary to common belief, was not significant in Valera's eyes and thus he ends *Morsamor's* path among religions with the following statement:

> But in essence, is there any progress…? I suspect the opposite is true. In ancient times men were often right in their assumptions because they were closer to the original revelation, or because their minds, free from the heavy load of experience and observation, were better able to reach higher spheres and attain an inspiration that partook of the innocent and almost of the divine. Today, by too much thinking and too many subtleties, the human mind is accelerated and distorted. There is no progress, just a perversion.[19]

In his letter to Menéndez, Valera states that Madame Blavatsky's miracles and doctrines, as well as those of her followers, whether they were true or not, constituted a unique and memorable example of the fin de siècle mentality. It is this feeling common to the end of the nineteenth century that Valera recreates in his novel, achieved by lending a voice to those who question progress and understand the terrible disorientation and confusion experienced by humanity as it moves farther and farther away from the Truth and from Nature. That is to say, from God.

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[19] Valera, *Obras completas*, vol. 1, p. 810.

MODERN GIRLS AND NEW WOMEN IN JAPANESE CINEMA

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The ideal traditional woman and the new modern woman vie for viewer sympathy in Japanese film history, even through the sixties. The song of the "pure Japanese woman" sung by Richiko at the family gathering in *Gishiki* [Ceremonies] by Oshima Nagisa (1968) raises questions about the "pure" Japanese woman, the ideal traditional role. Hanako, the free yet violent spirit of late fifties womanhood who dominates Oshima's *Taiyō no Hakaba* [Burial of the Sun] (1960) raises the question of how the *moga*, the modern girl, filters across the decades to remain an issue of contestation in the late fifties and sixties. These portrayals demand contextualizing in Japanese film history, and indeed, the history of Japanese women from the Meiji period to the present. The purpose of this essay is to examine the earliest portrayals in Japanese film of the new modern woman and her ideal traditional counterpart to provide that context.

In her essay "The Modern Girl as Militant," Miriam Silverberg looks at the history of the "Moga" or *Modan gaaru*, as Japanese popular culture termed the Japanese cultural heroine who emerged around 1924 and captured the public's imagination in the late twenties. She is seen as a "glittering decadent middle-class consumer" who "flaunts tradition in the urban playgrounds," although Silverberg aligns her with a more politically engaged militant of the same period. She ends her suggestive essay by remarking that much more research into popular culture needs to explore this image of the modern woman.[1]

Silverberg's essay is joined in the volume by two different approaches to the women of the Taisho period (1912-1926) and the early part of the Showa period which follows: one approach speaks of the "new woman" envisioned by feminist writers of the turn of the century through the twenties, while another addresses the woman as worker. Two articles explore this focus on the woman worker; one looks at the middle-class female intellectual worker (primarily the secretary, teacher, and nurse) and the other at the female factory worker. All four of these essays then center

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[1] Miriam Silverberg, "The Modern Girl as Militant," in Gail Lee Bernstein, ed., *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 239-266.

on women of Japanese modernity, but given that the perspectives are different – intellectual history in the first case, labor history in the second and third cases, and the history of popular culture in the Silverberg "Modern Girl" essay – the objects and the perspectives of these four studies are tellingly different.

Barbara Sato revisits this material in her *The New Japanese Woman: Modernity, Media, and Women in Interwar Japan*, comparing three types, the modern girl, the working girl, and the self-motivated housewife, reflected in women's magazines of the twenties and thirties.[2] Each of the studies points towards the perspectives of the other; for example, Silverberg tries to show how the modern girl may merge symbolically with the Marxist militant, thus becoming a figure with significance for intellectual and labor history. Yet some of the differentiation here is of generations, some of class.

First, as to generational differences, as we move through the decades of the Meiji (1868-1912) and the Taisho (1912-1926) feminist writing and women's outlook develop in stages that are distinct: a first generation might be seen as the male theorists of the 1870s, then a second, a generation of women feminist writers, such as Hiratsuka Raicho and Saito Akiko. This trajectory parallels the history of feminist ideas emerging in the West with Frederic Engels and John Stuart Mill preceding the women theorists of first wave feminism and suffrage. In fact the "new women feminists," as the Japanese feminists of this generation are called, named their journal *Seito* [Bluestockings] after their sisters in the West. This new woman activist generation can be characterized by debate among women arguing for political and legal issues, while others argued for a transformation of roles. Then came the next generational shift, parallel to one in the West: The "new women" feminists in Japan were to the modern girls who came after them as the suffragist feminists were to the flapper, although I do not mean to imply a simple equivalence here between U.S. early feminists and their Japanese counterparts, nor between the modern girls and the flapper. Rather I wish to emphasize certain parallels in the way one generation in both countries expressed its feminism through writers and activists, and the following one expressed a will towards freedom through cultural expression somewhat divorced from legal and political concerns.

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[2] Barbara Hamill Sato, *The New Japanese Woman: Modernity, Media, and Women in Interwar Japan* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).

Second, as to class differences, both the new women feminists and the modern girls are associated with the middle class, while working class women's struggles are studied largely in terms of their working lives and family ties. While we do not really know how much of the intellectual arguments of the new women feminists filtered to the working class, there is a sense in which the working women interviewed at the time were striving to be modern girls; the draw of the factory and the city may be to a lifestyle that popular culture itself announces and champions.

Behind all three positions for women loom the "dutiful daughter" and the "good wife, wise mother" the more traditional roles for Japanese women, roles still absolutely dominant at the time, but roles that are themselves threatened by modernization. Being a "dutiful daughter" might now mean being a factory worker or secretary to supplement family income, although the studies indicate that perhaps factory workers were more bent on establishing their independence. On the other hand, one branch of the "new women" feminists campaigned for government supplements to ensure women would continue to be able to perform their special duties in the domestic sphere; they were seeking less radical change and more economic support for the more traditional roles for woman. We are clearly in a period when traditional roles are increasingly under siege, not simply by women's desires for change, but by economic conditions driving women into the public economic sphere rather than the private domestic sphere, and away from their traditional productive roles within artisanal production, the family shop, and farming.

Behind all these women also looms the sexual woman. Female sexuality in Japan at this time finds traditional geisha and concubine roles competing with a new form of bar hostess. As was the case in the West, we are learning that sexual freedoms were being adopted by the Japanese female working class, but somewhat more clandestinely than the open claiming of sexual freedom staked by some "New Women" feminists. It is perhaps this area of sexual freedoms both in practice and in representation that is the hardest to determine and evaluate. Chastisement, as well as defense of "fallen women", abounds in these films, but do representations of fallen women serve as a stern warning or do they promote sexual discourse and even liberation as Janet Staiger suggests they might in the U.S. context in *Bad Women*?[3] While there may be a cumulative effect on

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[3] Janet Staiger, *Bad Women: Regulating Sexuality in Early American Cinema* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1995).

sexuality's presence in representation which inverts overt moralistic messages that would condemn the sexual woman, such retrospective evaluation may have been less than apparent to women struggling for a more liberated view of female sexuality, while others might have unconsciously or consciously ingested the films' moral condemnation.

Despite the broad based changes in images of women, clearly many women in interwar Japan remained in traditional roles. It is instructive to hear Yosano Akiko, one of the "New Women" feminists speaking in 1916: "the distinction between subjugation and equality lay not in behavior but choice."[4] Although this statement is made defending her choice to marry and have ten children, we can see that for some Japanese women the problem was being assigned roles; even a traditional role could be defended if chosen by the woman who has considered other options.

Behind all these women also loom Western models, particularly in art, fashion, theater and the novel. The question of Western influence, at once so obvious in its evidence on styles both in life and art as well as in its constant citation and debate by writers of the period, becomes quite controversial as it implies a simplistic contrast between old and new, Japan and the West. Not all changes occurring to and produced by Japanese women are a result of Western influences.

Our specific question regarding the modern girl's emergence in film is difficult due to the paucity of surviving Taisho period films. Aaron Gerow states, "We are fortunate that at least two feature-length films do exist from the 1910's." We have *Goro masamune koshiden* from 1915 and *Chushingura* [Tale of the Loyal 47 Retainers] that as Gerow points out, exists in two versions, both of which compile footage from various versions of this tale made between 1910-1917. Both of these films are from the Kabuki repertoire, and both use *oyama* (female impersonators) in the female roles. Gerow also shows that the *shingeki* or "new drama" films began appearing in 1917.[5] These would be key to any study of the modern girl, but

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[4] Laurel Rasplica Rodd, "Yosano Akiko and the Taisho Debate over the 'New Woman,'" in Bernstein, ed., *Recreating Japanese Women*, pp. 175-198 (187).

[5] Aaron Gerow, "Celluloid Masks: The Cinematic Image and the Image of Japan," *Iris* 16 (1993): 23-26. See also Aaron Gerow, "Writing a Pure Cinema: Articulations of Early Japanese Film" (Ph.D. diss., University of Iowa, 1996); and Joanne Bernardi, *Writing in Light: The Silent Scenario*

we are limited to the study of film reviews and synopses that do not often give us a clear sense of how women are represented in these films. With the better-preserved films of the twenties we are able to study extant prints, but let me emphasize how rare it is for a film from the twenties to have survived. David Bordwell's phrase in his Ozu Yasujiro filmography – "no script, negative, or prints known to survive" – forms a poetic elegy for a period.[6]

Our first assumption might be that new woman/modern girl would not appear as long as *oyama* played all female roles, and that the new woman/modern girl would be implicated immediately once actresses appear. Representation must rid itself of males substituting for females, as well as the male voice substituting for female, for the codified traditional female of the *oyama* repertoire to give way to a new portrayal. The *chambara*, Kabuki and Shinpa traditions must then give way to original screenplays, *shingeki* influences, and eventually, tendency films. I want to argue that this may be a somewhat false assumption, for several reasons. If we entertain the possibility that *oyama* might vary from those who rehearsed a codified interpretation of traditional Japanese womanhood to those who through their own gender perspective, or their following of foreign models, began to grant their heroines a greater measure of departure from the gestures. Let us look closely at two film stills: *Resurrection* (1914) and *The Living Corpse* (1917). Both of these films were adaptations of Tolstoy, and both feature *oyama*. From stills that survive from these films, it is clear that *oyama*, in acting out the Russian women's roles, set the stage for the Japanese new woman. Let me point particularly to the handholding gaze into the lover's eye in *The Living Corpse*, as well as the heroine's costume, her fashionable men's-style tie, the cloche hat and bobbed hair. Ironically here, the *oyama* did not shy away from men's-style clothing for his heroine in fear that his attempt to portray femininity would be compromised; instead the masculine aspects of the *oyama* here seem to lend themselves to the signifiers of female modernity. Men playing women could, if they so chose, subvert traditional feminine coding instead of the perhaps more common practice of borrowing the No and Kabuki means of coding femininity by exaggerated dipping, exposure of the back of the neck,

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and the Japanese Pure Film Movement (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2001).

[6] David Bordwell, *Ozu and the Poetics of Cinema* (London: BFI Publishing, 1988).

kimono sleeves covering the mouth, glances down, the repertoire of graceful and submissive female gestures.

Let us also examine the assumption that *benshi* (Japanese performers who provided narration for short films) controlled the discourse. First comes the revelation of female *benshi* who specialized in foreign films and in the female voices in Japanese film,[7] and then the tale of lewd *benshi* narration of *Sally the Dancer* (probably *Sally* [1925] starring Coleen Moore) and the response it provoked in the largely female audience.[8] These two pieces of crucial historical information remind us that we know so little about Taisho era films, their substance, and the ephemeral issues of presentation and reception. New hints are emerging and extant material must be closely read for all clues they provide.

In fact, if we jump back for a moment to the research of Komatsu Hiroshi on the late Meiji beginnings of Japanese cinema, we can find a fascinating instance in his discussion of Takamatsu Toyojiro who traveled around the country interpreting film from a socialist perspective beginning in 1901 (*Reframing Japanese Cinema*). Such Takamatsu titles from 1903 as *The End of the Role of the Schoolgirl* and *The Drinking Habit and the Family* suggest that these films may well have been inflected with New Woman feminism, although they may have focused on these women's issues as a by-product of a socialist critique. It is intriguing to correlate *The End of the Role of the Schoolgirl* with Hosoi Wakizo's *Jokō aishi* [The Pitiful History of Women Workers], an early study of female employment in the textile industry cited by Barbara Molony.[9] Hosoi portrayed girls right out of elementary school being lured to work in the mills contractually as indentured servants by unscrupulous recruiters who offered their parents a prepayment of at least several months wages. Although Molony now criticizes this study for creating the impression of a young and docile

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[7] Joseph Anderson, "Spoken Silents in the Japanese Cinema; or Talking to Pictures: Essaying the *Katsuben*, Contextualizing the Texts," in Arthur Nolletti, Jr. and David Desser, eds., *Reframing Japanese Cinema: Authorship, Genre, History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), pp. 259-310.

[8] Komatsu Hiroshi and Frances Loden, "Mastering the Mute Image: The Role of the Benshi in Japanese Cinema," *Iris: A Journal of Theory and Sound* 22 (1996), p. 46.

[9] Barbara Molony, "Activism Among Women in the Taisho Cotton Textile Industry," in Bernstein, ed., *Recreating Japanese Women*, pp. 217-238.

female work force in light of the labor activism of Japanese female textile workers in the twenties, we might compare *The End of the Role of the Schoolgirl* to the slightly later American film by Lois Weber, *Cry of the Children* (1911), which makes similar use of a young girl as an icon in a campaign against child labor practices with reformist and feminist implications.

Let me emphasize at this juncture that much of my argument is based on surmising a possible untold history of Taisho film from sources that do not ask questions of female representation and female audiences. Komatsu's purpose in introducing Takamatsu's films into his article is to argue that they represent a uniquely Japanese style of filmmaking not influenced by Western narrative style in that they are allegorical and use "icons for expressing thoughts." The theoretical questions that dominate histories of early Japanese film practice have been questions of Western influence, posited, refuted, or mediated. These questions surely overlap with a history that would trace New Women feminism and the modern girl, but the feminist inquiry that looks to female representation and reception needs to tell the story of Western influence quite differently. As we will see, the modern girl becomes an icon for the embrace of the West, infused with eroticization of the modern and the foreign.

Murata Minoru's films from the early twenties show how the female roles are clearly changing and highlight the function of female actresses in performing the modern girl. As women begin to play themselves, the women that they are playing are new women, different from the tradition, highly inflected by European ideals, but as Silverberg points out, not simply the echo or equivalent of the vamp and the flapper of U.S. and European cultures. Our theoretical dilemma here is how to get at the nature of this mixture of European and American ideals and Japanese factors.

Rojo no reikon [Souls on the Road] by Murata (1921) survives as an excellent print allowing us to address some of these questions. Adapted by Ushihara Kiyohiko from both *The Lower Depths* of Maxime Gorki and *Mutter Landstrasse* of Wilhelm Schmidtbonn, the film focuses in its first part on a musician's struggle to forge a career in the city, but finds he cannot support his lover and child, and he resents and mistreats them in his drunken, wasted state. Repenting, he marries his lover, and he convinces his new wife, who then dresses to resemble Mary Pickford, to head for his home to start life anew. The transformation of the lover into the image of a respectable Western-style woman represents a fascinating insistence on

urban respectability and the possibility of reform. The promise of a modernism that her appearance so embodies entails reform; in quite a specific sense, she is a new woman, one whose apparent fallen state can be cleansed of the less desirable attributes of modernity. Yet this new woman will meet with stiff resistance at the paternal country home.

The rest of the film focuses on the husband's determination to cross the country on foot to earn back the love and respect of his father. A young woman who cares for the father serves to contrast with his city bride. The father never forgives his son, and mistreats the wife and grandchild; the film critiques a harsh and unforgiving patriarchy. A second, unrelated narrative follows two former criminals who are seeking to survive in the country; they are given aid, and they reform, and it is these redeemed men who find the frozen body of the musician. A third woman, a wealthy landowner who hosts a flamboyant party for her neighbors complicates the portrayal of women, posing an alternative of autonomy. So while the women are not the central figures of this film, there is still the suggestion that a new Western-styled woman emerges on the landscape to challenge traditions, and especially the conservative, unforgiving mentality of patriarchal households.

What we do know from surviving prints and from synopses of plots in reviews is that many of the films from the twenties focus on women as performers often associated with the Asakusa district, Tokyo's site of vaudeville and film. I read this preoccupation with Asakusa as complex enunciation of the shift from the tradition of *oyama* to the appearance of women actresses. How do historical and fictional worlds interact during a period in which filmic and theatrical representation is transforming itself as the tradition of *oyama* has given way to the appearance of women actresses?

In the case of Mizoguchi Kenji, his connection to the Asakusa district is rendered in much of the criticism in biographical terms. This auteurist biographical approach ignores how such elements coincide with cultural currents and particularly the sources of several key Mizoguchi films in the *shinpa* plays and the novels of writer Izumi Kyoka (*Nihonbashi* [1929], *Taki no shiraito* [Water Magician, 1933], and *Orizuru osen* [1934]). Joseph Murphy's "Izumi Kyoka Today" explores this connection in depth focusing on its significance for Japanese literary history.[10] Here I wish to

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[10] Joseph Murphy, "Izumi Kyoka Today: Cinema, Antimodernity, and the Logic of Contestation in the Literary Field" (Ph.D. diss., 391 pp., Cornell University, 1995).

highlight his suggestion that the women who perform in these narratives do so on a terrain of ambiguity, in which the *shinpa* stage and the film industry already imply a modern frame to whatever condemnation of modernity the narratives generate.

The paucity of surviving films explains why those who have tried to address Taisho period cinema turn to Tanazaki Junichiro as a chronicler of the films in print media that has proved more durable than the celluloid that captured this writer's attention. Miriam Silverberg discusses Tanazaki's *A Fool's Love* translated into English as *Naomi* (1924).[11] Aaron Gerow notes that Tanazaki's *In Praise of Shadows* (1933) evinces a general appreciation of cinema, but more significant for our purposes here he discusses Tanazaki's *Jinmenso* [The Boil with a Human Face] a 1918 ghost story. Tanazaki places an imaginary film within the story in which a Japanese actress stars in an American film, but perhaps this film does not exist – a film expert denies this special effect is even possible at the stage of development of film technology.[12] I am fascinated by this repeated calling on Tanazaki for material evidence, although as I read the novels and stories in question, they raise questions of voice and framing of these references to film, for example, in *Naomi* how an authorial fantasy is presented through a protagonist and how the protagonist's love object, the woman, is known only through this doubly male voice and perspective. Silverberg tells us, "Naomi's chief desire is to act and look Western, an aspiration at first encouraged by her mentor," leaving out how we know what we know of Naomi's desire; her portrait, her desire is filtered through the confessional voice of the narrator, who begins by forming her Pygmalion style to conform to his desires, and who by the end of the narrative (the time of the narration) has vilified and abandoned Naomi and the very Western styles and behaviors she has come to represent. Tanazaki's novel begs comparison with Andre Breton's *Nadja* as an exploration of male fascination; Silverberg's conclusion that Tanazaki "projected his fear onto the Modern Girl" accounts for authorial fantasy at the end of the novel. If we recognize that the novel's evidentiary status needs to be constituted through a careful reading of its structure and its function as symptomatic discourse, then we can argue that Tanazaki's fiction and his essay hold U.S. and European

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[11] Silverberg, "The Modern Girl as Militant," pp. 239-266.
[12] Gerow, "Celluloid Masks," pp. 23-26.

films up as an ideal, yet pose as problematic Japanese films keeping pace with them.[13]

The modern girl becomes a locus within artistic form for this problem; she is necessary to modern artmaking, at once fascinating and frightening, for her very presence seems to ask precisely what the Japanese artist as Japanese might have to offer in his art. We have the modern girl as a figure of a symptomatic anxiety of influence.

It is in this light that I wish to now introduce yet another parallel form of expression to film, that of oil painting, a Western form introduced in the Meiji period that captivated young Japanese artists during the late Meiji and throughout the Taisho periods. These paintings display the modern girl as model and closely parallel work of Western artists, notably Auguste Renoir, Edgar Dégas and Henri Matisse. In Yamashita Shintarō's *Woman Reading* (1906) and *Offering* (1915), Mitsutani Kunishiro's *Nude Leaning on a Chair* (1912) and *Scarlet Rug* (1932), Nakamura Tsune's *Nude Girl* (1914), and Umehara Ryusaburo's *Nude* (1921), each of these paintings couple oil painting and the female nude as forms of Japanese modernity. One thing that these paintings demand from us is awareness that the women in them are fantasy projections of the artists, aspects of which are borrowed from the West, even as Europe was busily borrowing aspects of its new aesthetic practices from *ukiyoe*, the Japanese woodblock print. These wonderful nudes are not unlike the image of the Japanese Mary Pickford lounging perkily across the armchair in Murata's film discussed earlier; they are modern women tailored to the mise-en-scene which the modern aesthetic form (oil painting, silent film narratives) demands of them.

Turning to two films from the early thirties in way of conclusion, we find that the modern woman is still a sharp point of contention. Ozu Yasujiro's modern girl does not necessarily appear in Western dress; her differentiation is more subtle and has to do with the way she figures in the frame and narrative. For example in Ozu's *Tokyo no onna* [A Woman of Tokyo, 1933], the sister, Chikako (Okada Yoshiko) is shown in her room transforming herself from a domestic appearance, including an apron, into her street-wear kimono; this scene includes cutting to a series of three shots from various distances and angles of her applying make-up, kneeling in front of the large mirror over her make-up box. In the last of the series, she is shown in close-up reflected in the mirror, but towards the end of the shot

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[13] Silverberg, "The Modern Girl as Militant," pp. 239-266.

she exits, leaving the "empty" mirror. In Ozu's famous abrupt-cut transitions, this shot is followed by a shot of a table on which rests the white gloves of a police official, who, as we find out in the following scene, has come to inform her employer of her moonlighting activities in illicit prostitution. In the understated associations constructed through Ozu's formal filmic montage, the mirror is a sign of the prostitute, but an ambiguous one; the empty mirror leaves us with the suggestion of Chikako's absent and uncertain self-image, rather than the replete image of her as a fallen woman. It also suggests that Chikako's behaviors and roles perhaps escape the categorization and condemnation that will befall them.

In *Nasanu naka* [Not Blood Relations] by Naruse Mikio (1932), an actress returns from the U.S. after five years in Hollywood to reclaim a daughter she left behind. Extravagant deco surroundings and elegant dress establish her wealth and modernity. Her former husband has raised the daughter with his new wife, a more traditional woman (who nonetheless later in the film is shown working at a department store, where she sees her daughter in tow with the actress mother who has abducted her). That the girl had become deeply attached to her stepmother was established in scenes of their play together, as well as those of the stepmother's recovery from an auto accident caused when she runs into the street to save the girl who was attempting to recover a lost doll. The film focuses on the mise-en-scene of contrasts and confrontations of the two mother figures, portraying harshly the materiality of the actress and her reliance on money to secure what she wants, even to buy her daughter's love. Similar to the maternal melodramas in the U.S. in the thirties, this film suggests that modernity for women potentially causes inadequate nurturing.

In her dissertation, Mitsuyo Wada Marciano devotes a last chapter to how the studio's modernist style of filmmaking treats the modern woman.[14] She argues that the middle class becomes the center of Japanese modernity, while the films evidence a tension between Hollywood style filmmaking and nationalist prerogatives in defining the Japanese subject. For her, women become the locus of Japanese anxiety over modernization. Catherine Russell looks at the discourse of "beauty" as an affirmation of Japaneseness in light of the slogan "overcoming the modern," which H.D. Harootunian has discussed as the impetus of a 1942 symposium that aimed

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[14] Mitsuyo Wada Marciano, "The Production of Modernity in Japanese Cinema: Shochiku Kamata Style in the 1920s and 1930s" (Ph.D. diss., 236 pp., University of Iowa, 2000).

at "redeeming 'the social' from the fragmenting machine of modern history."[15] *Osaka Elegy* by Mizoguchi Kenji (1936) serves as Russell's example of a melodrama from the thirties, which she then compares to Ozu and Shinoda Masahiro films from the sixties. Melancholia is Russell's term for the sadness and social malaise evoked in the film, and she concentrates her analysis on the circumscribed emancipation of the heroine in the last shot as she refuses suicide and walks towards the camera. She makes the point that by 1936 the *moga* was already disappearing in the face of reactionary anti-Westernism.

So if 1936 has been seen as a temporary dead-end for the *moga* in the face of militarist nationalism, I wish to suggest that ambiguity underlies her intervention in Japanese culture throughout the pre-war period. Indeed, as I began this paper with reference to the echoes of these images in the films of Oshima, the post-war period will long reverberate with renewed discourses on women and modernity.

I will close with a question of methodology for the evaluation of images of modernity and womanhood in mass culture, art and writing.[16] We need to look further into practices of reading and interpreting historical

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[15] Catherine Russell, "Overcoming Modernity: Gender and the Pathos of History in Japanese Film Melodrama," *Camera Obscura: A Journal of Feminism and Film Theory* 35 (1995): 131-139; and Harry D. Harootunian, *History's Disquiet: Modernity, Cultural Practice, and the Question of Everyday Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).

[16] In addition to the sources cited, the author consulted the following: J.R. Clammer, *Difference and Modernity: Social Theory and Contemporary Japanese Society* (New York: Kegan Paul International, 1995); Vera C. Mackie, *Feminism in Modern Japan: Citizenship, Embodiment, and Sexuality* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Margit Nagy, "Middle-Class Working Women During the Interwar Years," in Bernstein, ed., *Recreating Japanese Women*, pp. 199-216; Yoshiko Miyake, "Doubling Expectations: Motherhood and Women's Factory Work Under State Management in Japan in the 1930s and 1940s," in Bernstein, ed., *Recreating Japanese Women*, 267-296; Elise K. Tipton and John Clark, eds., *Being Modern in Japan: Culture and Society from the 1910s to the 1930s* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000); and Maureen Turim, *The Films of Oshima Nagisa: Images of a Japanese Iconoclast* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

images of gender. In reading the film histories of the period, I have found discussion of gender representations to be intermixed with formal and industrial film history so that, for example, transformations in women's depictions provide keys to spurring the growth of the Shochiku and Nikkatsu studios, or are seen as part of a formal process of mixing Japanese and Western modes of representation or as an aspect of a director's approach as is common in discussions of Mizoguchi. By focusing specifically on the issue of the films' relationship to both historical Japanese women and to other cultural representations, I wish to bring a different focus to the important findings of historians of this period of Japanese cinema.

JAPAN THROUGH OTHERS' LENSES:
HIROSHIMA MON AMOUR **(1959) AND**
LOST IN TRANSLATION **(2003)**

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This essay is not actually about Japanese cinema. Instead, it will focus on how Japan and its people are represented in the cinemas of other nations, specifically: (1) a heavy French drama from 1959, *Hiroshima Mon Amour*, written by Marguerite Duras and directed by Alain Resnais, and (2) a light American romantic comedy from 2003, *Lost in Translation*, written, produced, and directed by Sofia Coppola. In some ways, because both movies narrativize a sort of cultural tourism and thematize a transnational "failure to communicate," both could be called "Lost in Translation."

The very title, *Hiroshima Mon Amour*, is a transnational oxymoron, combining as it does Japanese and French, agony and ecstasy, death and love. Its dialectical juxtaposition of opposites is reminiscent of Georges Bataille's book title, *Eroticism: Death and Sensuality*, which was first published in 1962, shortly after *Hiroshima Mon Amour* was released. The two protagonists, a Japanese architect (Okada Eiji) and a French actress (Emmanuelle Riva), are similarly contradictory. Indeed, although we never learn their real names in the film, he is called "Hiroshima" and she is called "Nevers," their respective hometowns, so both come to signify their nations, as well as individualized characters. He is played by Okada Eiji, who was deliberately cast because of his "Western-looking face" – his "French" profile, high forehead, and full lips. According to screenwriter Marguerite Duras, "A Japanese actor with pronounced Japanese features might lead people to believe that it is because the protagonist is Japanese that the French actress was attracted to him. Thus…we'd find ourselves caught again in the trap of 'exoticism,' and the involuntary racism inherent in any exoticism."[1]

She is played by Emmanuelle Riva, and we do not see her features for several minutes. Instead, the famous opening sequence of *Hiroshima Mon Amour* shows us the naked embrace of an anonymous mixed-race couple, interlaced body parts writhing in the throes of love or death, ecstasy

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[1] Marguerite Duras, *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (New York: Grove Press, 1961), p. 109.

Fig. 1. Scene from *Hiroshima Mon Amour*

or agony, drenched in the sweat of passion or the glistening radioactive dust of Strontium-90. Whatever it might be, this dew provides a cold shower, so to speak, to what could have been a rather sexy opening, aided and abetted by Giovanni Fusco's melancholy music. When we finally see the lovers, they are talking about – what else? – Hiroshima. She says (with some passion) that she has seen everything in Hiroshima; his impersonal, contradictory voice insinuates that she has, in fact, seen nothing.

Fig. 2. Scene from *Hiroshima Mon Amour*

Their initial "failure to communicate" enunciates a common international theme of the period – personal alienation – but the fact that this discordance is specifically about a fixation on Hiroshima suggests that these two national representatives have a cultural divide between them. Indeed, the man has a point: Nevers has not experienced the true horror of the atom bomb; she has merely witnessed the commercialization and merchandising of the Hiroshima tragedy: the impersonal bus outing (the Atomic Tour) with its smiling guide; the museum (a sideshow of flashing neon lights and honky-tonk music); the recreated documentaries; and the Gift Shop. She has essentially been a cultural tourist who has absorbed images and representations, rather than first-hand experience of the phenomenon of the nuclear attack on Hiroshima.

Fig. 3. Hiroshima following the atomic bomb

The initially flat, incantatory quality of the voices, along with the man's accented French, suggests a linguistic estrangement that is belied by the passion of their tight grip on each other. Then, as the woman rebuts his claim, her voice becomes impersonal and so does the imagery – scenes from around Hiroshima: the hospital and its exhibits, Peace Square, newsreels, survivors, graphic medical procedures. And then we return again to the couple's embrace. Somewhere between He and She, between the Empire of Signs and the Cinéma Français, falls the shadow, the shadow of obscurity and ambiguity. As a modernist film, Hiroshima Mon Amour is nebulous, opaque, and inscrutable – like the clichéd notion of Asia.

Later in the film, we see more of the city of Hiroshima – now a glitzy, Westernized metropolis presided over by the ruins of the famous

Genbaku Dome, the Hiroshima Peace Memorial. The city has been rebuilt from the ruins, probably by architects like the protagonist, in the image of the victorious West: skyscrapers, bars, neon signs, and advertising. It is only fourteen years after the Bomb devastated Hiroshima (and Nagasaki), yet the memories are already fading. But, ultimately, *Hiroshima Mon Amour* is a romantic drama – a psychological and philosophical film – that treats Japan and the Japanese with respect, albeit from a European perspective and with New Wave French film techniques. Sympathy for the victims of the atomic blast (and implied antagonism toward the United States) is certainly preferable to outright negative stereotyping.

It has been said that "Drama + Time = Comedy." That may be true, because fifty-eight years after the bombing of Hiroshima, an American romantic comedy is released that takes place in Japan and does not invoke memories of World War II at all: Sofia Coppola's *Lost in Translation*.

Like *Hiroshima Mon Amour*, *Lost in Translation* has a bit of a sexy Prologue also, a pre-credit shot of a Caucasian female derrière in translucent salmon-pink panties. This odalisque view is apparently provided for the scopophilic pleasure of the "male gaze," even though a woman directed the movie. It has been suggested that this image is an homage to the first scene of Jean-Luc Godard's *Le Mépris*,[2] which featured Brigitte Bardot's backside. The difference is that Godard was making a statement about objectification, while Coppola's postfeminist, postmodernist movie seems to be making no statement at all.

Fig. 4. Pre-credit scene of *Lost in Translation*

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[2] Jean-Luc Godard, *Le Mépris* [Contempt], 1963.

Once the film proper begins – "WELCOME TO TOKYO" – we are immediately put in the literal point of view of our male Caucasian "hero": aging, washed-up movie star Bob Harris (Bill Murray), who is being paid $2 million to endorse Suntory whiskey. We see postmodern Tokyo through Bob's jet-lagged eyes (and gaze-object-gaze editing) as he cruises in a limousine: neon signs, incomprehensible ideograms. He even sees himself on a giant commercial billboard, an alienating late-capitalist Lacanian "mirror phase" if ever there was one.

Fig. 5. Busy Tokyo intersection

We also see a digital dinosaur walking on the video-screen surface of a skyscraper, and Bob, who is a metaphorical kind of dinosaur himself, is both awed and dismayed by the sight. There is nothing magical in this tourism, only the eerily artificial semes of the modern megalopolis. Coppola, who has spent a considerable amount of time in Japan, shows us post-bubble Tokyo the way she might film an extraterrestrial empire…or the sensory overload of Las Vegas.

Once we arrive at Bob's destination – the swank yet antiseptic Park Hyatt Hotel – the stereotypes begin. He is greeted by a polite Japanese entourage, who present gifts and the key to his hotel room. Bob sums it all up, "Short and sweet. Very Japanese." On the elevator, he towers over the natives. On the one hand, this modest sight gag suggests the superiority of the Westerner; on the other hand, it can be construed as a visual means to show the character's discomfort in a foreign land. Either way, it reinforces a clichéd depiction of Asians as diminutive. (By the way, the Park Hyatt now offers a $5,000, five-night *Lost in Translation* package that includes a

55,000-yen [$500] meal at its Kozue restaurant, a shiatsu massage, and a map to the karaoke bar, arcade, nightclub, and shrine seen in the film.)

Fig. 6. Bob (Bill Murray) in elevator with Japanese businessmen

Once in his room, Bob listens to Western classical music on his TV, making no attempt to absorb the local culture. He hangs out in the hotel lounge, where the musical group is "Sausalito" and he ends up sleeping with its chanteuse, an American redhead. (Later, he watches *La Dolce Vita* on TV, plays golf near a misty Mt. Fuji, listens to Western rock music, and partakes of other Occidental pastimes, rather than explore Japanese culture.) Even when he does consume the native culture, it is usually an unfulfilling experience: disappointing food in a sushi bar, a weird melee in a nightclub, a drunken performance at a karaoke bar that plays the Sex Pistols, a strip club with American techno music, and constant insomnia. (Indeed, "Sleepless in Tokyo" could have been the title for *Lost in Translation*). He even tells his wife, "It's not fun. It's just very, very different." Actually, what he experiences is not so different, since most of his "tourism" is confined to doing comfortable and familiar things.

Later, in the photo shoot and prostitute scenes, Coppola plays on two cultural clichés: (1) the tendency of translators to abbreviate long monologues into a few pithy words, and (2) the difficulty many Japanese have in pronouncing R's and L's in English. The hip, Westernized photo shoot director screams at length, giving verbose instructions to Bob, and the interpreter translates it all as, "Turn and look into the camera." (As it turns

out, the translator is doing Bob a service by abbreviating the director's words: they are laced with insults.) Later, the director again gives lengthy notes, which are translated as "Right side, with intensity" and "Slower, more intensity." Indeed, the Japanese in this movie are more intense than the bored, discombobulated American tourists. The director finally ends the session by yelling, "Cutto! Cutto! Cutto!" (or *katto*, following katakana romanization). In a subsequent session, a photographer tells Bob to mimic "Flank Sinatla" of the "Lat Pack" and "Loger Moore" of James Bond fame. Bob gives him Dean Martin and Sean Connery instead. (Incidentally, Bob Harris is not the only celebrity to make a quick yen this way: Sean Connery hawked Suntory Whisky, as did Francis Coppola and Akira Kurosawa; Leonardo DiCaprio publicized the Orico credit card; Harrison Ford sold Kirin beer; Anthony Hopkins promoted Hyundai/Honda Cleo; Brad Pitt marketed Rolex, Roots Beer, and Honda; Meg Ryan plugged Purpeau face cream; Sylvester Stallone advertised Nippon ham; Arnold Schwarzenegger pushed Cup Ramen; and even Andy Warhol praised TDK tapes.)

Fig. 7. Bob filming a Suntory Whisky commercial

Later, Bob's hosts send a prostitute to his hotel room. This depiction of "Ingrish" pronunciation with a "Dzapaneese" accent (à la Mickey Rooney in Breakfast at Tiffany's) confirms a longstanding stereotype, even if it is based on a real difficulty that many native speakers of any language have in adjusting to a new tongue. Here, the manic hooker begs Bob to "prease" "lip" her stockings. She then ends up on the floor

screaming and flailing her limbs about as Bob tries to escape her clutches. This is clichéd inscrutability, with intensity!

When Charlotte (Scarlett Johansson) develops a foot bruise, Bob refers to it as "brack toe." Sofia Coppola justified this blatant linguistic humor as follows: "I know I'm not racist. If everything's based on truth, you can make fun, have a little laugh, but also be respectful of a culture. I just love Tokyo….Even on the daily call sheets, they would mix up the R's and L's – all that was from experience; it's not made up." Yes, and some black people like watermelon and some Italians are in the Mafia. Producer Ross Katz also addressed the issue: "We've shown the film in Japan, to a Japanese audience. The response was great." And, yes, some gay men laughed at the over-the-top drag queens in *La Cage aux Folles* (1978).
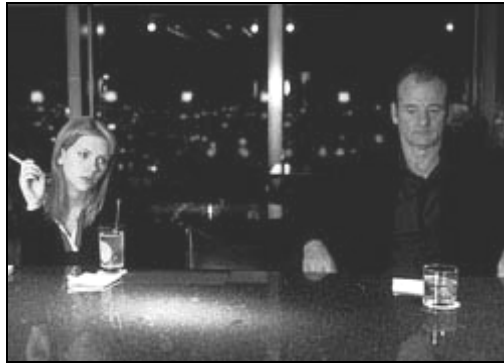

Fig. 8. Charlotte (Scarlett Johansson) and Bob in hotel bar

In *Lost in Translation*, Japanese conformity and regimentation are also satirized when Charlotte walks the bustling streets of Tokyo in a drizzle, the only blonde in sight, and the only person without an umbrella. Nonetheless, she at least ventures out of the hotel. She wanders Tokyo alone like a flaneuse, seeking to soak in both the bright lights of postmodernity and the traditional Buddhist temples and ceremonies. In contrast, Bob generally sticks to the hotel's bar, too world-weary to attempt the cultural translation work necessary to venture out (He even tells Charlotte, "I'll be in the bar for the rest of the week"). But as the two grow more intimate, they begin to experience the labyrinthine city together – lost, but at least lost together. With constant references to Buddhism in the background, the two Westerners seem to seek answers to their existential

koans, though only with the aid of each other – and Charlotte's self-help CD, *A Soul's Search* – as their masters.

The city of Tokyo is really the third main character. The high-rise hotel windows provide sweeping views of the skyline, day and night. The voyeuristic vista from Charlotte's window, which she gazes out of often, is like the central tower of Jeremy Bentham's panopticon in its incredible access to vision but also in its dissociation of the seer from the seen.[3] The hyperreal Tokyo cityscape is on view for her (and Bob) but she remains anonymous and alienated from it, a voyeur or cultural tourist.

Fig. 9. Charlotte gazes out over Tokyo

Thus, *Lost in Translation* becomes one of those films in which the setting itself takes on a certain subjectivity. Viewers are offered many point-of-view shots of the urban anxieties and attractions from inside taxis, as well as from more intimate perspectives: inside Tokyo-dwellers' apartments, nightclubs, and restaurants. Coppola's eyes for the city parallel a fascination many Western filmmakers have had with Japan's capital city. Several sequences almost precisely mimic scenes from Wim Wenders (*Tokyo-ga* and *Until the End of the World*) and Chris Marker (*Sans Soleil*), other visual essays that depict Westerners lost in Tokyo. Taken together, such scenes beg the question of what it is about that hybrid, transnational megalopolis – at the border of East and West – that inspires the modern Western filmmaker. On the one hand, this movie could have been set anywhere; on the other hand, it could only have been set in Tokyo. The idea

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[3] Jeremy Bentham, *The Panopticon Writings*, ed. Miran Bozovic (London: Verso, 1995), pp. 29-95.

of being "lost in translation" works well there, especially with no subtitles to tell English-speakers what the Japanese are saying. As such, there are no real Japanese characters here, only Tokyo itself, a city that speaks louder than anyone in the film.

Critic Alice Lovejoy suggests that in *Lost in Translation*, "Japan is not Japan itself but rather a canvas onto which these Americans' emotions are mapped."[4] Through Charlotte's drowsy eyes, Japan is a dream space, an impressionistic kaleidoscope that includes the crowded Shibuya Crossing, the Tokyo subway, an ikebana class, and the shinkansen track to Kyoto's temples. Tokyo, with all its flashy electronic displays, with its chaotic and teeming streets, still appears lifeless – a place where one can only be desperately lonely. There is nothing necessarily wrong with this. However, Coppola's depiction of Japan is a high-risk maneuver, and she does not always execute it in a way that would preempt protest about racism (or at least insensitivity). When Bob is a guest star on a bizarre real-life television talk show, *Matthew's Best Hit TV*, starring the foppish "Johnny Carson of Japan," he plays along with the host's incomprehensible and silly campy antics. We may laugh, and then wonder if we should have cringed instead.

All these scenes leave *Lost in Translation* open to the charge of "orientalism," and there have been many such critiques of the film because it keeps Japanese characters at a real distance. In fact, there was an organized campaign to prevent the film from receiving any Academy Awards. The organization Asian Mediawatch complained that, "the Asian-American community is abuzz with concerns that the movie…mocks the Japanese people."[5] The group's spokesperson bragged that they had kept odds-on favorite Bill Murray from winning the Best Actor award from SAG (which went to Johnny Depp) and from the Academy (which went to Sean Penn). While the charge of exoticizing (racism lite?) is not completely inaccurate, the point of view here is emphatically that of Bob and Charlotte, two persons lost in another world. To bring more specificity, more character development, to the Japanese characters would have been to sacrifice the Americans' personal disorientation. In other words, the exoticism may be more existential than cultural.

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[4] Alice Lovejoy, "The Two Souls Adrift in Tokyo Forge an Unlikely Bond in Sofia Coppola's 21st Century Brief Encounter," *Film Comment* (July-August 2003), p. 11.

[5] Kiku Day, "Hit Film Gets Lost in Racism Row" (http://guardian.co.uk/Oscars/story).

It is difficult to deny, however, that throughout the film, Japan's "alien" culture provides the comic relief; that is, Japan and the Japanese are the butts of most of the jokes. Some gags are relatively tame, such as the hotel drapery that opens automatically in the morning, the expressionless automatons at pachinko parlors, or the drunken patrons at a tasteless strip club. Sofia Coppola obviously found Japan's idiosyncrasies to be quite comical, but she also takes serious satirical aim at three shallow Hollywood types – Charlotte's workaholic husband, Bob's obsessive, home-decorating wife, and narcissistic Kelly (Anna Faris), an air-headed starlet who happens to be in Tokyo too. This may be Coppola's idea of "equal-opportunity" comedy, a "fair and balanced" approach.

There is no denying, though, that the two American characters and the delicate relationship that binds them are at the center of the film, with Japan serving as a convenient background and foil. But in fact, the depiction of Japan often gets in the way and stands out as a somewhat troubling issue. The film walks a fine line here, and some viewers will no doubt find the treatment of the Japanese people and their culture malicious and condescending.

In spite of some unfortunate moments, Coppola does not just crudely counterpoise the strangeness and alienation of Japan with the familiarity and humanity of the United States. Moreover, to be fair, Japan and its people are not always presented as uniformly strange, or always as the subject of mockery and contempt. Out with Charlotte, Bob finds some genuine moments with young Japanese people in spite of language and cultural barriers. He actually enjoys himself while barhopping with the young Japanese, especially one named "Charlie Brown," but that character's humanity is undermined because he has the name of an American comic strip icon. The scene in the hospital is also significant. It begins and threatens to end with what, by then, is a tired and offensive shtick. Bob and Charlotte do not understand the receptionist, who, unfazed, continues to speak Japanese and wave forms in their faces. Then we see Bob in a waiting room next to a Japanese elder who does not speak English at all. But this time we do not laugh at her. Somehow, the two communicate, and it is the woman who laughs.

Overall, one gets the feeling that, in the midst of all the dubious representations of Japan, Coppola really wanted to say something about America. (This is perhaps why the movie begins with an American in panties.) This may also be why the film focuses on two Yanks "stuck" in Tokyo, who, over the course of a week, have a platonic "brief encounter,"

that ranges from an ersatz father-daughter bond to being fellow tourists to becoming near-lovers. They share food and drink, existential quandaries, a few karaoke renditions of the Sex Pistols and Roxy Music, and even a non-conjugal night in bed. (It should be noted that the Bob-Charlotte liaison is a far more beguiling and culturally honest tease than that shown in *The Last Samurai* [2003]).

Fig. 10. Bob in his hotel room

Is Bob portrayed as boorish and America-centric because he is, and because Americans are? One does not feel compelled to defend the film against accusations of an insensitive portrayal of Japan. Its "strangeness" seen through the eyes of ignorant American tourists could have been developed in interesting ways. But Coppola only vaguely points the audience in the direction of a critique of American incuriousness. Yet the movie is certainly not in the same xenophobic league as, say, *Know Your Enemy, the Japanese* (1943); *The Purple Heart* (1944); or *Black Rain* (1989).

One could pose this hypothetical question as an experiment: Would it be possible to produce a Japanese film that plays the same jokes on Americans? There is, after all, plenty that is not just strange and alienating, but downright demeaning and abhorrent in American popular culture – our politics, the "Jerry Springer Show," reality TV shows, and all the ugliness that flows out of extreme social inequality in so many revolting forms. But it is difficult to imagine such a "turning-the-tables" satire coming from Japan. Many people in Japan know something about the U.S.

and a few words in English. Yet the American people and their culture appear to be immune from this sort of treatment.

At one level, we could be said that in this age of globalization, America functions as the main engine of cultural transformation. What Coppola sees as strange in Japan may just be a refraction of some element found originally in the U.S. For instance, the Japanese videogame arcade is depicted in the film as an alienating place, but it provokes the same feelings pioneered and trademarked by Las Vegas – and American arcades. In one of the early scenes, Bob Harris notices some Japanese young people wearing cowboy hats and leather. This strikes him as strange. But that "fashion statement" is borrowed from U.S. culture. Who is mocking whom, then? In such a mise-en-abyme structure, the off-putting character of Japanese life is itself a refraction of America. Thus, *Lost in Translation*'s representation of alienation in the face of Japan's strangeness becomes merely one facet of American self-alienation.

But this sort of "translation" is itself a far more complicated matter, since American popular culture is itself the product of multifarious national influences. Moreover, those influences tend to be hidden, since contemporary American pop culture rarely appears as the sum of the historical processes that produced it. Instead, it tends to abhor history and projects a certain vulgar timelessness, recycling and reprocessing influences mechanically, without acknowledging them.

This suggests a certain desolation and emptiness at the heart of a culture that can never be truly "national." The American culture industry is everywhere and nowhere – familiar, but only in its vacuity. It occupies the heights of global cinematic production, but from there it transmits mostly emptiness and artificiality. To paraphrase Gertrude Stein's comment on Oakland, "there's no there here." Perhaps that is the contradiction Coppola was groping toward. Ultimately, Bob's Weltschmerz and Charlotte's estrangement are not inflicted on them by Japan, but they are not purely personal either. There is something vaguely American about their ennui, but the film doesn't help us pursue that line.

Instead, Coppola encourages us to be content with Bonsai truths: a moment, a glance, and a few genuine but fleeting feelings. It is part of a widespread international postmodernist tendency to obliterate the modernist interest in history and society, in favor of a focus on interiority and intimacy, with the hope of catching a glimpse of the human condition. Coppola may express this tendency more honestly and skillfully than some, and, as a result, she ends up demonstrating its limitations very clearly.

In the end the question is, is Japan a metaphor for the globalized world in this film? [6] Are we all strangers in a strange land, perpetually lost and desperately trying to make meaningful connections with others on this small planet Earth? Does *Lost in Translation* deal with such big existential themes and universal ideas, as *Hiroshima Mon Amour* assuredly does? I would argue that although *Lost in Translation* is from Universal Studios, it is not a universal picture. Being an equal-opportunity racist or a cynical humanist is no reason to denigrate an entire people on screen. After all, the indexical nature of the cinema, its Barthesian "reality effect," means that, on screen, Tokyo is Tokyo, not Never-Never Land.

[6] In addition to the sources cited, the author consulted the following: Roy Armes, *The Cinema of Alain Resnais* (New York: Barnes, 1968); Wendy Haslem, "Neon Gothic: Lost in Translation" (http://www.sensesofcinema. com/contents/04/31/lost_in_translation.html); John Francis Kreidl, *Alain Resnais* (Boston: Twayne, 1968); James Monaco, *Alain Resnais* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979); Mark Olsen, "Sofia Coppola: Cool and the Gang," *Sight and Sound* 14/1 (2004), p. 14; S. Brent Plate, "Review of Lost in Translation," *Journal of Religion and Film* 8/1 (2004); Motoko Rich, "Land of the Rising Cliché," *The Age* (January 17, 2004); Donald Richie, *A Hundred Years of Japanese Film* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 2002); Emanuele Saccarelli, "Review of Lost in Translation," World Socialist Web site, October 3, 2003 (http://www.wsws.org); Mark Schilling, *Contemporary Japanese Film* (New York: Weatherhill, 1998); Paul Smith, "Tokyo Drifters," *Sight and Sound* 14/1 (2004): 13-16; John Ward, *Alain Resnais: Or, the Theme of Time* (London: Secker & Walburg, 1968); and Linda Williams, "Hiroshima and Marienbad: Metaphor and Metonymy," *Screen* (1978): 34-39 (http://www.hotelchatter.com/country/Japan).

IMMACULATE CONFESSION

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> Could you hurt me, sweet lips, though I hurt you?
> Men touch them, and change in a trice
> The lilies and languors of virtue
> For the raptures and roses of vice;
> Those lie where thy foot on the floor is,
> These crown and caress thee and chain,
> O splendid and sterile Dolores,
> Our Lady of Pain.[1]

In the aforementioned lines from Algernon Swinburne's "Dolores," the poet establishes a form of erotic "divine cruelty."[2] It is this very form of "divine cruelty" that forges the tortured *kokoro* of the protagonist, Kochan in Yukio Mishima's *Confessions of a Mask*. The depth of the tortuous self-analysis by Kochan is seemingly unfathomable, and perpetually reaffirms the conflict inchoate within the narrative – that of an internal conflict that is desperately endured by a young man in an increasingly Westernized and war-torn Japan.

It is a culture that he tries to at once embrace (by unsuccessfully pushing his burgeoning homosexual desires to the periphery of his personality) yet repel (by continuing to feed the flame of his carnal desires by contorting his perceptions to fit a pristine sanctuary of carnal desire). Yet despite the incessant psychological self-analysis, the protagonist is somehow unable to put the pieces of his past together and thereby discover the origin of the conflict. While the conflict is apparent, and clearly expressed within this lack of societal continuity, the important piece of the analytical puzzle that completes the picture lies instead within the very essence of Sadism, which stems from the unconscious desire for control.

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[1] Charles Algernon Swinburne, *Selected Poems* (Austin, TX: Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, 1987).

[2] Andrew Parle, "A Day Among the Creationists," University of Sydney, 06/02/1994 (http://home.austarnet.com.au/stear/a_day_among_the_creationists_parle.htm, accessed 03/24/2005).

The paraphilic focus of Sexual Sadism involves acts in which the individual derives sexual excitement from the psychological or physical suffering (including humiliation) of the victim. Sadistic fantasies usually involve having complete control over the victim, who is terrified by anticipation of the impending sadistic act.[3]

This desire eventually renders the protagonist Kochan incapable of acting on his emotional needs, making him curiously impotent, for his impeccable intellect conflicts with his desires, creating a unique psychological double-bind from which he cannot escape.[4]

In his love for the older, more mature middle-school student Omi, in two episodes, "foot prints" and "white gloves", we recognize the Kochan cannot act on his impulses, or even perhaps more elaborately, his love for another young man because of his inability to express his desires within the realm of an interpersonal relationship. While we can discern the reason for his urges for Omi within the two episodes, it is the analysis of two other distinct moments from Kochan's childhood that creates for us a lens of meaning to fully understand why Kochan acts the way he does in regard to Omi.

While never able to accurately assess his unconscious desire for control that manifests subconsciously in his sadistic thoughts (which in turn creates a conscious conflict within his homophobic environment), the protagonist in Mishima's *Confessions of a Mask* presents enough historical background of Kochan's fomenting personality that we can discern that two crucial catalytic events create the unconscious fertile state to feed his sadistic desires, and limit his ability for interpersonal intimacy.

The first event occurs when the protagonist is liberated from his mother as an infant – "my grandmother snatched me from my mother's arms on my forty-ninth day"[5] – and the second is the end of the protagonist's stay with his grandmother, when he is plucked from her geriatric "parentage" at the age of twelve by his father, ending Kochan's sublime fantasy existence: "rather than this I preferred by far to be by

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[3] *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 4th ed. (Washington, D.C.: American Psychiatric Association, 1994).

[4] G. Bateson, D.D. Jackson, J. Haley, & J. Weakland, "Toward a Theory of Schizophrenia," *Behavioral Science* 1 (1956): 251-264.

[5] Yukio Mishima, *Confessions of a Mask* (New York: New Directions Publishing, 1958), p. 3; hereafter CM.

myself reading a book, playing with my building blocks, indulging in my willful fantasies, or drawing pictures."[6]

These events shape Kochan, as his formative years become an artificial construct of fantasies and childhood tyranny – "One day I would bully a maid to tears...I ended many such meals by jumping up from the table and staring hard at the maid, as though to say 'So there!'"[7] Clearly, Kochan at this stage is the young king in a fantasy world of knights, dragons, spells, curses, and more. Naturally, as he is not physically mature at this stage, there is no carnal pathology evident, yet the loss of control as an infant that he has manifested into his tyrannical pose as a child and the foreshadowed potency of his ultimate dilemma of fitting his visions of perfection within a far from perfect real world is evident.

As he is eventually removed from the perfection of his grandmother's home, he is in a very different stage of development, that of puberty:

> a child provided with a curious toy. I was twelve. This toy increased in volume at every opportunity and hinted that, rightly used, it would be quite a delightful thing. But directions for its use were nowhere written, and so when the toy took the initiative in wanting to play with me, my bewilderment was inevitable. Occasionally my humiliation and impatience became so aggravated that I even thought I wanted to destroy the toy.[8]

The natural awareness of sexual potency has expressed itself into entirely sadistic subconscious manifestations. And when his father is transferred to Osaka, he again lacks a male role model, furthering his identification with the female gender, which had been established in early childhood, "I was forbidden to play with other boys"[9] and now, his guilt-ridden mask is gradually becoming formed.

By the time Kochan is beginning to feel the eventual pangs of physical desire for another person, he directs his emotions toward the perfect yet unattainable Omi. Kochan psychologically idealizes the object of his desires to the realm of the unattainable: "I fashioned a perfect, flawless

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[6] CM, p. 5.
[7] CM, p. 24.
[8] CM, p. 34.
[9] CM, p. 24.

illusion of him (Omi). Hence it is that I cannot discover a single flaw in the image that remains imprinted in my memory."[10] Knowing that he cannot violate his mask, yet still feeling the subconscious lustful urges creates a leitmotif that perpetually permeates the scope of Kochan's internal and external realities. As Kochan recognizes his love for Omi, it is the tension created by the desire of Kochan for Omi, bound by the protagonist's unconscious sadistic urges and the inability to betray his mask that renders Kochan incapable of action: "But as usual, my sluggish motor nerves protected me from my sudden whim."[11]

In the "foot prints" episode, Kochan idealizes the moment to perfection, building the purity of the setting and rendering it both gothic and mystical:

> The snow scene was in a way like a fresh castle ruin: its legerdemain was being bathed in the same boundless light and splendor which exists solely in the ruins of ancient castles.[12]

The moment is experienced in an idealized fashion, enabling Kochan to fit his base desires within the divine realm, supporting his long active fantasies of classical perfection that are marred only by lustful desires, which he manifests as carnal yet imaginary lust. As in the Saint Sebastian description, "The arrows have eaten into the tense, fragrant, youthful flesh and are about to consume his body from within with flames of supreme agony and ecstasy,"[13] Kochan idolizes and idealizes Omi in the same fashion during "foot prints": "As I ran, a most undreamed of sound came reverberating toward me – a friendly shout from him, filled with his power: 'Hey, don't step on the letters.'"[14]

Significantly, the first physical contact with Omi is rendered magical by expression, and yet tinged with dark sadomasochistic tones: "'Poor thing. I bet you don't even know how leather gloves feel – Here.' Abruptly, he thrust his snow-drenched leather gloves against my cheek."[15]

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[10] CM, p. 63.
[11] CM, p. 56.
[12] CM, p. 58.
[13] CM, p. 39.
[14] CM, p. 59.
[15] CM, p. 61.

Clearly, Kochan constructs the divine out of his base desires, which then creates the psychological double-bind that imprisons Kochan in his carnal urges. "A raw carnal feeling blazed up within me, blazing in my cheeks...From this time on, I was in love with Omi."[16] Yet because of the strictures of society, he cannot find a suitable expression for his desires, and Kochan is compelled to continue the construction of his mask.

During the "white gloves" episode, the rampant imaginative idealization of Kochan's love for Omi, "a precise definition of the perfection of life and manhood,"[17] heretofore physically dormant, achieves a physical manifestation, albeit in the manner of boys at play at a game. Yet it serves to escalate the physical tension within the narrative in its heightened form of lyrical expression. "The palms of our white-gloved hands met many times in stinging slaps."[18] As Kochan succeeds in grasping the glove of Omi, and they fall from their apex, Kochan feels an elusive moment that enables him to share his love for Omi:

> I knew intuitively and certainly that Omi had seen the way I looked at him in that instant, had felt the pulsating force that flowed like lightning between our fingertips and had guessed my secret – that I was in love with him, with no one else in the world but him.[19]

Kochan finally experiences the revelation of his love, and the subsequent physical embodiment of that emotion when Omi places his arm around Kochan's shoulders. As they walk back to class, the intensity of the moment to Kochan, and the benign nature of the same moment to Omi is apparent: "it was a supreme delight I felt as I walked leaning on his arm."[20]

As time passes, the active yet bound imagination of Kochan renders the moment into the proper paradigm to fit within his sadistic primacy: "it was a debasement more evil than that of any normal love."[21] Kochan at once feels lust, yet guilt over his lust, and then an unconscious violent desire to control that lust that then manifests itself into dire (if imaginative) circumstances.

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[16] CM, p. 61.
[17] CM, p. 64.
[18] CM, p. 69.
[19] CM, p. 70.
[20] CM, p. 71.
[21] CM, p. 72.

In the provisional desire for the successor to Omi, "a skilled swimmer with a notably good physique,"[22] Kochan begins to daydream of a sort of "murder theatre"[23] that demonstrates that the sadistic impulses, once germinal, are now flowering into a Baudelairean evil, which approaches dire (if only imaginary) proportions:

> "This is probably a good spot to begin on." I thrust the fork upright into the heart. A fountain of blood struck me full in the face. Holding the knife in my right hand, I began carving the flesh of the breast, thinly at first.[24]

And now, the deep unconscious desires begin to crawl their way to the surface of consciousness. First, innocently enough with the sadistically tinged Omi episodes, but now fully drawn within the imaginary world of Kochan.

Rather than recognize the apparent dichotomy within his soul, Kochan instead twists and turns within societal expectations to manage a facade-like existence. His deep well of intelligence seems at odds with the illogical nature of his subconscious desires. On the one hand, he is intellectually sophisticated enough to be able to appreciate the sad hubris of Helioglobus (or Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius Antonius), who satiated his primal urges at the expense of his esteem in the eyes of his kingdom. It is a subtle reminder of Elagabalus' transsexual proclivity, which is recounted in an anecdote from Cassius Dio (LXXIX.15-16):

> When Hierocles, a charioteer in the arena, was thrown in front of the emperor's box, his blond hair spilling out from under his helmet, Elagabalus immediately had the youth escorted to the palace, where he was found to be even more captivating. Calling him "husband" and contriving to be caught in adulterous trysts, Elagabalus proudly displayed the black eyes he insisted on receiving. But there was to be a rival. Frequenting the wharves and

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[22] CM, p. 94.
[23] CM, p. 92.
[24] CM, p. 97.

public baths, agents sought out others who might please the emperor, especially those who were well-endowed.[25]

Yet Kochan is unable to escape his own dark desires, instead almost embracing the darkness within his romanticized vision. The dichotomy is apparent in that Kochan is at once intelligent enough to be aware of the reasons and the manifestations of his sadistic desires, yet he is powerless to make any headway against them. Rather, Kochan retreats into his womb-like idyllic childhood, embracing it and lavishing himself within it: "I had a sworn unconditional loyalty to the stage manager of the play called adolescence."[26]

Kochan is incapable of reconciling his desires with the expectations of a male in early twentieth century Japan, and therefore creates the mask that he must wear to function within society.

> My knowledge that I am masquerading as a normal person has corroded whatever of normality I originally possessed, ending by making me tell myself over and over again that it too was nothing but a pretense at normality.[27]

Kochan realizes that his imaginary world is, in truth, *more* real than his real world, and that his current existence is nothing but a masquerade. Ironically, the inner reality of episodes within his imagination, such as the "foot prints" or "white gloves" episode, (rendered perfect within the confines of his broad imagination), are much more accurate barometers of the inner character of Kochan than is his actual existence.

Kochan realizes he cannot love Omi within the physical realm, but his true desire is not to actually consummate a physical relationship. Quite the contrary, he longs for it to remain in the magical realm of his idealized imagination, unsullied by reality:

> And yet from the outset, a logical impossibility was involved for me in these rude tastes, making my desires forever unattainable…

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[25] Scriptores Historiae Augustae, *Lives of the Later Caesars: The First Part of the Augustan History: With Newly Compiled Lives of Nerva and Trajan*, trans. Anthony Birley (London: Penguin Classics, 1976), p. 108.

[26] CM, p. 122.

[27] CM, p. 153.

> There was nothing for me to do but be forever watching them from afar with impassioned indifference being careful to never exchange words with them.[28]

It is evident that Kochan is cognizant of his machinations, and even rejoices in it, as it provides him with an inner pain that in some fashion is experienced as a method of continuing to feed his sense of pleasure.

As expressed fantastically throughout the narrative, the ideas and actions of Kochan find a retrospective balance due to the gravity of consistent reference. While we perceive that Kochan is incapable of embracing his true self, we also feel that the lyrical magical realism of narrative is in fact the sanctuary that envelops Kochan in a kind of twisted comfort within his own soul. It is as if the constructs of his imagination, brought to life upon the page, form the framework for an existent that is eminently more livable than actual reality. No greater dichotomy of the dynamism inherent within Kochan's soul can be found than in the following lines:

> As I did so, I recalled a line from Whitman: "The young men float on their backs – their white bellies bulge to the sun...But now again I said not a word." I was ashamed of my own thin chest, of my bony pallid arms...[29]

Because his unconscious urges are inalienable, he can never escape his inner truth, and no mask, no matter how elaborate, will allow Kochan to exist within his own soul.

As the protagonist in Yukio Mishima's *Confessions of a Mask*, Kochan does not wish for his submerged carnal longings to express themselves within the physical realm, because by doing so, they would lose their immaculate perfection, thus ending his pristine sanctuary of imaginative lustful longings. He would then become just a simple man, facing a simple reality.

> Dost thou dream of what was and no more is,
> The old kingdoms of earth and the kings?
> Dost thou hunger for these things, Dolores,

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[28] CM, p. 64.
[29] CM, p. 126.

For these, in a new world of things?
But thy bosom no fasts could emaciate,
No hunger compel to complain
Those lips that no bloodshed could satiate,
Our Lady of Pain.[30]

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[30] Swinburne, *Selected Poems*.

BOOK REVIEWS

Ellis S. Krauss and T.J. Pempel, eds., *Beyond Bilateralism: U.S.-Japan Relations in the New Asia-Pacific*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003. 448 pp. ISBN 10: 0-8047-4909-4 (hbk), $70.

Reviewed by Thomas E. Rotnem

Beyond Bilateralism explores the evolving, multifaceted U.S.-Japan relationship in an apparently emerging multilateral context. As such, the authors of this edited volume attempt to right what they aver has been a major defect of recent studies of the topic, i.e., an exclusive focus upon the bilateral nature of the relationship, while ignoring a growing range and number of activities mounted by either side in various multilateral forums.

The study begins with an analysis of key concepts and examines fundamental facets of the preexisting bilateral relationship in historical context. The editors then suggest three largely external forces that have collectively encouraged evolution beyond bilateralism: the demise of the bipolar system, the increasing significance of global private capital movements, and the rise of global and regional multilateral organizations. Later chapters examine in greater detail the particular motives causing Japan to engage the United States in multilateral forums, be they domestic political constraints, the U.S.'s inaction in the face of the Asian financial crisis in 1997, or the long-held desire of Japan to escape the "entrapment-abandonment" dilemma.

Contributing chapters explore aspects of the changing relationship from one of three arenas: security, economic, and multilateral contexts. Many of these chapters (particularly those included in the latter two realms) convincingly supported the volume's underlying thesis: multilateral institutions and, to a lesser extent, non-governmental organizations, play a growing importance in the U.S.-Japan relationship. The chapters also effectively examine the implications of these changes for the U.S. and Japan, as well as the larger region. One interesting finding was the growing realization on either side of the substantial benefits in "forum shopping," particularly in the global trade and finance arenas. Several chapters also noted the increasing attempts by either Japan or the U.S. to gain leverage over the other in economic or trade disputes by forming revolving coalitions with the E.U., China, or other Asian states at such multilateral forums.

At the same time, Saadia Pekkanen's contribution to the WTO demonstrates that, while forum shopping and coalition building may be more oft-used techniques to manage the evolving relationship, domestic political constraints continue to play as great a role in shaping each party's response in the emerging multilateral era as they may have in the former bilateral one. As well, Walter Hatch's chapter on the U.S.-Japanese manufacturing rivalry in Asia proves once again that the key factor inhibiting U.S. exports to the region is the lack of market access; indeed, in those manufacturing sectors that guarantee greater openness, American products compete effectively with their foreign counterparts.

On the whole, however, the volume is less persuasive in arguing the U.S.-Japan relationship has moved away from its bilateral historical roots in the security arena. As the editors may themselves admit, the U.S.-Japan security relationship has scarcely moved in a multilateral direction. Indeed, fears of an expansionist China, the renewed possibility of conflict on the Korean peninsula, and the anemic outcome of the ARF process mitigate against Japan shedding the U.S. security blanket. Still, this section of the volume warrants close reading, particularly Mike Mochizuki's chapter on China's impact upon the larger U.S.-Japan relationship; it appears that "playing the China card" no longer applies only to the détente era of the 1970s.

While the authors should be lauded for examining the U.S.-Japan relationship from different dimensions and with varying levels of analysis in mind, the absence of a clearer conceptual focus also detracts from the volume. In addition, although most chapters effortlessly complement one another as well as the volume's central theme, the inclusion of several of the articles appears to have been forced, while at the same time, the subject matter of other contributions (Jennifer Amyx's and Saori Katada's) overlaps to a considerable degree. It is also distressing that for a volume published so recently (2003), only passing mention is made of post-9/11 concerns and their implications for the U.S.-Japan relationship. Indeed, the volume gives short shrift to the issue of North Korean WMDs, the War on Terror, and the ongoing U.S.-Japanese missile defense relationship.

In general, however, the concluding chapter brings together handily the disparate strands of the individual chapters. The editors remind us of the myriad costs and benefits accruing to either power in transforming the bilateral relationship into an incipient multilateral one. As such, the claim is made that multilateralism also does not imply an ever-weakening relationship between the U.S. and Japan; on the contrary, that relationship

may sometimes be made stronger through the use of multilateral approaches to resolving conflicts. Still, as the various contributions to the volume relate, multilateralism is in no way a panacea for the ills that may affect the U.S.-Japan relationship. Furthermore, the volume demonstrates that certain impediments lie in the way of a further deepening in such multilateral structures, not all of them (or the most important of them) emanating from the U.S. side.

Hamaguchi Eshun and Kaneko Satoru, eds., ***Tora-san to Nihonjin: Eiga "Otokowa tsuraiyo" no shakaishinri*** **[Tora-san and the Japanese: Social Psychology of a Movie Series** ***It's Tough Being a Man*****]. Tokyo: Chisen shokan, 2005. 290 pp. ISBN 10: 4-901654-55-1, ¥1,700.**

Reviewed by Kinko Ito

Tora-san to Nihonjin is a book of social psychological, comparative, and content analysis of a very popular and famous Japanese movie series *Otokowa tsuraiyo,* or *It's Tough Being A Man.* The Guinness Book of World Records recognizes the series as the longest running movie series in terms of the number of installments. The forty-eight episode series was directed and produced by Yamada Yoji for 27 years from 1969 to 1995, and starred Atsumi Kiyoshi as *Futen no Tora*, or the Vagabond Tora and Baisho Chieko as his half-sister Sakura. The film series was shown in 105 countries and attracted many loyal and avid fans both in Japan and from abroad. Each episode, except the first few, was seen by more than 2 million viewers. The total viewers of the movie series in Japanese theaters easily exceeded one billion. Tora-san truly is one of the most beloved national heroes of modern Japan. The series was also broadcast on TV in its entirety in 2001 and 2005, and its videotapes and DVDs are now available. The Tora-san series, which was produced by Shochiku Co., was a godsend to the declining Japanese movie industry. A major film company, Daiei, which produced such world renowned movies as *Rashomon* and *Ugetsu* declared bankruptcy in 1971, and Nikkatsu, another major Japanese film company, changed its direction to romantic pornography in the same year.

Tora-san to Nihonjin consists of a prologue, twelve chapters, and an epilogue as well as a list of the series, the contents of each installment, and references available in books, magazines, comics, CD-ROM, web sites, etc. Four Japanese social psychologists used the methodology of

"participant observation," watched the entire series, and discussed in order to answer questions such as, "Who are the Japanese?" "What makes the Japanese so Japanese apart from other peoples of the world?" "What is Japanese everyday life like?" etc. as seen in the Tora-san movie series. This book makes another great addition to a genre of Japanese social psychology called *Nihonjinron*, or theories of Japanese-ness, the national character and the Japanese essence.

Each chapter deals with various aspects of Tora-san's social psychology, with special attention to his human relations and communication patterns, as well as to the psychology of other supporting characters, social, historical, political, and economic backgrounds of the episodes. Tora-san is a kind-hearted traveling peddler who tells stories and makes funny speeches to those who listen to him at his sales stand, which is usually set up at a festival in some remote town. He cons his unsuspecting customers and sells tacky products. He may recruit some people to perform a role of decoy customers so that others might be interested in taking a look at his products and purchase them. Bohemian Tora-san is forever single, carefree, humorous, bold, and sometimes unpolished and shy. He never seems to want to settle down anywhere with a steady income or with anyone.

The basic plot throughout the series is the same for all the installments: compassionate Tora-san happens to meet a helpless local woman, provides her with assistance, and in so doing falls in love with her. (Pity is akin to love, sometimes.) Tora-san gets really excited about his new-found love, comes home, and boasts about it. Each episode starred a beautiful leading lady who was referred to as a *Madonna,* and the selection of a new Madonna always made newspaper headlines. When the Madonna gets serious with Tora-san, he starts to feel rather uncomfortable and unworthy sometimes, withdraws from the relationship, leaves her behind, and keeps on traveling. Very often Tora-san misunderstands his Madonna who is interested in another man, and he ends up getting jilted. This film series, however, is not only about love stories but also Tora-san's falling in love with a Madonna, coming home, and his interactions with her and his kin.

According to the authors of *Tora-san to Nihonjin,* the series attracted a huge audience for more than a quarter century thanks to its depiction of warm, close-knit, human relationships within a family (Tora-san, his half-sister, their uncle and aunt, the sister's husband, and son) as well as a cozy neighborhood where everybody knows his name. This

primary group-like relationship is now hard to find in modern Japan especially in big cities, and the viewers satisfy their craving of warm, human relationships by going to see the Tora-san movie series twice a year. It provides the viewers with a vicarious experience of going back home, and the audience leaves the theater feeling warm, happy, and content.

All episodes also feature the everyday life of ordinary Japanese, an uneventful yet peaceful and comfortable life. The authors of *Tora-san to Nihonjin* argue that the series has calming and healing effects because it makes the audience feel nostalgic for the good old days and provides them with the feeling of warm human relationship that they now crave in a modern industrial society. Many Japanese white collar workers called "salarymen" may feel a bit trapped in their current situation, want improvements in their convenience of their daily life, but they feel ineffable fear at the same time. They have responsibilities to their companies and families, and their roles may not allow them to be truly themselves and enjoy life. They envy Tora-san's carefree lifestyle. They want to sigh just like the title of the Tora-san's movie series, "It's tough being a man."

Tora-san to Nihonjin also discusses and analyzes the social and historical backgrounds of the Tora-san film series that formed and affected the psychology of the Japanese people during the few decades when the movies were produced. The dialogues and scenes in the movie series also reflect the social events and trends that have taken place since 1969, whether it was intended or not. For example, the price of Japanese sweets that the store of Tora-san's aunt and uncle sell is an indication of the price index of 27 years ago. In Chapter 3, the book lists some historical background such as the decline of middle- and small-sized industries, the changes in the modern Japanese family as seen in Sakura's family, especially her son's growing up, the rise of aging people in self-employed businesses, and shifting attitudes toward the countryside that people in Tokyo long to come home to, etc.

The first three chapters of *Tora-san to Nihonjin* provide the readers with an introduction to Japanese social psychology as seen in the movie series, 11 points of examination, the compositions and features of the Tora-san movie series, historical background, and the localities. Chapters 4 and 6 deal with how the younger generation of Japanese people perceives Tora-san's movie series. The chapters are based on the data obtained by showing one of the installments to college students at Osaka City University in Osaka. Installment No. 29, "Ajisai No Koi (Love Romance - Hydrangea Flowers)" was shown to 293 students and a survey was conducted. The

authors report on the students'reactions and opinions about the movie, and they also provide a content analysis of the students' comments.

Throughout the latter chapters the authors explore special features of Japanese social psychology focusing on such concepts as *kanjin* (a special notion of Japanese self that exists in a network of social relationships)*,* close-knit human relationships and communication patterns in a primary group, and a *gemeinschaft*-like community where everyone knows everyone. What Hamaguchi calls *kanjin*, or "the contextual" forms a basis of Japanese human relationships, and this can be observed clearly in the Tora-san film series. The Japanese context is generally based on mutual dependence which assumes inevitable cooperation in society, mutual reliance which requires mutual trust and credibility, and regard for interpersonal relationships seen not as a means but as an end. A *kanjin* knows where he or she is in terms of his/her relationships with others and can take the role of others in order to behave properly. The authors of *Tora-san to Nihonjin* introduce various sociological theories by Erving Goffman and Emile Durkheim as well as social exchange theories, symbolic interactionism, and phenomenology.

Ayako Ono, *Japonisme in Britain: Whistler, Menpes, Henry, Hornel and 19th-century Japan*. London: Routledge Curzon, 2003. xxi + 250 pp. ISBN 10: 0-4152-9686-2 (hbk), $150.

Reviewed by Linda Gertner Zatlin

European *japonisme* has commanded attention during the past thirty-five years. Beginning in the 1970s, Dr. Gabriel Weisberg opened the field with his wide-ranging analyses, capping them in 1990 with a thorough annotated bibliography of scholarly work on *japonisme* that continues to be the point of embarkation for young scholars. His exhibitions and accompanying catalogues, from the 1975 *Japonisme: the Japanese Influence on French Art, 1854-1910* for the Cleveland Museum of Art to the recently opened (2004) *L'Art Nouveau, La Maison Bing* for the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam, continue to add to our knowledge. In contrast, outside of James McNeill Whistler, studied by American and French as well as British writers, there has been a paucity of scholarly studies of the influence of Japanese art in Britain during the last half of the nineteenth century. This relatively new subject for scholars boasts studies of E. W.

Godwin, Arthur Lazenby Liberty, Christopher Dresser, and Aubrey Beardsley. Toshio Yokoyama's ground-breaking *Japan in the Victorian Mind* (London, 1987) explores the social effects of Japanese art and artifacts on English culture. There is wide room for studies of textiles, tableware, furniture, interior design, fashion design, children's book illustration, graphic art, painting, and decorative art. British collectors of Japanese applied arts and those who purchased Japanese-influenced art and objects merit their own monographs.

Artists have been the prime object of scholarship, and Ayako Ono has studied four artists who worked in England: Whistler, Mortimer Menpes, an Australian, and George Henry and Edward Atkinson Hornel, the latter two part of the artistic group known as the Glasgow Boys. Her purpose is "to consider how western artists understood and accepted Japanese art as a source of inspiration," a task she accomplishes primarily by examining their paintings (p. xvi). Ono's first chapter uses the lens of exhibitions of Japanese art and objects in Britain to focus on the manner in which a taste for this radically different art was built. Her brief survey of English artists and craftsmen who adopted facets of Japanese style and technique includes enough names and brief descriptions of English and Scottish artists, craftsmen, and merchants to whet the palate for more studies. Chapter 2 belongs to a study of Whistler's *japonisme*, ground well-trodden. But Ono brings a fresh – because it is a Japanese – perspective to this material, and her deft analysis considers what Japanese techniques Whistler tried to adapt in his paintings and the degree to which he succeeded. Her most valuable contribution in this chapter, however, is her examination of Whistler's inclusion of Japanese objects in her work and her relation of these objects to his "attempt to produce subjectless paintings" (p. 66).

Among the artists Whistler influenced was Mortimer Menpes, and Chapter 3 explores the combined influence of Whistler and European artists on one hand, and on the other, Menpes' encounter with Japanese art during his trips to that country. Like Whistler, Menpes did not understand Japanese painting techniques. Consequently, he merely imported trappings of Japanese art into his realistic paintings and graphics. But back in London after his second trip to Japan, he adventurously built a studio and home according to what he perceived as Japanese style and decorated it with Japanese fittings. In this fascinating chapter Ono discusses Menpes' studio-house, his acquaintance with the prominent Japanese painter Kawanabe Kyosai, as well as Menpes' photographs of Japanese subjects, and their

relation to his subsequent work. Chapter 4 takes up George Henry and Edward Atkinson Hornel. Like Menpes, they were interested enough in Japanese art to take a joint trip to Japan where they collected over 400 souvenir (for export) photographs of the type called *Yokohama Shashin*. In varying degrees these scenes of daily life influenced their art, with Henry gaining a "genuine awareness of Japanese colour," while Hornel effectively used a "European manner to create his own original style when treating Japanese subject matter" (pp. 124, 129).

In addition to these chapters there are ten appendices that document the furnishings of Whistler's home on Tite Street; his collections of oriental porcelain and blue and white china; Raphael Collin's (flavorlessly translated) recollections of the great Japanese art dealer Hayashi Tademasa; a transcription of a supposed Japanese citizen's view of Commodore Perry's arrival in Japan; the 1888 London exhibition of 177 pieces of Menpes's work; the 1903 show of his collection of 265 works by Whistler; and the Yokohama Museum's forty-nine etchings by Menpes. Rounding out this group are Hornel's 9 February 1895 lecture on Japanese life and art, the 20 June 1894 interview of Henry on the same subject, a letter to Hornel, and a glossary of terms.

This is an interesting book even though the group of artists examined is somewhat eccentric. As mentioned above, Whistler has been much studied and his relation to Japanese art has not been ignored. Furthermore, he and Menpes worked in London, and Henry and Hornel in Glasgow, but Ono presents no reason for this grouping. Was it her residency at the Whistler Center that led to her choice, or some other compelling, but unmentioned, reason? Moreover, while Ono presents much information, she is not guided by some of the larger questions. For example, was there a difference between Whistler and Menpes and the Scottish artists in their acceptance of Japanese influence – in other words, regional differences? How did the shifts in the English attitude to things Japanese during the last half of the century affect their views? What do sales of these four artists' work tell us about *japonisme* in Britain? What part did Japanese artists working in Britain play in the phenomenon of *japonisme*? Most important is the lack of discussion of Japanese sources. With the exception of Whistler, these Westerners met Japanese artists and photographers on their trips to Japan, as Ono documents. But a reader who threads through her mention of these meetings and therefore yearns to know what the Japanese art world thought of the three Western artists is greatly disappointed; that material is lacking – whether it is due to lacunae in the

records or the author's omission is not made clear. In addition, abundant and inexcusable typographical errors stud the pages. Nonetheless, the material is interesting – perhaps even more so in Japan where this study recently won Ayako Ono a prize.

James L. Huffman, *A Yankee in Meiji Japan: The Crusading Journalist Edward H. House.* New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003. 328 pp. ISBN 10: 0-7425-2620-8 (pbk), $28.95.

Reviewed by Daniel A. Metraux

A small group of Western teachers and advisors played a critical role in Japan's rapid modernization during the Meiji era (1868-1912). They assisted in the development of modern industrial, educational and political systems and of a formidable military. Some of these Westerners also introduced Japan to their native lands through their books, articles and public lectures and acted as a critical bridge between Japan and the West.

Scholars have written a considerable number of monographs that have rescued many of these persons from obscurity. I have read many of these works, but am most impressed with James L. Huffman's 2003 biography of American journalist Edward H. House (1836-1901). Huffman labored for over three decades tracking down every scrap of information available in the United States and Japan to reconstruct the life of House. The result is a magnificent biography that reveals both the strengths as well as the foibles of one of the outstanding foreigners in Meiji Japan.

House left his native Boston in 1858 to become a reporter for the *Tribune* in New York. He quickly became one of the star journalists on what was then the most influential newspaper in the United States. Choice assignments included coverage of John Brown's trial and execution in 1859 and Japan's first diplomatic mission to the United States in 1860. House's fame as a rising journalist brought him into contact with a number of public and literary figures including Mark Twain with whom he developed a long-lasting and deep friendship (the Twain friendship finally broke down in a very ugly public quarrel late in House's life). He also enjoyed good friendships with Walt Whitman, Artemus Ward and other luminaries.

During the 1860s House developed a fascination for Asia, so much so that he contributed short stories featuring Asian topics to American magazines. He yearned to visit the East and finally persuaded the *Tribune* to

send him to Japan as America's first regular correspondent there. House became an avid student of Japanese history and culture and, unlike some of his Western contemporaries, portrayed Japan as a most progressive and civilized nation struggling to maintain its dignity and independence against unwarranted encroachments by Western imperialists. House's regular dispatches, which were first carried back by ship and then telegraphed from California to New York, conveyed this very favorable image of Japan to his American readers. House soon gained the reputation as one of the leading journalists reporting on Japan in the early Meiji era.

House soon made numerous contacts with leading Japanese officials, who were impressed with his fair reporting and willingness to listen to the Japanese version of events. There were several English-language newspapers in the Tokyo-Yokohama region run by foreigners that expressed a *gaijin* view of life in the 1870s, but no foreign outlet for Japanese views. Members of the Japanese government therefore determined to open their own English-language paper in 1877, *The Tokio Times,* with House as its editor. For the next three years until the paper's demise House argued persuasively for such issues as Japan's need for tariff autonomy and eventual acceptance as an equal among nations. James Huffman suggests that House's editorial work clearly presented Japan's own worldview to the West in a highly coherent manner and helped advance Japan's endeavor to win her place among the nations.

Concerning the contributions that House made, Huffman notes:

> House mattered for the contributions he made, and he mattered for the issues his life illustrated. The former is easier to describe, though arguably less important. As a young member of Horace Greeley's stable of brilliant *New York Tribune* writers, he helped to shape U.S. images of the zealot John Brown and introduced the first Japanese visitors (1860) to U.S. readers; he also played a pivotal role in sending Mark Twain's national career into orbit….During his early years in Tokyo, he was among the most important of what one scholar has labeled the "teachers of the American public," helping his fellow countrymen form positive views of Japan with articles that challenged the strange-inferior-Oriental narrative. In this regard, Japan's early image as an advocate of justice resulted in part from his accounts of the *Maria Luz* episode, and his book on Japan's 1874 expedition to Taiwan still shapes the standard narrative of that episode. Within Japan

itself, House was a pioneer in the development of orchestral music and sent his students off into a stunning array of public posts. And in his most important role, as crusader, he more than anyone else induced [the U.S.] Congress to return the Shimonoseki indemnity to Japan and articulated, like no other writer in English, the case against the unequal treaties. Foreign Minister Mutsu Munemitsu called House the "one who laid the groundwork" for treaty revision, "the one we should call the grand old champion" (pp. 270-271).

House's work did much to promote America's and the West's largely very favorable image from the 1870s through the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05. His writing as an apologist for Japanese imperialism in the late 1800s also had a role in smoothing the West's reaction to Japanese expansionism at that time.

House had a genuine concern for the welfare of the needy and the lives of women in Japan. During the late 1870s and early 1880s he opened, taught in and managed the Hausu Gakkō (House School) that offered training in math, reading, writing and sewing under the instruction of himself and a Japanese instructor. The school was praised by observers for its innovations and principles and for its help to over three dozen needy girls, some of whom later rose to positions of prominence in Japanese society.

Huffman gives us an in-depth view of House's personal life – his very painful fight with gout that landed him in a wheelchair given to him by the powerful political leader Okuma Shigenobu – and his deep relationship with a young woman, Aoki Koto, whom he adopted as his daughter when as a girl she was on the verge of suicide.

Huffman's work also gives us a very vivid portrait of life in Japan in the late nineteenth century. Huffman has drawn upon House's voluminous writings and on hundreds of letters between House and major figures in both the United States and Japan. The book is brilliantly researched and written in a clear lively manner. It would be ideal for use in a college course on modern Japan.

Bruce L. Batten, *To the Ends of Japan: Premodern Frontiers, Boundaries, and Interactions.* **Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003. xiii + 337 pp. ISBN 10: 0-8248-2447-4 (hbk), $44.**

Reviewed by Yuki Takatori

Who are the Japanese? And how did Japan come into existence? These questions have captivated and inspired the imaginations of scholars and laymen alike, yet, to arrive at an answer, which presupposes a knowledge of quite diverse but intricately connected fields of study, has never been simple. *To the Ends of Japan* is Bruce Batten's intrepid attempt to do so. It presents a comprehensive picture of Japanese contact with the external world and, in the process, it challenges the traditional view of the Japanese identity, i.e., that racially and culturally, Japan has remained the most homogeneous of nations, existing within stable borders and (until recently, on the historical scale) in complete seclusion. Batten, a professor of Japanese history at Ōbirin University in Tokyo, has employed the tools of a variety of disciplines – history, geography, anthropology, archaeology, and sociology – to present his case, and he has tackled an enormous and far-reaching subject by breaking it down into topics that are more manageable and accessible.

The book is divided into three parts. Part One, "Borders," consisting of three chapters, takes on the riddles of state, race, and ethnicity, all of them long the subjects of controversy and heated debate. Part Two, "Interactions," is divided into six chapters dealing with the issue of Japan's contact with East Asia and the rest of the world in the areas of politics, commerce, information exchange and the military. Part Three, the final, single-chapter section, provides analyses of the relationship between the "social power" and the "contested ground" of frontiers. Each chapter begins with a set of questions to be addressed therein, followed by an introduction to the general theoretical framework upon which that chapter's reasoning rests.

Batten's central thesis is that "Japan was never isolated from its external environment but always functioned as part of a larger system – East Asia for much of pre-modern history, and the world as a whole in more recent times" (p. 235). As the starting point of his argument he counters the widely-held belief, the "one-nation, one-people" myth, that Japan is a nation consisting of a single ethnic group that speaks one language, and is further unified by an agricultural system dominated by the cultivation of rice. He

shows that the Japanese are of a less uniform nature than they are willing to admit: historically, the country has been home to various minority groups, the largest of them the *burakumin* ("village people"), followed by the Koreans and Chinese, and the Ainu. He goes on to reveal another layer of complexity in the social fabric by touching upon the longstanding differences between the "Westerners," who lived west of the Fossa Magna (a geological rift that cuts across central Japan), and the "Easterners," distinguishing characteristics which have probably existed since pre-historic times (pp. 60-61).

Of equal significance as the lack of homogeneity are Batten's findings that Japanese borders were never static, that Japanese territory was always fluctuating, with rapid expansion phases and slow growth phases occurring alternately. (Here, he makes an important distinction between boundaries and frontiers: the former is linear, abrupt, clearly defined, and "inner-oriented," whereas the latter is zonal, gradual, ill-defined, and "outer-oriented" [pp. 24-28].) He demonstrates that territorial fluctuation was most notable in northern Japan (the present-day prefectures of Hokkaido, Fukushima, Miyagi, Iwate, Akita, and Aomori), which remained a frontier throughout the pre-modern era.

That Japan was never detached from the external world becomes obvious from the extent of its continuous interactions with the outside, even in its period of diplomatic isolation, beginning in the early seventeenth century and ending in the mid-nineteenth century (pp. 141-142). David Wilkinson classified Japan as a separate and autonomous "civilization" (equivalent to Chase-Dunn and Hall's "world-system"), at least militarily and politically, but Batten argues that although Japan maintained some degree of autonomy in some respects, it was "always embedded within a web of relations" as "part of the Chinese world-system," and never constituted a "fully-developed world-system in its own right" (pp. 146, 227-229). He buttresses his contention with observations concerning not only political and military interactions, but also the transportation of bulk as well as prestige goods, and the transmission of information and technology. In his discussion of the level of mutual cross-border contacts, the author draws from the work of social physicists, who rely on mathematical models to account for human behavior. Although this reviewer does not subscribe to the notion that behavioral patterns can be reduced to formulas, equations, decimals, *chi*-squares, and the like, it is nonetheless comforting to know that the models have "been found to accord with empirical data on all

manners of human movement" regardless of time, place, and culture (p. 144).

In military and politics, the scale of interactions "pulsated," that is, there were periods of large scale frequent interactions and those of small scale infrequent interactions, and crucially, the pulsation was a result of external, rather than internal, conditions that placed Japan within larger Asian networks, not at the center of its own network. The trade in prestige goods behaved similarly, within a network that extended beyond East Asia to all of Eurasia, and perhaps globally. By contrast, the limited flow of bulk goods did not exhibit the tendency to fluctuate, being subject to domestic events. As for the movement of information, it is quite fascinating to learn that, even during the Edo era, Japan managed to remain at all times current on world affairs. All in all, these observations eloquently frame a theme recurrent throughout the book, of a Japan that was a "subsystem of a larger Asian system," not a world-system of its own.

Batten's theses and conclusions are persuasive; however, a few topics and details are underdeveloped, absent, or misinterpreted. For one, the importance of the role language plays in the formation of ethnic identity is not examined in depth. The presentation of linguistic evidence would have given additional support to the claim of an East-West divide within Japan; similarly, the dual characteristics seen in the Japanese language (Malayo-Polynesian phonologically and morphologically, but Altaic syntactically) would corroborate the dual origins of the present-day Japanese people. In the opinion of the reviewer, without a common language it would be extremely difficult, though not impossible, for members of a group to identify with one another both religiously and culturally. Batten states that it is easy enough to find examples of ethnic groups that do not share a common language, but gives none (p. 117). (The post-Diaspora Jews are a possible candidate, since, prior to the founding of Israel, they used Hebrew almost exclusively for purposes related to religious observance, but their employment of Yiddish and Ladino as lingua franca would appear to weaken the case for them.)

In the section on Ancient Japan (pp. 28-34), some reference to the controversy over the mysterious Yamatai Country should have been included, for the precise location of the Yamatai (somewhere in Nara or north Kyūshū) would affect the timetable of the emergence of the first centralized government in Japan. Finally, in the section on territorial expansion, the characterization of the Kwantong Territory (i.e. Manchuria),

leased to and later becoming a puppet state of Japan, as one of Japan's "colonies" (p. 55) might raise the eyebrows of many historians.

These quibbles in no way diminish the value and strength of *To the Ends of Japan*, which is a valuable addition to the slim body of scholarly works addressing the diversity of the Japanese people and their extensive contacts with Eurasia and beyond prior to the modern era. Its insights into the questions of "What is Japan?" and "Who are the Japanese?" should enlighten those who tenaciously hold firm to the myth of a Japan as a land apart, possessed of a culture and people unique in their purity and sameness.

Cristina Rocha. *Zen in Brazil: The Quest for Cosmopolitan Modernity*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006. xii + 256 pp. ISBN 10: 0-8248-2976-X (hbk), $37.

Reviewed by Ronan A. Pereira

The localized site is Brazil, a country of over 180 million people that accounts for almost half of South America's area, population, and economy. The core subject is the diffusion of Zen Buddhism there as a result of global flows of people, ideas, images, technology, and suchlike. However, the scope goes beyond the title *Zen in Brazil*, as it is suggested by the subtitle: *The Quest for Cosmopolitan Modernity*. In the author's own words, this case study is used not only to elucidate the contemporary transnationalization of Buddhism, but also "to deepen our insight into the interplay of the global and the local, the articulation of modernity vis-à-vis tradition, transformations in Brazilian society, the process of creolization of beliefs, and the historical anthropology of modernity" (p. 3). This ambitious task is supported by a wide range of theoretical categories (i.e., modernization, globalization, creolization, Appadurai's *scapes*, Bourdieu's *habitus*), a critical debate on the scholarly literature of Buddhism, transnational production and flow of cultural goods, and a multi-sited field.

In Chapter 1, Rocha establishes a web of surprising connections among Brazil, Japan, Zen Buddhism and the discourse of modernity. She shows that in the early twentieth century the Brazilian elite desperately longed to enter modernity while at the same time attempting to construct an identity for Brazil as a white and Western nation. In this context, the modernizing Meiji Japan became a successful model to be followed and Japanese immigrants were hailed as the "whites of Asia" and an asset to

help Brazil get closer to modernity. In presenting the lives and rhetoric of some Zen missionaries (*kaikyōshi*) in Brazil, Rocha shows that they were invariably informed and aligned with the discourse of modern Zen "that has been packaged to assert Japan's own modernity vis-à-vis Western cultural hegemony" (p. 61). Parenthetically, it is interesting to note that while Rinzai Zen was the first and most successful Zen sect in the West due to the propagandist effort of D.T. Suzuki and the Kyoto School philosophers, Sōtō Zen predominates in Brazil.

Shifting the focus away from the *kaikyōshi* and pursuing a deeper discussion on modernity, Chapter 2 addresses the role of intellectuals in introducing into the country an idealized image of Zen. On the one hand, this process was informed – as in many countries – by the Romantic Orientalist ideas associated with a mystical and "exotic East," on the other hand, it was used to perpetuate a tradition of social markers used for class distinction in Brazilian society. Thus, instead of having a first-hand approach to Japanese culture and Buddhism through the Japanese immigrants, Brazilian intellectuals tended to seek inspiration in cultural centers in the West such as France (until WWII) and the United States or, later on, in Japan. Rocha supports her arguments by tracking down the presence of the "Orient" in the Brazilian literature, the popularization of *haiku* and its association with Zen, the role of non-Japanese Brazilian intellectuals in "bridging the local and the global." She concludes that "from the late 1950s onward, elite intellectuals saw their knowledge of Zen not as a form of cultural resistance, but rather as a tool enabling them to demonstrate both their role in Brazilian society as translators and interpreters of overseas avant-garde movements and their prestigious position as cosmopolitans. These claims gave them the cultural capital necessary to reinforce and maintain their own class status in the country" (p. 73).

In Chapter 3, Rocha situates Zen within the Brazilian religious field in order to profile its sympathizers and adherents. Here again the idea of modernity is crucial. First of all, the author argues, "modern Buddhism – constructed by Asian elites as compatible with science and thus superior to Christianity – was adopted by Brazilian intellectual elites in opposition to what was perceived as a mystical, hierarchical, dogmatic, superstitious, and hence traditional and "backward" Catholic Church, the religious tradition into which they were born" (p. 91). Next, the very feature of religious practice in modern times – "pluralization of faiths, privatization of choice,

and turning to the self as the main source of meaning" – favored the association of Zen with modernity and, thus, its adoption by Brazilians.

Additionally, the Brazilian religious field itself showed other favorable characteristics that both help the acceptance of Zen and shaped the way it has been practiced and constructed in this country. That is, the Brazilian religious field has been, if anything, plural and complex, with a recurrent transit from one religion to another. Zen reception has also been paved by esoteric traditions, Kardecist Spiritism and the Brazilian Umbanda, which hold key concepts for Buddhism such as karma and rebirth/reincarnation – though with distinct interpretations. The New Age movement of the mid-1980s and 1990s, added Rocha, helped the late 1990s boom of Buddhism among the white, upper- and middle-class professionals.

In Chapter 4, following a previous description of the role of Sōtō Zen missionaries and non-Japanese Brazilian intellectuals in propagating Zen, the author uses Arjun Appadurai's five scapes that accounts for transnational cultural flows in order to explore the role of the cultural industries in familiarizing Brazilians with Buddhism. On the one hand, Brazilian mass media (mediascapes) – reflecting the North American "Tibetan chic" – triggered a Buddhist boom in the late 1990s, in a way that it came to be associated with "urban cosmopolitanism, class distinction through taste, and the construction of the imagined worlds of the exotic other" (p. 128). On the other hand, high speed technoscapes such as the Internet have further propelled the interest in Buddhism beyond the great urban centers. As a result, Zen became more than a new spiritual option for Brazilians. It came to encompass "all Oriental, exotic beliefs, practices, and techniques employed to achieve wisdom, harmony, tranquility and inner peace." It has also been used as an adjective to connote cool, savvy, cosmopolitan, chic, calm, collected, peaceful, and/or alternative lifestyle people.

According to the author, Buddhism appealed mainly to elite groups such as liberal professionals, intellectuals, and the bourgeoisie. Here is the clue: for many of these practitioners, Buddhism became "fashionable," identified with a desirable, modern, transnational religious consumption flow, a way to equate oneself with the developed world and its upper classes while, at the same time, detach oneself from and feel superior to the rest of the "backward," unrefined, superstitious Brazilian population. This explains why, in most cases, Brazilian Buddhists have not been active as "engaged Buddhists": taken chiefly as an inner quest for peace and wisdom, Buddhism is also employed to establish social distinction and identity.

The last chapter is the crowning of Rocha's debate on modernity. While discussing her field data, she demonstrates that the depiction of Japanese and Japanese-Brazilian Zen practices as "traditional" and of non-Japanese Brazilians as "modern" is quite deceptive. She not only found creolizing processes in both groups, but also came across much transit among and porosity in them. The ethnic group not just perpetuates the traditional role of Japanese Buddhism as a provider of funeral rites; some Japanese Brazilians actually have joined Zen meditation groups in their search for alternative spiritual practices. Conversely, there is a rise of rites of funeral, memorial, wedding and even "baptism" upon demands of non-Japanese Brazilians. As Rocha stresses, these rites have been "creolized by Catholic practices."

Surprisingly, the author talks of a non-Japanese Brazilian monk who gives Brazilian indigenous names to his disciples' babies instead of traditional Japanese dharma ones. As she discusses the "dialogic relation" of these two groups, Rocha sets a strong critique of the literature on Western Buddhism. In short, she questions the need to create a separate set of opposed congregations such as Western/Asian, convert/ethnic, modern/traditional. "(A)ren't some Westerners asserting their own practice as superior to the 'backward,' 'ethnic' one? Isn't this approach an endeavor to 'civilize' Buddhism?" (p. 191), asks the author. In doing so, she becomes a critic as much as an active conversant with the scholarly literature on Buddhism and the transnational production and flow of cultural goods.

In the past decades, many claims have been circulated to explain the complexity of and the multiplicity of flows in the worldwide integrative process of "globalization." Though the Western predominance is always acknowledged, it has also been suggested that there is a subtle and ongoing process of "Easternization of the West" (Colin Campbell), which implies a reverse flow from the periphery/Asia to Western countries. Cristina Rocha's book expands on this picture by showing that global flows also occur between peripheries. That is, some peripheries can also become regional "centers" as illustrated here by Brazil becoming a reference and center of information on Buddhism for Latin America and Portugal. Additionally, this book has the merit of being a pioneer case study on Buddhism in the West as it moves away the traditional focus on North America and Europe to Brazil, where Buddhism has a small but solid and growing following.

Overall, I believe this book is well-written, carefully researched and based on a sound and updated bibliography. Minor weaknesses that one might encounter here do not jeopardize its high quality. For instance,

occasionally the reader may wonder if Rocha is speaking about Buddhism in general or Zen. Rocha states that Buddhism appealed mainly to the white, intellectual, upper middle class as it became fashionable and trendy. This is most certainly the case of Zen and Tibetan Buddhism. However, my own research on Sōka Gakkai in Brazil reveals that this group is making a breakthrough among the middle and lower classes. A possible explanation is that, although Zen has been appealing for many people as a technique for a better quality of life (particularly as a stress reliever), Sōka Gakkai is more pragmatic and "down to earth," promising to solve all kinds of problems through a simple ritual of chanting the *daimoku* – which is even simpler than sitting and meditating.

In a country with an immense and long-lived social inequality, plagued by corruption, violence, inefficient presence of government agencies in basic services such as healthcare and education, the sector of the population most affected by this situation is probably turning to Sōka Gakkai in a similar way it has been using the services of other popular religions, such as the Kardecist Spiritualism and Umbanda. Rafael Shoji has also noted a regional popularization of Shingon's "consultation and blessing" rituals among non-Japanese, predominantly middle-class Brazilians in a city surrounding São Paulo. This group visits Shingon temples mainly in an attempt to solve problems related to health, unemployment or family disharmony. The concept of sangha or spiritual development through meditation or esoteric practices is distant, if not absent among these Shingon "clients." These two cases are quite contrasting and complementary to the situation depicted by Cristina Rocha in regards to Zen in Brazil.

In essence, this book, which is originally Cristina Rocha's doctoral thesis, confirmed the impressions I had of her previous articles. She has a beautiful style of unfolding the subject that combines a captivating description of events, rituals, anecdotes and interviews with a sharp and creative analysis. Thumbs up to the editor of the University of Hawaii Press' *Topics in Contemporary Buddhism Series* for having picked this fascinating, intelligent, informative, creative, and (re)commendable book for publication.

Duncan Ryūken Williams, *The Other Side of Zen: A Social History of Sōtō Zen Buddhism in Tokugawa Japan.* **Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005. xiv + 241 pp. ISBN 10: 0-691-11928-7 (hbk), $55.[1]**

Reviewed by Steven Heine

This long-awaited volume by Duncan Williams is based on his outstanding Harvard University doctoral dissertation, "Representations of Zen: A Social and Institutional History of Sōtō Zen Buddhism in Edo Japan" (2000), also recommended to readers since it contains valuable material which did not find its way into the book version. *The Other Side of Zen* makes a great contribution to our understanding of the history of Zen in the early modern or Tokugawa (Edo) era of Japanese history (1600-1868). It goes a long way toward filling a crucial historical gap between William Bodiford's seminal work on the Kamakura era (1200-1600), *Sōtō Zen in Medieval Japan* (University of Hawaii Press, 1993), and works on the Meiji era (1868-1912) including Richard Jaffe's *Neither Monk Nor Layman: Clerical Marriage in Modern Japanese Buddhism* (Princeton University Press, 2001). It also complements Helen Baroni's *Ōbaku Zen: The Emergence of the Third Sect of Zen in Tokugawa Japan* (University of Hawaii Press, 2000).

Williams has two overarching concerns, one specific and one general. The more specific concern is to explain how Sōtō Zen rose from a relatively small school at the beginning of the Tokugawa era to become the single largest school of Buddhism in Japan by the early eighteenth century. In dealing with this issue, the approach in *The Other Side of Zen* is particularly notable for making the most of recently disclosed sources that reveal the role of Sōtō Zen as a popular religious movement. "Indebted to the many local history and temple history projects that have emerged in the past twenty years," Williams points out, "the representation of the Sōtō Zen tradition offered here was made possible by newly discovered letters, temple logbooks, miracle tales, villager's diaries, fund-raising donor lists, talismans, and tombstones" (p. 123).

The second, more general concern is with moving interpretations of Zen away from an emphasis on the image of Zen monks serenely

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[1] This review was originally published in *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* 12 (2005): 84-87.

entranced in meditation, which was in fact rarely practiced by Tokugawa era Zen priests, to an emphasis on their performance of diverse kinds of ritual practices. Eschewing a focus on the great literary Sōtō monks of the era, such as Manzan Dōhaku and Menzan Zuihō, who are examples of what he calls "'ceramic plate priests,' extraordinary exemplars brought out of the cupboard of the Sōtō Zen tradition in terms of proselytization...or on special occasions" (p. 119), Williams concentrates on the aspects of Zen that negotiated boundaries between this world and the next through funerary ceremonies, between illness and wellness through healing rites, and between the other-world and practical benefits through pilgrimages and talismans.

I will first consider the substance of Williams's findings regarding popular religiosity in the middle chapters of the book (Chapters 2-5) and then comment briefly on the value of his social historical approach for the discourse, or in this case anti-discourse, concerning the nature – and different sides – of Zen as emphasized in the opening and concluding chapters.

Following the discussion in Chapter 1 on the significance of undertaking a social historical analysis (part of Williams' more general concern), the next chapter shows how several key factors that unfolded at the dawn of the Tokugawa era attracted followers and bolstered the number of parish households. These factors included the participation of Sōtō Zen in the anti-Christian campaign and the implementation of the temple-registration system. By the mid-seventeenth century, the Sōtō school "was able to retain this membership generation after generation through a set of ritual and economic obligations that bound the parish household to each of its nearly 17,500 parish temples" (p. 22). At the end of the second and throughout the third chapter, Williams explores the role of Zen as part of "funerary Buddhism" (*sōshiki Bukkyō*) in bestowing posthumous ordination names (*kaimyō*) and developing other forms of managing the dead, carried out in large part as a means of fundraising.

The price to be paid for the expanded role of the death cult, Williams shows, is that Sōtō Zen helped legitimate methods of discrimination against social outcastes and women. The result was the fostering of an apparently hypocritical outlook whereby some parishioners (upper-class males) were guaranteed the attainment of a state equal to that of Buddha at the time of death, while the downtrodden were instructed to expect immense suffering without relief in the afterlife. In supporting the role of the *Ketsubonkyō* (Blood Pool Hell Sutra), which damned women to a

state of pollution, priests informed the sufferers that only the efficacious cleansing rituals and chants of the Sōtō school could provide salvific powers, performed on demand as initiated by significant family donations.

The fourth and fifth chapters analyze various ways that Zen offered other avenues for parishioners and adherents to receive the benefits of its rites. In a detailed case study of the prayer temple at Daiyūzan Saijōji temple in Odawara, Williams gives a fabulous depiction of religious life involving pilgrimage routes to festivals and the acquiring of potent talismans to cure ailments, ward off misfortunes, and gain practical benefits. These practices are centered on the ceremony for displaying a hidden deity (*kaichō*), the statue of the flame-engulfed Dōryō *tengu*-goblin riding on a flying white fox. This section is followed by a careful analysis of the importance of the manufacture and sale of "sacred medicine" in the Sōtō school, in particular, the panacean herbal pill, Gedokuen.

The use of Gedokuen as a cure for everything from fatigue and flu to gonorrhea was originally based on a legend of Dōgen's recovery from illness during his travels in returning from his trip to China while accompanied by Dōshō through the intercession of the rice fertility deity, Inari. Williams points out that this account appears in the *Teiho Kenzeiki,* the 1753 annotated version of the traditional sectarian biography, the *Kenzeiki.* "What is striking here," he writes, "is that none of the handcopied versions [from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries included in a critical edition edited by the modern scholar Kawamura Kōdō] includes the story about Dōshō and the medicine" (p. 94). However, this is not so startling because Kawamura has demonstrated that it is just one of over a dozen discrepancies between the original *Kenzeiki* and the more hagiographical entries in the *Teiho Kenzeiki*. The chapter includes two other fascinating case studies of temples in Tokyo, one involving the "splinter-removing" Jizō (Togenuki Jizō) enshrined at Kōganji temple and the other dealing with smallpox prevention talismans associated with Mawari Jizō at Senryūji temple.

Regarding the book's more general concern with focusing attention on the role of popular religiosity in the spread of Sōtō Zen, Williams does an admirable job that contributes to the anti-discourse of deconstructing the stereotypical view of Zen as remote and reclusive. However, the book could perhaps benefit from a more sequential rather than purely thematic structure which makes it difficult for readers to get a sense of the chronological development of the Sōtō school.

I question the title, derived from an influential article on medieval Japanese culture by Barbara Ruch. By using the definite article and singular noun, rather than "Other Sides of Zen," – or even "Sides of Zen" – Williams implies that there is a "first side," but what is this? If it is the notion of meditative Zen, then he is far from the first to challenge the apparent simulacra that has been constructed around the tradition. If the first side of Zen is the Rinzai school as the subtitle might suggest, or the elite monks of Sōtō that are not discussed here, then he needs to develop a more nuanced view. This is hinted by the comment regarding the Daiyūzan deity to the effect that beliefs in "this Zen monk-turned-tengu attest to the power and vitality of Sōtō Zen prayer temples that reveal a different side of the Sōtō Zen tradition from both the austere monasticism and funerary Zen." Indeed, save for the Manzans and Menzans – although it should be pointed out that Menzan himself was the one responsible for inserting unsubstantiated hagiographical elements in the *Teiho Kenzeiki,* including the Gedokuen legend – Williams has exposed the reader to a rich range of materials revolving around multiple perspectives of what it meant to practice Tokugawa era Zen Buddhism. We need not even ask which side he is on.

Marie Højlund Roesgaard, *Japanese Education and the Cram School Business: Functions, Challenges and Perspectives of the* Juku. Copenhagen: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies Press, 2006. 203 pp. ISBN 10: 8-7911-1491-8 (hbk), $65.

Reviewed by Steven E. Gump

"The term *juku*, which is already listed in the *American Heritage Dictionary*, is circulated in English written and verbal communications as a word, though italicized, that requires little explanation among those who have some knowledge of Japan." Thus wrote sociologist Keiko Hirao in 2007.[2] But Marie Højlund Roesgaard, author of *Japanese Education and the Cram School Business: Functions, Challenges and Perspectives of the*

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[2] Keiko Hirao, "The Privatized Education Market and Maternal Employment in Japan," in Frances McCall Rosenbluth, ed., *The Political Economy of Japan's Low Fertility* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), pp. 170-197.

Juku, wrote her book precisely to offer some explanation of a concept that, in the West, is often misunderstood – even among those who have some knowledge of Japan. Roesgaard, deputy head of the Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies at the University of Copenhagen, argues that institutions known as *juku* in Japan are varied and diverse; thinking of them only as "cram schools," as the term has historically been translated and conceptualized, is incorrect. Moreover, she argues that, without *juku*, the regular system of schooling in Japan would not be able to function. Even though *juku*, as private businesses, fall under the auspices of the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (*Keizai Sangyōshō*), Roesgaard investigates two triangular relationships: one among the school, family, and community; and another among *juku*, regular schools, and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (*Monbukagakushō*, hereafter Ministry of Education).

The major contribution of Roesgaard's book, a study of the function of academic *juku* in Japan, is the typology she offers of various kinds of academic *juku*. Using eight variables, she goes beyond Rohlen's 1980 distinction between *shingaku juku* and *hoshū juku*[3], and diagrams a continuum of four categories of academic *juku*: *shingaku juku*, the most "cram-like," which offer ability-based courses for exam preparation; *hoshū juku*, which offer remedial lessons on content covered in school; *kyōsai juku*, which offer individualized instruction to students who may not be going to regular school; and *doriru* (lit., "drill") *juku*, which concern practicing basic skills, often by correspondence, with little to no one-on-one instruction. The purposes of various *juku* are different enough that some children, based on their needs, attend multiple *juku*. The eight variables Roesgaard uses to construct her typology are atmosphere (competitive versus relaxed), focus of courses (school curriculum versus entrance exams), relation to school, academic ability of students, teaching material, size, admission procedures, and advertising (commercial versus word of mouth). A useful table (table 1.2, p. 34) offers a snapshot of the eight variables across the four *juku* types.

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[3] Thomas P. Rohlen, "The Juku Phenomenon: An Exploratory Essay," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 6/2 (1980): 207-242. Note also, as Rohlen describes, the presence of non-academic *juku* (offering, for example, abacus, calligraphy, music, and swimming lessons). Such *juku* are mentioned by Roesgaard but not considered in her discussion.

Roesgaard sets forth this typology in the first part of her book, after a contextualizing introductory chapter that could have benefited from more discussion of the history and Asian antecedents of contemporary *juku*. (See Rohlen, cited above, for more detailed background.) The second part involves case studies of three of the four *juku* types she identifies: *shingaku*, *hoshū*, and *doriru juku*. Here she relies on visits to various *juku*, interviews with teachers and *juku* representatives, promotional materials, and information from *juku* websites. (Remarkably, all seven website addresses for *juku* presented at the end of the bibliography are valid as of June 2007; none of the other URLs I checked from her citations or references was still valid.)[4] In these chapters, she describes nine individual *juku* – many of which, especially among *shingaku* and *doriru juku*, have become national (and even international) franchises. Many *juku*, however, typically those of the *hoshū* type, remain localized and small in scale, often operating out of private residences. As Rohlen had done before her, Roesgaard also comments on the beneficial secondary role that some *juku* play as daycare centers and local meeting places for schoolchildren.

Some of Roesgaard's interviews were conducted as long ago as 1996, and much of the survey data upon which she bases some of her other conclusions are old, as well. (Without the least bit of hyperbole, she refers to a poll conducted in 1985 as "a bit dated," p. 123.) And although she considers the politics behind some of the statistics she cites (see, e.g., p. 151), some of her public-opinion sources seem not to present a complete picture of the scene she sets out to describe. But in the third and final part of her book, where she considers the present and future of *juku* education vis-à-vis Japanese politics and, especially, curricular reform, her commentary feels more current. In this section she discusses an issue that is apparent throughout her book, namely, that "the existence of juku challenges the ideal of equality in access to education" (p. 173), as set forth in the 1948 Fundamental Law of Education. *Juku* attendance is not free, after all, with annual per-student fees at the most elite *shingaku juku* exceeding ¥1 million (over $8,200, at June 2007 exchange rates). "As in many other countries all over the world," Roesgaard concludes, "it is the case in Japan that a strong family economy will offer wider options in education" (p. 165).

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[4] Interestingly, given the fact that *juku* are not administered by the Ministry of Education, some *juku* websites have ".ac.jp" suffixes (equivalent to ".edu" in the United States), though most have ".co.jp" suffixes (equivalent to ".com").

In her presentation, Roesgaard focuses on elementary school students, despite the fact that a greater percentage of middle school students have historically attended *juku* as preparation for high school entrance exams. Her argument is that the Ministry of Education's implementation of the five-day school week in April 2002 and the ensuing reduced curriculum in public education have increased interest in private education at the middle school level. Thus, as greater numbers prepare for private middle school entrance exams, *juku* attendance by elementary school students is growing. Moreover, "it is generally considered impossible to pass entrance examinations at the more prestigious private middle schools without juku attendance" (p. 61). Somewhat frustratingly, though, Roesgaard ignores commenting on the public-private divide in Japanese education until midway through her book, where she finally explores the costs of private middle schools and the perceived advantages students at such schools have at progressing up the so-called academic escalator (see pp. 89, 100).

Roesgaard's presentation would benefit, I believe, with more detailed attention to day-to-day activities at the various *juku* she describes. Rohlen does a commendable job describing the "typical" *juku* (with average numbers of students, teachers, days and hours attended per week, subjects studied, etc.). Perhaps because Roesgaard's agenda is to disabuse us of the "ideal-type" mentality with respect to *juku*, though, her presentation lacks a depth of richness that would help readers better understand the goings-on at different kinds of *juku*. For example, Roesgaard is not specific about when and for how long various *juku* activities take place (though, excepting *kyōsai juku*, the reader assumes they primarily take place after school, on weekends, and during school vacations); nor does she provide more than a small handful of specific examples of the various forms these activities may take.

Although no standards exist, I craved more information on teacher backgrounds and preparation. (Kumon Kyōshitsu, one of two *doriru juku* Roesgaard profiles, licenses its teachers after they have completed one year of training and passed an exam. At other schools, *juku* instructors may be part-time workers and may include university students.) And perspectives from students – and additional perspectives from parents – would have been a welcome addition to the book. Rohlen explores the social meanings and implications of sending one's children to *juku*, ideas Roesgaard does not particularly tackle; but I nonetheless finished Roesgaard's book wanting to know more about what it really is *like* to attend *juku*. Granted, Rosengaard approaches *juku* from a sociological perspective; perhaps rich description of

the "lived experience" I was seeking would have its place in an ethnography of *juku*. Methodologically, I was also curious as to how Roesgaard secured her interviews, since she offers no metadiscourse on her research process.

Overall, though, Roesgaard succeeds in presenting a new and useful framework for understanding *juku*, institutions reflective of Japan's "credentialist society" (*gakureki shakai*) that sit at the junction of business and education. Her predictions about the future of education in Japan – notably, the ways in which *juku* should continue to grow to compensate for perceived shortcomings in the public education system – speak to for-profit educational enterprises around the world, making her work of value to students and scholars not only of Japanese studies but also of comparative education.

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