

JAPAN STUDIES REVIEW

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**JAPAN STUDIES REVIEW
VOLUME TWENTY-ONE
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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the twenty-first volume of the *Japan Studies Review* (JSR), an annual peer-reviewed journal sponsored by the Asian Studies Program at Florida International University. JSR remains an outlet for publications related to Southern Japan Seminar events that encourages submissions from a wide range of scholars in the field. The 2017 issue includes research articles covering varied interdisciplinary topics and a special section featuring a bibliographical essay plus additional essays and book reviews

Appearing in this issue are four articles dealing with a variety of topics on Japanese society and culture. The first article is by Ben Van Overmeire, who analyzes Zen Buddhism in the twentieth century in terms of “frame-stories” from Daisetz Teitarō Suzuki’s book *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism* in relation to Janwillem Van de Wetering’s *The Empty Mirror*. The second article, by Rebecca Richko, presents a study of Japan’s low birth rate and the role of women in contemporary society. The next article is by Shiho Futugami and Marilyn M. Helms, who explore the underlying factors behind employment challenges in Japan by reviewing current policies for work involving age and gender equality. The fourth article, by Bernice J. deGannes Scott, presents an economic analysis of the United States-Japan automobile trade conflict of the 1980s.

The special section in this year’s issue contains a biographical essay by Steven Heine with assistance from Katrina Ankrum. It provides a detailed overview of compilations of traditional Sōtō Zen commentaries, primarily from the Edo period but also including some medieval and modern examples. These manifold works, with more than eighty examples, examine the content of Eihei Dōgen’s masterwork, the *Shōbōgenzō*, as well as the factors that led to the formation of the 95-Fascicle Honzan Edition first published in 1906.

This issue includes two additional essays. The first one by Junko Baba is a discussion on the military government’s food policies in World War II Japan. The second essay is by Cassandra Atherton, who focuses her analysis of “ocean plain” (*wata no hara*) imagery in the animated film *Gake no Ue no Ponyo* directed by Hayao Miyazaki.

Furthermore, this volume contains three book reviews of recent publications on Japanese studies. Daniel A. Métraux reviews a book by Janice P. Nimura, *Daughters of the Samurai: A Journey from East to West and Back*, and a volume by Richard Reeves titled *Infamy: The Shocking Story of Japanese Internment in World War II*. Finally, Yuichi Tamura reviews a book by Peter Cave titled *Schooling Selves: Autonomy, Interdependence, and Reform in Japanese Junior High Education*.

Re: Submissions, Subscriptions, and Comments

Submissions for publication, whether articles, essays, translations or book reviews, should be made in electronic formats, preferably Word for Windows via email attachment (please inquire about other formats). The editor and members of the editorial board will referee all submissions.

Annual subscriptions are \$35.00 (US). Please send a check or money order payable to *Florida International University* to:

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

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Articles

**PORTRAYING ZEN BUDDHISM IN THE TWENTIETH
CENTURY: ENCOUNTER DIALOGUES AS FRAME-STORIES IN
DAISETZ SUZUKI'S *INTRODUCTION TO ZEN BUDDHISM* AND
JANWILLEM VAN DE WETERING'S *THE EMPTY MIRROR***

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Overview

In the twentieth century, few people have influenced perceptions of Zen in the West as much as Daisetz Teitarō Suzuki. Thus far, studies of Suzuki have not addressed the literary forms he used to convey his construction of Zen, thereby ignoring one of the most important ways in which he rendered his ideas attractive to non-Japanese audiences. To address this gap, my article investigates how two accounts of Japanese Zen Buddhism, Suzuki's *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism* (1934) and Janwillem Van de Wetering's memoir *The Empty Mirror* (1973), frame Zen Buddhist stories known as encounter dialogues. I argue that Suzuki uses these stories 1) to condition the relationship between author and reader as that between a master and a student; and 2) to portray Zen as an a-historical practice centered on "experience." In *The Empty Mirror*, however, framed encounter dialogues remain ideal portrayals that contrast with the protagonist's life in a Zen monastery. The manner in which Van de Wetering uses frame-stories thus implicitly critiques Suzuki's influential narrative of Zen, and suggests a manner of writing and thinking about this religion that takes into account both the ideals and failures of Zen Buddhist practitioners.

Introduction

At first glance, Janwillem Van de Wetering (1931–2008) and Daisetz Teitarō Suzuki (1870–1966) could not be more different. Whereas Suzuki became world-famous for his scholarly and popular accounts of Zen Buddhism, Van de Wetering wrote crime novels. Before he became a novelist, though, Van de Wetering ventured on a spiritual quest that led him from his native Holland to a Zen Buddhist monastery in Kyoto, Japan. This experience inspired his first book, a fascinating but virtually unstudied memoir titled *The Empty Mirror*. I argue that in this memoir, Van de Wetering testifies to Suzuki's influence while simultaneously showing that Suzuki's portrayal of Zen is idealized. By comparing both authors' framing of Zen Buddhist stories, Van de Wetering's ambiguous attitude towards

Suzuki becomes clear. Whereas Suzuki uses these stories to portray Zen insight as an experience accessible to anyone, in *The Empty Mirror* the stories remain as ideal representations of enlightenment that continue to remain out of reach.

Suzuki's influence has resulted in significant critical attention. His influence on the Beat Generation, the composer John Cage, and, via Cage, on the Fluxus performance art movement are all well attested.¹ Western scholarship on Zen, too, has for a long time followed in Suzuki's tracks. However, since the 1990s his position has been seriously questioned, particularly his casting of Zen as the very essence of Japaneseness, an idea complicit with a nationalist ideology popular before and during the Second World War.² Such scholarship has also shown that Suzuki characterizes the Zen tradition by relying on terms alien to that tradition, foremost among which is a transcendental notion of experience.³

Surveying these two strains of criticism, Richard Jaffe points out that Suzuki's wartime complicity has been exaggerated, and that his project, translating Zen for the West, justifies his usage of western terminology even if that terminology is not found within the Zen tradition. Ultimately, Jaffe argues, Suzuki was not concerned with any historical incarnation of Zen, but

¹ For Suzuki's influence on the Beats, see Jane E. Falk, "The Beat Avant-Garde, the 1950's, and the Popularizing of Zen Buddhism in the United States" (Ohio State University, 2002), 92–135. For his influence on Cage, see David Nicholls, *John Cage, American Composers* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007), 46–48. For Cage's influence on Fluxus, see Owen F. Smith, *Fluxus: The History of an Attitude* (San Diego: San Diego State University Press, 1998), 20–23.

² Robert H. Sharf, "The Zen of Japanese Nationalism," *History of Religions* 33/1 (1993); Bernard Faure, *Chan Insights and Oversights: An Epistemological Critique of the Chan Tradition* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993), 52–88; Brian Victoria, *Zen at War*, 2nd ed. (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006); Judith Snodgrass, "Publishing Eastern Buddhism: D.T. Suzuki's Journey to the West," in Thomas David DuBois, ed., *Casting Faiths: Imperialism and the Transformation of Religion in East and Southeast Asia* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 46–72.

³ Robert H. Sharf, "Buddhist Modernism and the Rhetoric of Meditative Experience," *Numen* 42/3 (1995), 228–83.

instead, he put the emphasis on the essence of Zen and what it can mean for the modern world.⁴

What these discussions of the value of Suzuki's portrayal of Zen have neglected are the literary features of his prose. If Suzuki's writing has been particularly influential, one would suspect that one reason for this might be the very materiality of his writing, its literary form. In this article, I show that it is the manner in which Suzuki frames canonized Zen stories, called encounter dialogues, that has rendered his work rhetorically effective.

As "mirrors in the text," encounter dialogues reinforce and reflect a narrative where Suzuki is the Zen master and the reader a student. *The Empty Mirror* mimics Suzuki's manner of framing to an extent, while critiquing it at the same time. In his 1975 review of Van de Wetering's memoir, the famous Zen scholar Inagaki Hisao noted this ambiguity, describing the book as "another addition to the long list of books produced in the current world-wide boom of Zen," but "probably unique in not pretending to know what *satori* is."⁵

In particular, *The Empty Mirror* enacts this implicit critique by reproducing the idealized Zen stories that Suzuki cites in abundance within a narrative that describes a failure of those stories to become reality. Van de Wetering thus maintains a tension between what the autobiographical main character experiences and what he expects to experience based upon what he has read in Suzuki's books.

He thus achieves three things at the same time: he attests to Suzuki's influence, critiques Suzuki's view of Zen, and shows us another way of thinking and writing about Zen, one that gives a voice to those Zen Buddhists who do not obtain the enlightenment experience that Suzuki posits as the goal of all practice. At a time when Suzuki's vision of Zen remains influential, Van de Wetering's alternative is well worth pondering.

⁴ Daisetz Teitarō Suzuki, *Selected Works of D.T. Suzuki: Zen*, ed. Richard M. Jaffe, vol. 1 (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2015), xiv; Daisetz Teitarō Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture*, Bollingen Series 64 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), xxii.

⁵ Hisao Inagaki, "Review of *The Empty Mirror*: Experiences in a Japanese Zen Monastery," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (New Series)* 107/1 (1975), 87.

Suzuki's Mirrors in the Text

John McRae⁶ asked in 2000, “Why are descriptions of Ch’an [Zen] practice, both medieval and modern, so dominated by dialogues, narratives, and orality?” About ten years earlier, Robert Buswell asked the same question, pointing out that such stories present “an idealized paradigm of the Zen spiritual experience” that ignores the realities of Zen practice.⁷ Though both McRae and Buswell identify Suzuki as “the most notable practitioner of this strategy [of abundantly using stories to talk about Zen],”⁸ neither examines this “strategy” in detail. I will show that Suzuki uses a literary technique called “the mirror in the text” to condition a hierarchical relationship between author and reader. Examining this technique allows us to question a narrative of Zen that persists today.

I analyze Suzuki's manner of discussing Zen through a reading of *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, a 1934 book so important that Carl Jung wrote a foreword to the German translation. *An Introduction* has two textual levels. On the first or higher level, Suzuki describes his view of the Zen Buddhist tradition. In his discussion, he regularly cites canonized stories that describe the actions of legendary Zen masters. These stories constitute a second level of discourse within the text, and are framed within the larger narrative in such a way that they reflect the contents of the first level, turning them into what I will identify as “mirrors in the text.”

Consider, for example, the third chapter of *An Introduction*. Like most chapters of the book, this chapter tries to answer a basic question about Zen, namely “Is Zen Nihilistic?” In the first three pages, Suzuki seems to entertain the possibility that this is indeed the case, and subsequently cites eight stories, of which I only quote the first two:

“I come here to seek the truth of Buddhism,” a disciple
asked a [Zen] master.

⁶ John R McRae, “The Antecedents of Encounter Dialogue in Chinese Ch’an Buddhism,” in Steven Heine and Dale S. Wright, eds., *The Kōan: Text and Contexts in Zen Buddhism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 46.

⁷ Robert E. Buswell, *The Zen Monastic Experience: Buddhist Practice in Contemporary Korea* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 5.

⁸ McRae, “The Antecedents of Encounter Dialogue in Chinese Ch’an Buddhism,” 46.

“Why do you seek such a thing here?” answered the master. “Why do you wander about, neglecting your own precarious treasure at home? I have nothing to give you, and what truth of Buddhism do you desire to find in my monastery? There is nothing, absolutely nothing.”

A master would sometimes say: “I do not understand Zen, I have nothing here to demonstrate; therefore, do not remain standing so, expecting to get something out of nothing. Get enlightened by yourself, if you will. If there is anything to take hold of, take it by yourself.”⁹

There are several things worth noting about the dialogues quoted above. They consist of an enigmatic exchange between one person deemed higher in spiritual realization (the master) and one lower (the student). The “message” of the exchange would seem to belie that hierarchy, since the putative “master” demonstrates his mastery by rejecting personal authority. He does not know what “Zen” or “Buddhism” is, and urges his student to figure it out himself. Descriptive indexes are minimal: we do not know where or when this encounter takes place, or what the participants may have been thinking. In a sense, the interlocutors are pure external forms, for the invisible narrator also tells us nothing of their interior subjectivity.

At least since Yanagida Seizan, such Zen stories have been called “encounter dialogue” in Buddhist Studies, and that is how I refer to them here, though they are perhaps better known under their form as *kōan*. Recent scholarship has pointed out that encounter dialogues, typically found in medieval “Records of Sayings” collections that brought together stories about the ancient masters of Zen, are literary creations shaped by the political contingencies of the Tang (618–907) and Song (960–1279) dynasties, not accurate representations of Zen practice during those time periods.¹⁰ Yet that

⁹ Daisetz Teitarō Suzuki, *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism* (New York: Grove Press, 2004), 19.

¹⁰ Bernard Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy: A Cultural Critique of Chan/Zen Buddhism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991), 96–131; Faure, *Chan Insights and Oversights*, 195–242; Albert Welter, *Monks, Rulers, and Literati: The Political Ascendancy of Chan Buddhism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Albert Welter, *The Linji Lu and the Creation of Chan Orthodoxy: The Development of Chan’s Records of Sayings*

is how Suzuki treats these dialogues here: as historically transparent and accurate evidence for his own assertions about Zen's essence. Because these dialogues refuse to disclose their ultimate referent, instead suggesting it vaguely like the classic Zen story of a finger pointing at the moon, Suzuki can project his own idiosyncratic ideas about Zen onto them. He does this on the higher textual level within which these dialogues are framed.

The dialogues above, for example, are cited as implying that Zen is "nihilistic." However, shortly after entertaining this interpretation, Suzuki denies that it is valid, and instead claims that, "Zen always aims at grasping the central fact of life, which can never be brought to the dissecting table of the intellect."¹¹ Suzuki's interpretative mobility here (first hinting that the dialogues demonstrate one idea and then citing them as evidence for another) shows the level of ambiguity encounter dialogues possess. Ironically, by calling attention to this hermeneutic ambiguity, Suzuki unconsciously undermines the idea that encounter dialogues can serve as a stable basis to represent the essence of Zen, an idea that is foundational for *An Introduction* as a whole.

Suzuki frames encounter dialogues on the lower level as evidence for what he asserts on the higher level. In *An Introduction*, encounter dialogues therefore function as "mirrors in the text," a term Lucien Dällenbach has used to describe a specific quality of "frame-stories" or *mise en abyme*. Dällenbach distinguishes three ways in which these "mirrors" can reflect the narratives in which they are incorporated: "reflexions [sic] of the utterance, reflexions of the enunciation, and reflections of the whole code."¹² In other words, "reflections of the utterance" mirror the plot of the novel or the characters within it (often both); "reflections of the enunciation" show or problematize the relation between author and reader (e.g. putting readers in the narrative who have read the story they themselves are a part of, or putting

Literature (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 131–56; Morten Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen: The Dispute over Enlightenment and the Formation of Chan Buddhism in Song-Dynasty China*, Studies in East Asian Buddhism 22 (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), 15–16; Alan Cole, *Fathering Your Father: The Zen of Fabrication in Tang Buddhism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).

¹¹ Suzuki, *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 21.

¹² Lucien Dällenbach, *The Mirror in the Text*, trans. Jeremy Whiteley and Emma Hughes (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1989), 43.

in authorial figures who resemble the real author of the work, and so forth); and lastly, “reflections of the code” mirror the way the work is written, the code as a whole (e.g. what principles structured the literary work?).

Suzuki’s encounter dialogues operate as reflections of the enunciation, prescribing a role division that casts the author as a Zen master and the reader as a Zen student, a power dynamic that is uneven. Consider this encounter dialogue cited by Suzuki:

Hyakujo (Pai-chang) went out one day attending his master Baso (Ma-tsu), when they saw a flock of wild geese flying.
 Baso asked:
 “What are they?”
 “They are wild geese, sir.”
 “Whither are they flying?”
 “They have flown away.”
 Baso, abruptly taking hold of Hyakuji’s nose, gave it a twist. Overcome with pain, Hyakujo cried out: “Oh! Oh!”
 Said Baso, “You say they have flown away, but all the same they have been here from the very first.”
 This made Hyakujo’s back wet with perspiration; he had *satori*.¹³

Here, the master’s replies to the student’s questions lead the latter to *satori*, the spiritual awakening that for Suzuki constitutes the ultimate goal of Zen practice. Note the violence accompanying this exchange: Baso can twist Hyakujo’s nose because he is the latter’s social and spiritual superior, a position the tradition calls “enlightened.”

The uneven power dynamic that characterizes encounter dialogues shapes the relationship between author and reader in *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*. Throughout the book, the reader is assumed to be asking questions of Suzuki, an assumption reflected in chapter titled such as “What is Zen?” and “Is Zen nihilistic?”¹⁴ These titles cast the reader as a student of Zen, a role emphasized by the encounter dialogues Suzuki continually cites. Suzuki

¹³ Suzuki, *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 59–60.

¹⁴ Moreover, all the other chapters in the book might also be phrased as questions from a Western viewpoint. For example, in the chapter titled “Illogical Zen,” Suzuki answers the question “Is Zen logical?”

himself takes the role of Zen master. Throughout the book, he avoids rational explanations and delights in puzzling the reader. This position as a master is not left implicit. Suzuki tells his reader:

You and I are supposedly living in the same world, but who can tell that the thing we popularly call a stone that is lying before my window is the same to both of us? You and I sip a cup of tea. That act is apparently alike to us both, but who can tell what a wide gap there is subjectively between your drinking and my drinking? In your drinking there may be no Zen, while mine is brim-full of it.¹⁵

While the reader “may” have had some taste of Zen experience, there is no doubt about Suzuki’s claim to it. In *An Introduction*, the division reader-author mirrors the division student-master. This qualifies the encounter dialogues not only as inset narratives conditioning this relationship, but also as “transpositions,” a paradigmatic function of inset narratives according to Dällenbach.¹⁶

The operation of such transpositions is similar to that of Freudian dreamwork, in that familiar elements are transformed and repositioned. Like dreams, transpositions “pluralize meaning.” The *mise en abyme* multiplies the amount of possible interpretations of the larger literary work. An example is Apuleus’ *The Golden Ass*. In this Ancient Roman novel, the first three books, which are a picaresque tale, are followed by a mystical inset narrative in the next three books. The *mise en abyme* offers itself as a re-reading of the picaresque component, which thus acquires mystical dimensions. The relatively superficial picaresque¹⁷ gains a profundity of depth it would not have had without the added meaning generated by the *mise en abyme*. Paradoxically then, the tiny *mise en abyme* ends up reframing, and thus conceptually dominating the larger narrative. Dällenbach comments:

¹⁵ Suzuki, *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 58.

¹⁶ *Mirror in the Text*, 56–59.

¹⁷ The picaresque novel typically has an episodic structure, and its contents feature action, heroes and villains. An archetypical example of the genre is *Lazarillo de Tormes*.

Compensating for what they lack in textual extent by their power to invest meaning, such transpositions present a paradox: although they are microcosms of the fiction, they superimpose themselves semantically on the macrocosm that contains them, overflow it and end up by engulfing it, in a way, within themselves.¹⁸

We might stop here and ask how this works: if transpositions are about pluralizing meaning, how can they “engulf” the whole narrative? Dällenbach answers that this process is possible only by using certain genres that allow for such universalization, such as tales or myths.

The encounter dialogues Suzuki employs allow for universalization and thus function as transpositions because they lack any clear meaning or context. These texts first pluralize the meaning of Suzuki’s book. That is to say, not only does Suzuki’s use of encounter dialogues enable readers to enjoy curious tales within a book of philosophy, it also allows them to step into those narratives, tasting what it is like to be a student with Suzuki as master. Ironically, such a pluralization eventually limits interpretation, ossifying the readers’ position as acolytes of a master. In other words, the enunciative relationship that *An Introduction* proposes is hierarchical, with readers subordinate to the author.

This is a surprising conclusion, though one foreseen by Dällenbach: the dialogues have indeed “overflowed” and “engulfed” the main narrative “within themselves.” This manner of framing stories and thus determining the role of the reader as student and the author as master has been very influential. Most non-scholarly books published on Zen today present a similar paradigm, where the author positions himself as spiritually superior to his audience.

Suzuki also uses encounter dialogues to legitimize an idiosyncratic view of Zen, one that also remains influential and often acts as a lens through which the entire tradition is read. According to Suzuki, the essence of Zen is “a pure experience, the very foundation of our being and thought.”¹⁹ In *An Introduction*, he sets out to demonstrate this idea through interpreting the inset dialogues. For example, he reads the exchange between Hyakujo and Baso (which ended in a nose-twist) as evidence that awakening or *satori* “is an experience which no amount of explanation or argument can make

¹⁸ Dällenbach, *Mirror in the Text*, 59.

¹⁹ Suzuki, *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 21.

communicable to others unless the latter themselves had it previously.”²⁰ Elsewhere Suzuki talks about *satori* as a “new viewpoint.”²¹ But the Zen texts he cites as evidence for that position contain no such ideas: their message is very unclear. Suzuki, however, while claiming that *satori* or Zen cannot be communicated, nevertheless interprets all these dialogues in a manner that nowhere admits its own historical contingency. Ironically, his historically determined focus on identifying the perennial essence of Zen prevents exactly this admission.

Recent scholarship has shown that this move, namely interpreting Zen Buddhism through the lens of experience, has little basis in pre-modern Zen Buddhist texts. Robert Sharf and Bernard Faure, among others, have argued that Suzuki’s understanding of experience is a very modern one, inspired by the work of Suzuki’s lifelong friend Nishida Kitaro, who in turn based it on a reading of William James’ *Varieties of Religious Experience*.²²

²⁰ Ibid., 62.

²¹ Ibid., 58, 65.

²² Faure, *Chan Insights and Oversights*, 52–88; Sharf, “The Zen of Japanese Nationalism,” 22; Sharf, “Buddhist Modernism and the Rhetoric of Meditative Experience,” 248. While acknowledging Faure and Sharf’s critique as valid, Richard Jaffe has pointed out that something resembling Suzuki’s concept of experience does exist in the writings of the famous eighteenth-century Japanese master Hakuin Ekaku (1686-1768; Suzuki, *Selected Works of D.T. Suzuki: Zen*, 1:xxxix). Furthermore, as I pointed out in my introduction, Jaffe has defended Suzuki’s usage of experience as part of his project of modernizing Zen, arguing that Suzuki only intended to accurately represent the essence of Zen and not the historical tradition. While Jaffe is right in pointing out that we should not judge Suzuki on what he never meant to do, this purpose is never made very clear in Suzuki’s introductory books, which mix discussions of practice in Zen monasteries (the final chapter of *An Introduction* is titled “The Meditation Hall and the Monk’s Life”) with explanations of the essence of Zen (“What is Zen?”; “Zen a Higher Affirmation”). This mix gives the reader the impression that Suzuki’s Zen is actually practiced, and is not just an ideal. As I discuss in the next part of this article, Van de Wetering’s memoir depicts a man departing for Japan under exactly this assumption: that the ideal Zen of Suzuki’s books is practiced in Japanese monasteries. I would therefore argue that Suzuki’s usage of experience is more than a modernizing move: it is part of a strategy

In brief, Nishida, the founding figure of the Kyoto school of Japanese philosophy, proposed that at the basis of human consciousness there lies a “pure experience” that precedes and envelops all dualistic oppositions like subject-object, universal-individual, and so on. Because it exists before mental categorizations and even consciousness of time, pure experience is universal and eternal, and therefore forms the foundation of all the world’s religions. However, the Japanese have most perfected their access to pure experience, and in the meditation of Zen monks, the concentration of samurai in a bout, or the pouring of tea in a tea ceremony Nishida sees the best examples of accessing such experiences.²³

What does Suzuki’s use of Nishida’s “pure experience” mean for his interpretation of Zen? Suzuki’s stress on pure experience becomes a means of asserting the authority of his interpretation of the encounter dialogues he so abundantly cites. As is clear from the cited summary, in principle Nishida’s experience is accessible to all. Yet, and Suzuki developed this dimension in-depth, the Japanese are best equipped to feel it. Thus, what is presented as a universal feature of human perception turns out to be particularly accessible in the “East,” especially Japan. Significantly, in the first chapter of *An Introduction*, Suzuki follows an assertion that Zen “most strongly and persistently insists on an inner spiritual experience”²⁴ by concluding: “Therefore I make bold to say that in Zen are found systematized, or rather crystallized, all the philosophy, religion, and life itself of the Far-Eastern people, especially of the Japanese.”²⁵ In his position as a Japanese introducing Zen to the West, Suzuki immunizes himself from any criticism from his Western readers, for those readers are not only not

of making Zen attractive to western readers while also consolidating Suzuki’s authority in speaking for the tradition.

²³ Robert Edgar Carter, *The Kyoto School: An Introduction* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013), 13–60; John C. Maraldo, “Nishida Kitarō,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, April 12, 2010 (accessed August 2, 2017, <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2010/entries/nishida-kitaro/>). For a substantive critique of this notion of experience, and how it is complicit with the Japanese war effort, see James W. Heisig and John C. Maraldo, eds., *Rude Awakenings: Zen, the Kyoto School, & the Question of Nationalism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1995), 77–131.

²⁴ Suzuki, *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, 4.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 7.

Japanese, they are not even “Far-Eastern.” Suzuki, who is Japanese, explicitly identifies himself as having had the experience he reads into encounter dialogues. As quoted previously, he tells his reader that his cup is “brim-full” of Zen. This unequal power relationship is reinforced by the metafictional relegation of the reader to the role of a student, a process already discussed.

Thus far, I have focused only on *An Introduction* as a sample of Suzuki’s writing. However, the pattern I have identified appears in nearly all non-specialist introductions to Zen Buddhism Suzuki wrote. Consider *Essays in Zen Buddhism*. In the introduction to the first volume of the *Essays* (1927), Suzuki emphasizes the importance of encounter dialogues: “The ‘Goroku’ [“Records of Sayings,” collections of encounter dialogue] is the only literary form in which Zen expresses itself.”²⁶ Later on, he stresses the importance of experience: “Zen proposes its solution [to the problems of life] by directly appealing to facts of personal experience and not to book knowledge.”²⁷ This assertion is quickly followed by two encounter dialogues, which Suzuki again explains as indicating “that Zen was not subject to logical analysis or to intellectual treatment. It must be directly and personally experienced by each of us in his inner spirit.”²⁸

Like *An Introduction*, in the first chapter of the *Essays* this emphasis on an experience read into encounter dialogues translates into a power relationship between author and reader. After citing an encounter dialogue in which a master reprehends a student by calling him an “ignoramus,” Suzuki immediately moves to address the reader: “If I go on like this there will be no end. So I stop, but expect some of you to ask me the following questions [two hypothetical questions about encounter dialogues follow]. In answer, I append these two passages [two encounter dialogues].”²⁹ In this sequence, we again see how Suzuki’s concept of experience and the framed encounter dialogues condition a relationship between author and reader that is hierarchical, with the author strategically avoiding directly answering questions, just like the medieval Zen masters in the encounter dialogues.

²⁶ Daisetz Teitarō Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, vol. 1 (London: Rider & Company, 1927), 7.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 1:16.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 1:21.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 1:33.

What we see in this brief summary of only the introduction of the *Essays* is the same pattern I have demonstrated for *An Introduction*.

Another example of the pattern I have identified can be found in the wildly famous *Zen and Japanese Culture*, which, according to Jaffe, sold 100,000 copies since the paperback edition of 1970 alone (it was published long before that in both English and Japanese, so the actual number is probably much higher).³⁰ In the first chapter of *Japanese Culture*, titled “What is Zen,” Suzuki provides his reader with a host of encounter dialogues, introducing the first three with the statement: “Zen verbalism expresses the most concrete experience” and concluding after quoting them: “This is what I call Zen verbalism. The philosophy of Zen comes out of it.”³¹ As in the first chapter of the *Essays* just discussed, the manner in which the student-master relationship appears is in the ignorance of certain readers. After citing an encounter dialogue that answers the question about the Way of Zen by the assertion “When you are hungry you eat, when you are thirsty you drink, when you meet a friend you greet him,” Suzuki asserts:

This, some may think, is no more than animal instinct or social usage, and there is nothing that may be called moral, much less spiritual, in it. If we call it the Tao, some may think, what a cheap thing the Tao is after all! Those who have not penetrated into the depths of our consciousness, including both the conscious and unconscious, are liable to hold such a mistaken notion as the one just cited. But we must remember that....³²

Here, Suzuki again presents himself as an authority who has indeed “penetrated into the depths of our consciousness,” whereas at least some of his readers have not. Therefore, *Japanese Culture* also displays the pattern I have identified in *An Introduction*.

Suzuki uses encounter dialogues to build a narrative of Zen in which there is only success. Even if a student in the encounter dialogues occasionally does not comprehend the master’s meaning, this is never the master’s fault. In Suzuki’s framing of the dialogues, what seems like failure is in fact a step towards enlightenment, which for him lies at the end of any

³⁰ Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture*, vii.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 6–7.

³² *Ibid.*, 11.

proper practice of Zen. Van de Wetering's *The Empty Mirror*, to which I turn next, both demonstrates Suzuki's influence and contests its view of Zen. Van de Wetering counters Suzuki's certitude with doubt, offering a way of describing Zen Buddhism that leaves room for failure: the possibility that the ideal may not become real.

Van de Wetering's *The Empty Mirror*

Suzuki offers his readers an ideal portrayal of Zen through encounter dialogues. In their predetermined role as students, readers are conduced to interpret these stories as proof for Suzuki's main points. Van de Wetering's book is different because it establishes a tension between life in a Japanese Zen monastery and the idealized stories of Zen as they appear in Suzuki's work. Van de Wetering therefore attests to Suzuki's influence while subtly critiquing the latter's portrayal of Zen, opening the door to a manner of writing about the religion that allows for a Zen experience that is unlike the one Suzuki reads into encounter dialogues.

This tension between personal experiences and encounter dialogues is present in *The Empty Mirror* from the beginning. Having just been admitted to the monastery in Kyoto where he will stay for a year, the main character of the book, Janwillem,³³ stands face to face with a statue that depicts, as the extradiegetic narrator informs us, "A Zen master who lived in the Middle Ages, one of the most spectacular characters from the history of Zen."³⁴ Despite the fact that Janwillem is unaware of this, he feels "threatened by the will-power of the man."³⁵ Shortly after, as Janwillem waits

³³ To prevent confusion, I will henceforth refer to the autobiographical character in *The Empty Mirror* as Janwillem, and to the narrator and the author of the book as Van de Wetering. I am aware that conflating a so-called extradiegetic narrator with a real person carries great risk, but I see no other way to effectively describe this book in narratological terms. By an extradiegetic narrator, I mean a narrator who does not participate in the story, stands outside it and is all-knowing. It is the top level of the narrative structure according to the narratological system of Gérard Genette. For a useful description of focalization, see Luc Herman and Bart Vervaeck, *Handbook of Narrative Analysis*, Frontiers of Narrative (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 81–86.

³⁴ Janwillem Van de Wetering, *The Empty Mirror: Experiences in a Japanese Zen Monastery*, 1st ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974), 5.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 6.

for an interview with the abbot, the focalization³⁶ of the narrative shifts from a personal to an external vocalizer: the extradiegetic narrator tells us about the background of the Zen master in question, a roguish character who refused students and commissions, and who chose to live under Kyoto's bridges like a beggar.³⁷ At one point, the emperor sought his wisdom, and was told beforehand that the master likes melons. This information proves to be true when the disguised despot finds "a beggar with remarkable sparkling eyes."³⁸ What follows is typical:

He [the emperor] offered the beggar a melon and said:
 "Take the melon without using your hands." The beggar
 answered: "Give me the melon without using your hands."
 The emperor then donated money to build a temple and
 installed the master as a teacher.³⁹

³⁶ This term and the narratological system it implies is that described as "structuralist" by Herman and Vervaeck, *Handbook of Narrative Analysis*, 41–102, who modify the term coined by Gérard Genette. By "focalization" they mean the viewpoint adopted by the narrator, but not identical to that narrator. For example, an all-knowing nineteenth-century narrator, who often shows his omniscience by predicting what will happen to the characters later on the book, may still choose to narrate through the eyes and bodies of the characters to maintain tension, or evoke other effects. Focalization thus has two main types, internal and external to the narrative: when the narrator views a narrative solely through the eyes of a character, he is internally focalizing; and when he tells the story through his own eyes, he is externally focalizing. Of course, as Herman and Vervaeck are very much aware, this division is problematic because it assumes that there are "centers of perception in a narrative text that approximate human beings and that apparently think and feel as we all do" (Ibid., 71).

³⁷ Though Van de Wetering never identifies this master, it is clear from the contents that Daitō Kokushi (National Teacher Daitō; 1235-1308) is meant here. For a discussion of Daitō, see Heinrich Dumoulin, *Zen Buddhism: A History – Volume 2 Japan* (New York: Macmillan, 1990), 185–90.

³⁸ Van de Wetering, *The Empty Mirror*, 6.

³⁹ Ibid.

This story, an encounter dialogue, sets up a model for the encounter with the real abbot of the monastery. After the narrator has finished telling the story about the beggar-master, the focalization shifts once again, and we see the world through Janwillem's eyes. He is surprised, because he will actually get to see the abbot:

I had read that Zen masters live apart and do not worry about the running of the monastery. The daily routine passes them by; their task is the spiritual direction of the monks and other disciples whom they receive every day, one by one.⁴⁰

Janwillem thus experiences the monastery through the lens of what he has read about Zen Buddhism. In a moment, I will show that it is Suzuki in particular who influences his expectations. Van de Wetering's book attests to Suzuki's influence, while at the same time critiquing the Japanese scholar by contrasting his ideas with the realities of the Zen monastery.

In the remainder of the first chapter, Janwillem continues to impose the knowledge he has gained by reading about Zen on his experiences in the monastery. Just before meeting the abbot, Janwillem again reflects on what this Zen master should be like: he should not like "long stories" and will prefer "methods without words."⁴¹ Therefore, Janwillem expects a non-verbal treatment that might also be violent. That is why he decides to keep his statements brief:

"I am here," I said carefully, "to get to know the purpose of life. Buddhism knows that purpose, the purpose which I am trying to find, and Buddhism knows the way which leads to enlightenment" [. . .] To my surprise the master answered immediately. I had thought that he would be silent. When the Buddha was asked if life has, or does not have, an end, if there is, or isn't, a life after death, [. . .] he did not answer but maintained a "noble silence."⁴²

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid., 7.

⁴² Ibid.

This seemingly simple passage contains an important parallel: the very moment Janwillem starts speaking to the abbot, he is consciously repeating a scene he has read in books (namely the exchange between Shakyamuni and an unnamed interrogator). However, the abbot refuses to conform to the role assigned to him, and answers approvingly: “‘That’s fine’, he said. ‘Life has a purpose, but a strange purpose. When you come to the end of the road and find perfect insight you will see that enlightenment is a joke.’”⁴³ This answer does not complete the series of surprises: instead of being rigorously tested before he is allowed to become a student, Janwillem is readily admitted to the monastery, causing him to conclude: “Obviously the books which I had read about Zen were faulty, written by inexperienced writers.”⁴⁴

In *The Empty Mirror*, Van de Wetering never names the “inexperienced writers” that apparently so misinformed Janwillem about the reality of Zen practice in Japan. Only much later, in 1994 and again in 1999, would Van de Wetering testify that what oriented him towards Japan in the 1950s (and not India, or any other exotic location) was reading Suzuki. He had read “Dr. D.T. Suzuki’s Zen guide”⁴⁵ while on the ship to Japan and when he arrived in Kyoto, he was “clutching Suzuki in [his] right armpit.”⁴⁶ This attachment to Suzuki as a Zen authority leads him to have a host of preconceived notions on the behavior of Zen masters and Zen practice, notions that are first proven wrong during the interview with the real Zen master in Kyoto, and that will haunt the rest of his stay in Japan.

Van de Wetering was not the only one so decisively influenced by Suzuki: in the era after the Second World War, Suzuki was the main reference for many Westerners intrigued by the religion they had come to know simply as “Zen.” But what is remarkable about *The Empty Mirror* is that it details the discovery of the misunderstandings Suzuki’s books can cause. Janwillem operates on the assumption that Suzuki’s work accurately represents the realities of life in a Zen monastery, but again and again discovers that this is not so.

⁴³ Ibid., 8.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Janwillem Van de Wetering, *Afterzen: Experiences of a Zen Student out on His Ear* (New York: St. Martins Press, 1999), 65.

⁴⁶ Janwillem Van de Wetering, “Introduction,” in *The Zen Kōan as a Means of Attaining Enlightenment* (Boston: C.E. Tuttle Co., 1994).

The second chapter of *The Empty Mirror*, which is aptly titled “Meditating Hurts,” provides another example of the contrast the memoir maintains between the reality portrayed in Suzuki’s books and what Janwillem experiences in the monastery:

The first meditation is forever etched into my memory. After a few minutes the first pains started. My thighs began to tremble like violin strings. The sides of my feet became burning pieces of wood. My back, kept straight with difficulty, seemed to creak and to shake involuntarily. Time passed inconceivably slowly. There was no concentration at all.⁴⁷

The books Janwillem has read do not mention this experience. In a hagiography of the Tibetan saint Milarepa, Janwillem reads that this bodhisattva is not bothered by pain: “There was nothing about pain in the legs or back, the fight with sleep, the confused and endlessly interrupting thoughts.”⁴⁸ Life in the monastery is tough: Janwillem sleeps some four hours per night, with an extra hour in the afternoon, meditates six painful hours in summer and more in winter, and spends the remainder of his time cleaning hallways and maintaining the monastery garden. This routine is not without results: regular meditation causes Janwillem to become “fully aware,” able to “really see objects in [his] surroundings.”⁴⁹ He even manages to instinctively solve a problem by improvising, something that his master considers a great accomplishment.⁵⁰ But what always remains beyond Janwillem’s reach and drives him to despair, is *satori*, the enlightenment experience Suzuki sees as the goal of Zen practice. He is supposed to gain it through solving the question contained in his *kōan*,⁵¹ and then providing his master with the answer during a formal interview. Thus, Janwillem day after

⁴⁷ Van de Wetering, *The Empty Mirror*, 14.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 20–21.

⁵¹ By *kōan* is meant the illogical riddles the Zen tradition is so renowned for. Those riddles were often drawn from the mysterious interactions contained in encounter dialogues. From the Song dynasty onwards, the Rinzai tradition of Zen has used these riddles to train students.

day lines up outside the master's room, goes in, bows to the master, and says nothing. In the *The Empty Mirror*, he never finds the answer.

The contrast between Janwillem's life and that of the Zen masters in the encounter dialogues reaches a climax at the end of the book.⁵² An American colleague of Janwillem, Gerald, is depressed, and Janwillem tries to cheer him up by telling him a Zen story: a monk tries to solve his *kōan* but does not succeed despite great efforts. He therefore leaves the monastery and goes to live in a temple. Over time, he forgets the *kōan* and instead spends his days taking care of his new abode. But one day, the sound of a pebble sends *satori* surging through his being. Gerald, however, is not impressed by this story and tells two more recent stories: one describes a monk trying to solve the *kōan* "stop the Inter-city train coming from Tokyo." He works on the riddle for many years, to no avail, and finally throws himself underneath said high-speed train. The second story is about a headstrong monk, whose master often punished him with a small hard cane. One day, the master strikes too hard, and the monk dies. No one is held accountable, because "the police know that there is an extraordinary relationship between master and pupil, a relationship outside the law."⁵³

Thus, in the conclusion of *The Empty Mirror*, disappointment enters the level of the *mise en abyme*, which from then on can no longer function as a normative ideal. At that point, the tension between ideal and reality that the book has maintained for such a long time collapses, and the story ends. Having never known *satori*, Janwillem leaves the monastery and gets on a ship bound for his native Holland. The last sentence of *The Empty Mirror* brings us back to everyday European life: "I went into the bar and ordered a cold beer."⁵⁴ His departure is the completion of a long process. By writing

⁵² Van de Wetering, *The Empty Mirror*, 132–34.

⁵³ Ibid., 134.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 145. In the follow-up volume to *The Empty Mirror*, *A Glimpse of Nothingness*, Van de Wetering does solve his *kōan* while staying in an American Zen community. Although "according to the Zen books I had read and the stories I had heard solving a *kōan* is accompanied by *satori*, enlightenment," for Janwillem solving the *kōan* has minimal results: "I had to admit that nothing had changed very much. Perhaps I might now have a more intense realization of relativity, a better idea of the non-importance of what concerned me. But that was nothing new. Detachment is caused by a slow process, and the results of this process, if any, are gradual. It was quite

the Zen history of a failure, Van de Wetering shows that there is a significant gap between Zen's ideals and reality. Thus, he reveals the one-dimensional nature of representations such as Suzuki's, which only discuss success and not failure.

In *The Empty Mirror* encounter dialogues no longer figure as "mirrors in the text." Instead of reflecting the contents, they invert them. Dällenbach does not allow for this possibility. For him, the literary work cannot be riven by internal division, a structuralist assumption that underlies his study. Therefore, Van de Wetering's book requires a different method of reading the framed stories. Throughout this article, I have argued that the contrast between encounter dialogues and reality in Van de Wetering's novel is a manner of critiquing books like Suzuki's that idealize Zen. Van de Wetering's narrative of a failed Buddhist creates the possibility for a different, more balanced, type of Zen narrative.

The uniqueness of Van de Wetering's approach can be illustrated by a brief comparison with three other testimonies by Westerners who also went to Japan to study Zen. None of their testimonies include encounter dialogues, and all of them end with *satori*. These two differences indicate that in these stories, the ideal of Zen does become reality, and mark the uniqueness of *The Empty Mirror*, which maintains a tension between ideal (encounter dialogues) and reality (the experiences in the monastery).

Philip Kapleau's *The Three Pillars of Zen* (1967) presents itself as "a book setting forth the authentic doctrines and practices of Zen from the mouths of the masters themselves [. . .] as well as to show them come alive in the minds and bodies of men and women of today."⁵⁵ The latter part of the book therefore contains "Eight Contemporary Enlightenment Experiences of Japanese and Westerners," already suggesting that the outcome of each of these testimonies will be *satori*. As a sample of these testimonies, Kapleau's own account, collected under the heading "Mr. P.K., An American Ex-

possible that I was merely imagining my improved sense of detachment." Though *A Glimpse of Nothingness* deserves its own study, I would like to point out that in this book also maintains a tension between ideal (solving a *kōan* results in *satori*) and reality (solving a *kōan* changes nothing). See Janwillem Van de Wetering, *A Glimpse of Nothingness: Experiences in an American Zen Community*, 1st ed. (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1975), 55.

⁵⁵ Philip Kapleau, *The Three Pillars of Zen: Teaching, Practice, and Enlightenment* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), xv–xvi.

Businessman,” serves well.⁵⁶ Like Van de Wetering, Kapleau has read and heard a lot about Zen before going to Japan. He is also familiar with Suzuki’s work.⁵⁷ When Kapleau arrives in a Japanese monastery, he and a friend therefore try to “test” a Zen master by using their book knowledge, something that turns out disappointing.⁵⁸

A further similarity to Van de Wetering’s book is that Kapleau describes his first experiences with meditation as “miserable.”⁵⁹ However, eventually Kapleau conquers his *kōan*, whereafter joy surges through him, changing his life forever.⁶⁰ He then becomes a Zen master in an established lineage. His Canadian wife, Delancey Kapleau, who writes the eighth testimonial in the book, undergoes a similar evolution, with *satori* at the end.⁶¹ Although these narratives show that *satori* is indeed possible, they also tantalize the reader into seeking valuation in *satori* as the only goal of their Zen practice. In the testimonies of Philip and Delancey Kapleau, one detects an obsession with *satori*, the experience that, they are both certain, will change their life. Both testimonies read as detective stories, where the culprit remains elusive until at last he is caught and the world is put right. One imagines that readers of this book who started to practice Zen held on to *satori* in a similar manner, and there must have been those who failed in their quest. In *The Empty Mirror*, Van de Wetering gives a voice to this silent group, and thus pioneers a new type of Zen narrative.

Like Kapleau’s book, Robert Aitken’s Zen manual *Taking the Path of Zen* (1982) contains a short account of the author’s own experiences with Zen training. Aitken’s testimony is similar to those of Kapleau and Van de Wetering, but shares its happy ending only with the former. As an American prisoner-of-war during World War II, Aitken encounters Zen in Kobe, Japan, where a guard loans him a copy of R.H. Blyth’s *Zen in English Literature*.⁶² After having met Blyth, coincidentally also a prisoner in Kobe, Aitken

⁵⁶ Ibid., 208–29. Kapleau indicates that this is his own experience on page 190.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 208–9.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 210–11.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 211.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 227–29.

⁶¹ Ibid., 254–68.

⁶² Robert Aitken, *Taking the Path of Zen* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1982), 115.

resolves to study Zen in Japan and is encouraged by Suzuki, who helps him obtain a scholarship after the war ends.⁶³ In Japan, Aitken meets Kapleau and studies under many Japanese masters, eventually obtaining an enlightenment experience and becoming an authenticated Zen teacher. Again, Aitken's account is similar to Van de Wetering's in some respects: both first encounter Zen through books and then travel to Japan to learn more. However, *The Empty Mirror* never shows us an enlightenment experience, again indicating how unique Van de Wetering's memoir is within the subgenre of Zen memoirs written by westerners. Moreover, like the Kapleaus, Aitken does not include encounter dialogues in his testimony. He does not need to – for him the ideal experience Suzuki reads into encounter dialogues becomes reality.

Conclusion

This article has explored Suzuki's *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism* with Van de Wetering's *The Empty Mirror* by comparing the manner in which both texts frame encounter dialogues. Suzuki's manner of framing was one of reflection: for him, the stories constitute the reality of Zen, which for him lies in a modern Japanese notion of religious experience. In Van de Wetering's book, this move was impossible, because the latter maintains a significant contrast between ideal reality and daily existence in the monastery. Paired with this analysis of experience was the use of Lucien Dällenbach's *The Mirror in the Text* to investigate the function of encounter dialogues. Whereas in Suzuki's book the inset encounter dialogues determines the relationship between author and reader (thus showing the marks of a specific type of *mise en abyme*, namely the "transposition"), in *The Empty Mirror* this was impossible because the ideal reality of encounter dialogues found no reflection in Janwillem's existence. As a result, it was revealed that a more effective way to see the function of failure in Van de Wetering's book is through critiquing narratives of Zen comparable to Suzuki's, thus presenting a more balanced Zen, where monks have weaknesses and ideals do not represent all of reality.

⁶³ Ibid., 117.

SOCIETY'S INFLUENCE ON WOMEN'S CHILDBEARING DECISION IN CONTEMPORARY JAPAN

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Introduction

The Focus on Women in Japan's Declining Population

Japan's declining population is the subject of immense fascination domestically and internationally. What is the cause of the consistently low birth rate? The hunt for an answer to this question often only leads to more queries. One of the main inquiries to surface is: What are women doing wrong to cause the low birth rate? It is true that the role of women in society has changed in recent decades but this is hardly evidence of a concerted effort by women to drive the population down. Blaming women, who suffer the same negative consequences of a low birthing society as men, has been standard practice since the news of the low birth rate first became a hot topic about twenty-five years ago.

For this reason, discussion of Japan's low birth rate tends to focus on the role of women, specifically indicating that women should change their behavior to prioritize motherhood rather than a career or other goals.¹ This stance is supported in large part by traditionalists who remain unsympathetic to, or lack concern for, the societal disincentives for women to have children.²

In an ironic twist, this article will also focus on the relationship between women and the low birth rate. However, it seeks to serve as a counterpoint to the popular conservative rhetoric by shedding light on how

¹ Setsu Shigematsu, *Scream from the Shadows: The Women's Liberation Movement in Japan* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), 22; and Sharon Sievers, "Women in China, Japan, and Korea," in *Women in Asia: Restoring Women to History*, eds. Barbara Ramusack and Sharon Sievers (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1999), 226.

² Susan Holloway, *Women and Family in Contemporary Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 4; and Justin McCurry, "Japanese Minister Wants 'Birth-giving Machines', aka Women, to Have More Babies," *The Guardian*, January 28, 2007 (accessed October 17, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2007/jan/29/japan.justinmccurry>).

Japanese culture has shaped itself into a society with a declining population. To blame women or, inversely, identify them as the solution to the problem solely for their reproduction capabilities, ignores the larger issues at hand. While many Japanese women, in fact, do wish to become mothers, they are often met with obstacles that, when stacked together, are too great to overcome.³ This article will look at the varied impediments that women in Japan face when trying to balance their professional and personal lives.

There is a noticeable struggle that women go through in Japan that is not amply discussed in scholarly research or popular commentary. The ideal for women to become mothers is supported by public discourse and is sought after by many women. When faced with the demands of contemporary society, however, a growing number of women find motherhood to be an unfeasible option, even though the desire to have a family remains. This struggle forms from the pressure to live up to the ideal of becoming mothers without having the necessary conditions or tools to do so. While parts of this research focus on the struggle that women go through in their childbearing decision, the focus remains on the factors that influence their choice, rather than the associated psychology of decision-making.

Societal Influences on Women's Childbearing Decision

Japan's low birth rate is the result of a nexus of social and economic influences that are experienced in contemporary society. My analysis of the influences on a woman's decision about childbearing is based on two fundamental distinctions: (1) the ideal female gender model versus alternative gender roles; and (2) internal versus external influences. Idealized gender roles are behaviors learned and internalized by a person as appropriate to their sex and are often determined by prevailing cultural norms.⁴ Due to the idealized gender role and societal expectations for women, marriage and childbirth are almost synonymous in Japanese culture. In contrast, alternative gender roles reflect the adaptations made by Japanese women to overcome challenges in contemporary society.

³ National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, Department of Population Dynamics Research Japan, *The Fourteenth Japanese National Fertility Survey in 2010: Attitudes toward Marriage and Family among Japanese Singles* (Japan Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare, 2010), 18.

⁴ "Gender," *Oxford Dictionaries* (accessed October 22, 2016, http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/gender).

Another distinction lies in internal versus external influences. Internal factors deal with the issues that are internalized by women, the emotional struggle of the high exposure to the ideal gender model and the recognized implications of the alternative gender roles. External influences are public and economic policies as well as corporate programs, which try to deal with the population decline. To provide a nuanced analysis of the influences on a woman's decision of whether or not to have a child, the following categories will be discussed: (a) internal, individual factors; (b) internal, public factors; (c) external, economic factors; and (d) external, institutional factors.

Internal, Individual Factors: The Ideal Female Gender Model and Personal Relationships

A popular proverb claims, "If we know who we came from, we may better understand who we are," meaning that the past can teach us about the present. In the same vein, before discussing the current state of women's status, it will be helpful to mention a major historical moment that contributed to the current ideal female gender model.

"Good Wife, Wise Mother"

The Meiji ideal of "good wife, wise mother" (*ryōsai kenbo*) has had a lasting influence on Japanese society in terms of how women are valued and what roles they are presumed to uphold. The phrase originally came about in the late nineteenth century, when Japan sought to redefine itself as a "modern" nation, as outlined by imperialist Western nations of the time. One of the foci for change was to reform the Japanese family system, and thus the role of women. The improved status of women, especially in education, became associated with the phrase, which was designed to empower women with greater access for their own education and greater authority in the education of children. *Ryōsai kenbo* was quickly adopted and promoted by early feminists.⁵

In contrast to the progressive intentions of *ryōsai kenbo*, the conservative government of the Meiji era changed the meaning of the phrase to create an ideal of women based on their sexual reproductive capabilities, enforcing a gendered and limited role on women. The government's response to the early feminist movement of the late nineteenth and early

⁵ Sievers, "Women in China, Japan, and Korea," 198.

twentieth century was harsh, stripping women of many of their basic rights, and severely punishing advocates of social change by sentencing them to prison or death.⁶

Although women's agency was greatly improved thanks to the postwar constitution, the "good wife, wise mother" mentality continues to affect the ideal gender model of Japanese women today by coaxing women to prioritize their role as caregivers. The intense social pressure on women to marry and have children should facilitate a higher birth rate, but with the birth rate so low, this is clearly not the case. Why is the ideal gender model no longer a strong stimulus for women to have children? Research shows that women who adhered to the idealized gender role by becoming mothers and homemakers, and therefore forfeited a life outside the home, are now discouraging their female relatives from following in their footsteps.⁷

Women as Caregivers

A woman's personal relationships are a powerful factor in her decision about childbearing that is neutralizing the intense societal pressure to conform to the idealized female gender role. There are many private relationships that may affect a woman's decision about childbearing, though perhaps the strongest influences come from her parents and her husband's parents.

Scholars have conducted extensive research on the *ie*, a family system where a couple's male child and his wife reside with his parents, particularly examining the traditional role of the *yome*, or daughter-in-law.⁸ In this system, there is a high expectation on women to provide care for their husband's parents. One expert noted, however, that "the *yome* role is being renegotiated by Japanese women who either refuse to accept the traditional responsibilities of the *yome* or set new conditions for fulfilling this role."⁹ Why is the traditional role of the *yome* losing popularity? Scholars have found that Japan's aging society is partly responsible for this shift in values.

⁶ Mikiso Hane, trans. and ed., *Reflections on the Way to the Gallows: Rebel Women in Prewar Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 3.

⁷ John W. Traphagan, and John Knight, *Demographic Change and the Family in Japan's Aging Society* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), 8.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

With an average life expectancy of eighty-three years, women who choose to become a *yome* can expect to fulfill the role into their sixties, when they may need care themselves.¹⁰ Brenda Robb Jenike's field research included interviews with women who sought out government-funded elder care options to supplement services or relieve some of the burden of caring for their elderly in-laws.¹¹ These women, often in their fifties or older, had provided in-home care for their elderly in-laws for several years or decades already. Jenike established that the encumbrance of elder care placed solely on the daughter-in-law was great enough to warrant the need for government aid and served as a deterrent for marriage altogether for some women. Thus, women are making the personal choice not to become a *yome* and are receiving less insistence from their partners and family than in previous generations.

The ideal gender model pushes women to have children while a woman's personal relationships may pull her away from motherhood. This represents one of the ways that women experience a dynamic internal struggle in their decision to have a child in contemporary Japan. Personal relations and the ideal gender model are not the only factors in a woman's struggle, but are two of the most significant factors in this category, and thus were offered as examples of internal, individual factors that affect a woman's decision about childbearing.

Because of the varied nature of experiences from person to person, there are a number of considerations for a woman's choice of whether or not to have a child that fall into the category of internal, individual factors. Indeed, the burden of such a caregiving role may sway a woman's decision to not have a child, but it is not the only reason for declined preference. Instead, the low birth rate is an outcome that occurs when the combination of all categories – internal, individual; internal, public; external, economic; and external, institutional factors – happen in society simultaneously. In other words, the low birth rate is the result of a systemic problem.

¹⁰ World DataBank, "Life Expectancy at Birth by Country" (accessed January 4, 2016, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/S.DYN.LE00.IN>).

¹¹ Brenda Robb Jenike, "Parent Care and Shifting Family Obligations in Urban Japan," in John W. Traphagan and John Knight, eds., *Demographic Change and the Family in Japan's Aging Society* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), 194.

Internal, Public Factors: Mass Media

Internal, public factors refer to instances where the standards that are associated with the ideal gender model are displayed and often upheld in public spaces, mass media, and popular culture. This section will explore examples of how private concerns, such as the decision about childbearing, are discussed publicly. One way that this occurs, for example, is through television shows and movies.

The Ideal Female Gender Model in Mass Media

The idealized female gender role is the predominant role portrayed by women in mass culture.¹² Take, for example, this photo in Figure 1 of an advertisement in the appliance department of a major retail store in the Shinjuku neighborhood of Tokyo.



Figure 1. “Happī Wedingu [Happy Wedding]” Advertisement¹³

The mannequin is displayed in a Western-style wedding dress and is placed right next to a washing machine and other household appliances with a sign that reads “*Happī Wedingu* [Happy Wedding].” The choice of gender and dress for the mannequin as well as the message in the advertisement

¹² Midori Suzuki, “Women and Television: Portrayal of Women in Mass Media,” in Kumiko Fujimura-Fanselow and Atsuko Kameda, eds., *Japanese Women: New Feminist Perspectives on the Past, Present, and Future* (New York: Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1995), 76.

¹³ Photo courtesy of the author.

expresses a direct connection to and endorsement of women as homemakers. In other words, public spaces can be used as a way of supporting the idealized gender role for women.

The main group that advocates for the ideal gender model is conservative politicians. Today, many conservatives in Japan view the low birth rate as a crisis and judge women as the driving force for the declining population by not assuming their "proper" roles as "good wives and wise mothers." The public criticism of women for the decline highlights the internal struggle that women go through when they want to have children but are unable to, which is made worse by public condemnation.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's administration has been known to betray his platform for the advancement of women's interests on numerous occasions. In 2014, Tokyo lawmaker Ayaka Shiomura was addressing the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly about the capital's childrearing policy, when several assemblymen from the ruling Liberal Democratic Party shouted jeers like "Hurry and get married" and "Are you not able to have a baby?"¹⁴ After significant public outcry and demands for the identification of the hecklers, one of the perpetrators confessed and was forced to resign from his position. A couple of months later, another Liberal Democratic Party Assemblyman, Zenji Nojima, commented on the event, stating that the trouble was not in the message of the taunts, but "the problem was that such a remark was made to an individual speaker in a public setting."¹⁵ Nojima's statement is particularly surprising, since he made this comment after being appointed as head of a league that promotes gender equality. Thus, many conservative politicians endorse the ideal gender model, reducing the ability of women to sexual reproduction and remaining uninformed of the outlying causes of the low birth rate.

News media coverage on Japan's low birth rate is symptomatic of society's perspective of the ideal gender model. The term "parasite singles" became popularized in the 2000s, after sociologist Yamada Masahiro published his book, *Parasaito shinguru no jidai* [The Age of the Parasite

¹⁴ Masaaki Kameda, "Tokyo Assemblyman Leading Gender Equality Panel Apologizes for Sexist Remark," *The Japan Times*, September 18, 2014 (accessed May 18, 2017, <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2014/09/18/national/tokyo-assemblyman-leading-gender-equality-panel-apologizes-sexist-remark/#.WR38nsYpC70>).

¹⁵ Ibid.

Singles].¹⁶ In addition to the status of singlehood, the term implies that young Japanese women are “too free and overly selfish,” and are “held responsible for the worsening economic crisis in Japan.”¹⁷ The term also does not consider the reasons for this type of alternative role or the obstacles to achieving the ideal. Suzanne Hall Vogel and Steven Kent Vogel, researchers of Japanese culture and political science, stated, “While the expression parasite single has a negative meaning, many Japanese people have no choice but to live with their parents well into adulthood for financial reasons.”¹⁸ The next section will further explore the impact of finances on women’s decision about childbearing, but the use of this derogatory term demonstrates the harsh social climate that women are subjected to when they do not conform to the idealized gender role.

Challenges to the Ideal Female Gender Model in Mass Media

Depictions of single, childless women are still uncommon in Japan, though these portrayals are becoming more prevalent. As time goes on, movies and television series are shifting away from the pattern of the ideal gender model and are adapting more to the contemporary reality. More often, female characters are shown as single, in their thirties or older, and pursuing careers, reflecting the increasing prevalence of this group. For instance, *Last Cinderella* is a Japanese drama that aired in 2013.¹⁹ The main character is a 39-year-old woman named Sakura Toyama. *Last Cinderella* acts as a forum to address existing views of gender ideals in Japanese society.

¹⁶ Yamada Masahiro, *Parasaito shinguru no jidai* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1999), 6.

¹⁷ Ofra Goldstein-Gidoni, *Housewives of Japan: An Ethnography of Real Lives and Consumerized Domesticity* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 50, 194; and Lynne Nakano and Moeko Wagatsuma, “Mothers and Their Unmarried Daughters: An Intimate Look at Generational Change,” in Gordon Mathews and Bruce White, eds., *Japan’s Changing Generations: Are Young People Creating a New Society?* (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 139.

¹⁸ Suzanne Hall Vogel and Steven Kent Vogel, *The Japanese Family in Transition: From the Professional Housewife Ideal to the Dilemmas of Choice* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2013), 152.

¹⁹ Nakano Toshiyuki, *Last Cinderella*, television series, dir. Tanaka Ryo, Hirano Shin, and Sekino Munenori (Tokyo: Fuji Television, 2013).

The title itself implies the Western notion of a woman who goes from rags to riches solely because of her marriage but it is unclear if this was the intention of the show's writers. Sakura receives the pet name "Cinderella" from Hiroto, one of her love interests, because he found her shoe in a hotel stairwell after she had drunkenly tossed it aside. The word "last" also has several implications. For Sakura, society would say that this is her last chance to get married since she is turning forty. In a larger context, though, it could also mean that Cinderellas are a dying breed, due to alternative gender roles.

The show uses Sakura and Rintaro Tachibana, Sakura's male boss and later love interest, to exemplify the different views of male and female gender ideals. In one scene, Sakura and Rintaro happen to end up at the same restaurant. When Sakura orders a beer, Rintaro criticizes her, stating that she should be more modest because a woman should not drink alcohol in the middle of the day. The following translated dialogue ensues:

Sakura: "So you're saying that men can drink during the day but women can't?"

Rintaro: "If women act like men, there will be no distinction between the sexes."

Sakura: "There's nothing women aren't allowed to do that men are."

Rintaro: "That's why you can never be successful. No matter how much women have progressed, it's still a male-dominant society. Women that can't kiss up to men won't get far in their career or love life."²⁰

This dialogue verbalizes the problem that many women face, as women who do not conform to the ideal gender model are negatively impacted in other parts of their lives. This creates a dynamic situation where women are often forced to choose between having a career and having a family. The effect of employment on the lives of women and their childbearing decision will be covered in a later section as part of the external, institutional factors; however, *Last Cinderella* is an excellent example of how the influences discussed in this article can overlap. The film deals with both internal, public factors and external, institutional factors by representing the perceptions of

²⁰ Ibid.

an unmarried, childless woman in a profession on a television show. Equally important, it depicts a woman in what has become an alternative gender role, but in a very positive light.

Summary

Individual and public factors both deal with subjects that are internalized. Internal, public factors, however, specifically refer to the gendered propaganda in public spaces, mass media, and popular culture. Because of the easy access to a wide audience, internal, public factors can support the ideal gender model on a national level and are a strong influence on women to conform to it, which advocates for marriage and children.

Not all forms of mass media represent women as submissive housewives, however. Many television shows, books, and movies, like *Last Cinderella*, break away from the mold set by the idealized gender role by depicting real situations faced by women. More often, female characters are shown as single professionals in their thirties. These forms of entertainment also illustrate the social consequences for their lifestyles, such as the stigma of being forty and never married, as well as the personal conflict of not having a family but wanting one, something that resonates with women as they consider whether or not to have a child of their own.

Even though women are increasingly represented in entertainment with roles other than motherhood, those who do not fulfill the idealized gender role are still subject to social scrutiny. News coverage of Japan's low birth rate is highly suggestive of the stereotype for women to become mothers at an "appropriate" age, while women who remain unmarried and without children are labeled as "parasite singles." Thus, women are pushed to seek the protection of motherhood to avoid public reproach.

The existence of internal, public factors is an interesting social phenomenon, particularly because of the implication that private decisions like whether or not to have children are within the realm of public discourse. As a result, mass culture often stresses the ideal of women as mothers, yet frequently depicts them in alternative gender roles. With the birth rate as low as it currently is, the reinforcement of this ideal no longer appears to be effective. In fact, further partiality towards the idealized gender role seems to be detrimental to stimulating population growth by creating a distance between the existing lifestyles of women and the ideal that they are supposed to attain. The demands of motherhood in public perception are becoming increasingly incompatible with current realities.

External, Economic Factors: Personal and National Economies

External factors deal with the effect of the government, corporate, and economic establishments on society. This category is further separated into economic factors, referring to both private and public economies, and institutional factors, meaning the corporate and governmental impact on people's lives. This section will focus on how external, economic factors influence the lives of Japanese women and contributes to the internal-external binary struggle that women experience.

The Low Birth Rate and National Economy

Stabilizing the birth rate is necessary, especially considering the predictions for Japan's continued population decline. Japan's populace stood just under 127 million in 2015.²¹ The Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare predicts that, without adequate intervention, the population will fall to 87 million by 2060, a decrease of about 32% of its current population.²²

In addition to a declining national population, Japan is aging. As of 2015, about 26% of the population was over the age of 65 and the rate is steadily increasing.²³ With a third of the population projected to be of retirement age in 2050, there is an increased demand for government programs, like social security and public health insurance, which are funded largely by the revenue generated by the workforce.²⁴

Additionally, a decline in the total population results in a reduction in the workforce population. Researchers have considered the effect of the aging population on Japan's economy by discussing the ratio of the population over the age of sixty-five to the workforce population, defined as ages twenty to sixty-four. They found that "in 2055 Japan, approximately

²¹ "Japan," World Bank (accessed March 6, 2017, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/japan>).

²² National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, Department of Population Dynamics Research Japan, *Vital Statistics: Population Projections for Japan* (Japan Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare, 2012).

²³ "Japan: Population Ages 65 and Above," World Bank (accessed March 6, 2017, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP65U0T0.ZS?locations=J>).

²⁴ Robert Dekle, "The Deteriorating Fiscal Situation and an Aging Population," in Magnus Blomström, Jennifer Corbett, Fumio Hayashi, and Anil Kashyap, eds., *Structural Impediments to Growth in Japan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 205.

1.4 current workers will support one aged citizen, whereas, in 2000, 3.6 current workers supported one aged citizen.”²⁵ In the past, nearly four working individuals supported one non-working person. In contrast, future workers will need to support a retiree singlehandedly. This implies that the population in the workforce will be nearly equal to the population that is not working.

In other words, there is an increased expenditure from the growing elderly population, but less contribution from the shrinking workforce. Such a weight on the declining workforce would burden economic growth and induce a rise in public debt.²⁶ For this reason, there is a strong national motivation to increase the birth rate in order to improve economic prospects.

Personal Economy as a Hindrance to Improving the Birth Rate

Economic cost, however, is one of the leading reported causes for delayed marriage and childbearing among Japanese individuals.²⁷ Because the cost of raising children is significant, many women postpone marriage in order to delay having children, with the intention of saving money so that they can afford that phase of their life in the future.²⁸ This, however, results in a longer period of singlehood and less fertile years available for childbearing.

The high financial cost of raising children directly affects the population decline.²⁹ The cards begin to stack against the birth rate when a

²⁵ Thomas F. Cargill, and Takayuki Sakamoto, *Japan since 1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 259.

²⁶ Toshihiro Ihori, Ryuta Ray Kato, Masumi Kawade, and Shun-ichiro Bessho, “Public Debt and Economic Growth in an Aging Japan,” in Keimei Kaizuka and Anne O. Krueger eds., *Tackling Japan's Fiscal Challenges: Strategies to Cope with High Public Debt and Population Aging*, (Basingstoke, England: Palgrave Macmillan/International Monetary Fund, 2006), 30.

²⁷ National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, *Attitudes toward Marriage and Family among Japanese Singles*, 8.

²⁸ Holloway, *Women and Family in Contemporary Japan*, 4; and Goldstein-Gidoni, *Housewives of Japan*, 58–80.

²⁹ Sumiko Iwao, *The Japanese Woman: Traditional Image and Changing Reality* (New York: Macmillan, 1993), 265–282; and Seiritsu Ogura and Tamotsu Kadoda, “Effects of Public Policies and the Labor Market on the Fertility of Japanese Women: Analyses of Municipal Data,” in Noriyuki

couple first begins to consider getting married. The ideal gender model encourages women to leave the workforce upon marriage, a loss of income that contributes to the cost of married life. This is supported by a government survey, which found that one of the leading reasons for delayed or lack of interest in having children among singles is credited to the economic cost of marriage and childrearing. The survey states:

The [Japanese National Fertility] survey asked the never-married people who intend to get married what they saw as potential obstacles if they were to get married within a year. 'Money for marriage' was the most often selected answer for both men and women [43.5% for men, 41.5% for women].³⁰

There is a direct correlation between the cost of married life and the low birth rate, as economic costs are causing couples to get married and have children later in life. The survey explains, "Couples are meeting one another at older ages, the length of courtship has lengthened, and the trend of later marriage has further strengthened."³¹ As couples spend their youth saving up funds to have children or postponing the cost, there are less fertile years available to them to have children. Additionally, there is a positive correlation between the age group of female participants and the selection of "hate to bear children in older age" as an obstacle to having children (38%).³² This signifies that financial stability achieved later in life is not a motivator for childbirth for over a third of the population. It is necessary, therefore, to curb the costs of marriage and childrearing in order to facilitate initiating that stage of life during younger, more fertile years.

It is not only singles that affect the birth rate. Even among married couples, there is a discrepancy between the ideal number of children and the

Takayama, and Martin Werding, eds., *Fertility and Public Policy: How to Reverse the Trend of Declining Birth Rates* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011), 81–110.

³⁰ National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, *Attitudes toward Marriage and Family among Japanese Singles*, 8.

³¹ National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, *Marriage Process and Fertility of Japanese Married Couples*, 2.

³² Ibid.

actual number of children that a couple has. This is suggestive of further economic impediments to the birth rate. Many couples want two or more children but only have one or none. In addressing the high ideal number but low achievement, the survey stated that “although childbearing intentions continue to be present among young couples, those intentions are not realized,” largely credited to the economic cost.³³

In the idealized gender role, women must quit their jobs and rely on their husbands’ income, a deficit that contributes to the high cost of having children. Vogel and Vogel said, “Japanese society, especially before 1945, taught that a woman should always be financially dependent upon and obedient to a man – first her father, then her husband, and finally her son.”³⁴ Today, however, more women can make a living on their own. The financial autonomy available to unmarried, childless, working women is shown to be a strong motivator to maintain that status, since singlehood offers more financial and personal independence.

Summary

The lack of personal financial resources pulls women away from motherhood while national concerns over the threat of population and economic decline push for women to have more children. The individual cost of raising and educating children in Japan is significant, so many women postpone marriage to save the funds they will need for their potential children. The trend of deferring marriage to work towards economic achievement is embraced as a means to an end, even among those who seek to fulfill the idealized female gender role by becoming wives and mothers. Economic cost is one of the leading reported causes for delayed marriage and childbirth among Japanese individuals, with the economic hurdle growing greater after each child.³⁵

Once the decision to delay having children has been made, however, these women find themselves fulfilling an alternative gender role, which is

³³ Ibid, 10.

³⁴ Vogel and Vogel, *The Japanese Family in Transition*, 114.

³⁵ National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, *Attitudes toward Marriage and Family among Japanese Singles*, 8; National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, *Marriage Process and Fertility of Japanese Married Couples*, 12; and Masahiro Hori, “The Expenditure on Children in Japan,” *Economic and Social Research Institute Discussion Paper Series 279* (Cabinet Office, 2011), 1.

further strengthened by the economic autonomy proffered by singlehood. In some cases, these women remain unmarried later in life because their dedication to achieving financial means has brought them past the age deemed appropriate for marriage. As mentioned in the previous section, these women are given derogatory labels without consideration for the economic causes of their situation.

Women who remain in the workforce are looked down upon by many conservatives for not following the ideal gender model, believing that their actions are the cause of the low birth rate. Yet, the Japanese government has found that the advancement of women in the workforce would not only bring more revenue to the state fund, but would potentially boost the birth rate.³⁶ As more of the population reaches the age of retirement and fewer children are born, the age gap widens, placing a greater weight on the workforce to provide for social programs. It is necessary to address the large government medical expenditure by increasing the workforce population through greater participation of women in order to generate revenue and thereby prevent a potentially high national debt that would grow in the coming decades.³⁷ For this reason, there is a strong national motivation to increase the birth rate in order to improve population growth and economic prospects.

External, Institutional Factors: Corporate Culture and Government Policies

This article defines external, institutional factors as the effect of businesses through corporate environment and the national, prefectural, and local governments through public policies on a woman's decision of whether or not to have children.

³⁶ Shinzo Abe, "Shinzo Abe: Unleashing the Power of 'Womenomics,'" *The Wall Street Journal*, September 25, 2013 (accessed July 18, 2017, http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/pais/research/researchcentres/cpd/easg/easg_calendar/shinzo_abe__unleashing_the_power_of_womenomics_-_wsj.pdf); and Louis D. Hayes, *Introduction to Japanese Politics* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2009), 205.

³⁷ Dekle, "The Deteriorating Fiscal Situation and an Aging Population," 71; and Ihori, et al., "Public Debt and Economic Growth in an Aging Japan," 30.

RANKINGS	JAPAN	SOUTH KOREA	UNITED STATES
Overall	111	116	45
Economic Participation and Opportunity	118	123	26
<i>Legislators, Senior Officials, and Managers</i>	113	114	11
Educational Attainment	76	102	1
<i>Literacy Rate</i>	1	66	1
Health and Survival	40	76	62
<i>Healthy Life Expectancy</i>	1	1	79
Political Empowerment	103	92	82
<i>Women in Parliament</i>	122	90	82

Figure 2. International Comparison of Rankings from the 2016 Global Gender Gap Report³⁸

Corporate Culture

According to the World Economic Forum's 2016 Global Gender Gap Report, Japan ranked 111th overall out of 144 countries, representing Japan's poor performance of gender equality by international standards.³⁹ In comparison, the United States ranked 45th and South Korea ranked 116th as illustrated in Figure 2.⁴⁰

The overall female participation rate in the labor force was reportedly 66%, compared to 85% for males, meaning that women have a more difficult time finding and maintaining a job than men, and reflecting the pressure for women to be homemakers.⁴¹ It also means that women face more obstacles than men in receiving a promotion. In addition, only 11% of working women participate in the economy as legislators, senior officials, and managers, compared to the 89% male participation, earning Japan the 113th rank in that category. This suggests the widespread nature of gender discrimination in the workforce that exists in Japan and sheds more light on the struggles that women experience.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ World Economic Forum, "Global Gender Gap Report 2016" (accessed March 6, 2017, <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2016/economies/#economy=JPN>).

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

The lower overall workforce participation rate by women can be directly linked to the ideal gender model. Lynne Nakano stated, "For men, both marriage and singlehood require continuous commitment to work. For women, in contrast, marriage generally involves a commitment to caring for children and husband while singlehood brings continuous full-time employment."⁴² Women are less represented in the workforce overall, with a noticeable decline in participation in their twenties and thirties, usually referred to as the M-curve.⁴³ In fact, scholars have attributed this dip in participation to the cultural norm of women leaving the workforce when they marry to become housewives and mothers.

The disparity in wages earned between the genders is also indicative of gender inequality in the Japanese corporate structure. Prime Minister Abe acknowledged that "Japanese women earn, on average, 30.2% less than men (compared with 20.1% in the U.S. and just 0.2% in the Philippines) [in 2013]."⁴⁴ Lower wages for women may be designed to encourage women to marry and depend on their husband's income but this is, in fact, contributing to the prevalence of delayed marriage. Single women must work several jobs to make ends meet and many couples simply cannot afford to get married and raise a child.

The apparent intention of this corporate environment is to reinforce the idealized female gender role of "good wives and wise mothers." More often, however, women are choosing to remain in the workforce longer, delaying marriage and motherhood instead.⁴⁵ Again, there is a dichotomy

⁴² Lynne Nakano, "Single Women in Marriage and Employment Markets in Japan" in Satsuki Kawano, Glenda Susan Roberts, and Susan Orpett Long eds., *Capturing Contemporary Japan: Differentiation and Uncertainty*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2014), 164.

⁴³ Leonard J. Schoppa, *Race for the Exits: The Unraveling of Japan's System of Social Protection* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2006), 92; and Sugimoto, *An Introduction to Japanese Society*, 163.

⁴⁴ Abe, "Shinzo Abe: Unleashing the Power of 'Womenomics.'"

⁴⁵ Fumie Kumagai, *Families in Japan: Changes, Continuities, and Regional Variations* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2008), 144; Jeff Kingston, *Contemporary Japan: History, Politics, and Social Change Since the 1980s* (West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell Publishing, 2011), 45; and Ezra Vogel, *Japan's New Middle Class* (Plymouth, UK: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2013), 271.

between the intent and reality that contributes to women's struggles in balancing their personal and professional lives. It is an interesting fact that as companies attempt to reinforce the ideal gender model, which should boost the birth rate in theory, they are in fact alienating the ideal by making it harder to achieve. This is supported by the fact that the percentage of singles is on the rise, signifying that women are having a harder time finding partners and are dedicating themselves more to their companies for their livelihood.⁴⁶ The expectation of women to conform to the idealized gender role, thereby excluding them from the workforce, is an indication that the contemporary Japanese corporate environment is based on an outdated structural model and negatively affects the birth rate. Government and social intervention is needed to break the cycle, which can be accomplished via public policies and a change in social mentality.

Government Policies Aimed at Promoting Childbirth

In 2013, as part of his economic reform, Prime Minister Abe responded to the research that correlated the advancement of women in the workplace with an improvement in both the economy and birth rate by instituting several governmental changes. Only recently have pro-fertility policies looked at gender equality in the workplace.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, the policies address issues in other areas of society and have since been revised to increase the number of nurseries available, provide greater financial support to parents, and improve government-sponsored eldercare programs.

As previously mentioned, women have been historically expected to provide care to their parents, husband, and children. Because of this, state-sponsored care programs for children and elderly are lacking, which is a growing concern as the role of women shifts from the ideal gender model. Due to the lack of nurseries available in urban settings, there is a long waitlist for families who are trying to enroll their children. The result of this waitlist is that mothers often must make the decision to leave their jobs and

⁴⁶ Nakano, "Single Women in Marriage and Employment Markets in Japan," 164.

⁴⁷ Mizuho Aoki, "Diet Passes Bill Aimed at Boosting Women in the Workplace," *Japan Times*, August 28, 2015 (accessed December 23, 2015, <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/08/28/national/politics-diplomacy/diet-passes-bill-aimed-boosting-women-workplace/#.VoQuCFIrdxV>).

stay home to take care of their child until they are accepted to a nursery, though this process can take years due to the long waitlist.

The government has sought to rectify this issue through social reform with the increased production of child care facilities, particularly in urban areas where the demand is higher. The government has attempted to address the public concern for limited daycare facilities, but has been unable to accommodate the demand. Thus, the availability of nurseries continues to influence a couple's decision to have a child.

Another government policy is the *jidō teate*, or Child Allowance System.⁴⁸ The economic cost for raising children is a strong deterrent to having children so it is important to note the government's efforts to combat economic challenges. In the Child Allowance program, families with children younger than three years old receive ¥15,000 each month (about \$133 in 2016). After a child turns three, families receive ¥10,000 (about \$88 in 2016) until the child graduates from junior high school.⁴⁹ Unfortunately, research has found that this support has "little impact on the average family's finances."⁵⁰ Although the Child Allowance System provides some monetary relief for parents, it is not enough to impact the significant cost of childrearing in Japan and continues to be a concern for women in their decision of whether or not to have a child.

Despite their aim at improving the birth rate, previous public policies have had little effect on population growth. Often, they were modelled after policies that were developed and proven effective in other countries. Recent research shows, however, that these policies have not been successful in Japan, implying an alternative cause for the low birth rate rather than poor policy-making.⁵¹ While the improvement of childcare and eldercare services acknowledges and alleviates the caregiving burden placed on women, society has turned to government-funded programs, rather than looking to male relatives to care for their families. The policies may be

⁴⁸ Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, *Policy System of Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare [Fundamental Goals, Grand Measure Goals, and Measure Goals], 2012 – 2016* (2012), 164.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Schoppa, *Race for the Exits*, 179.

⁵¹ Patricia Boling, "Demography, Culture, and Policy: Understanding Japan's Low Fertility," *Population and Development Review* 34 (2008), 320.

ineffective because they seek to reinforce the ideal gender model, and do not address gender inequality in the corporate structure.

Summary

Japan ranks in the bottom quarter of global gender equality reports, signifying systemic gender inequality, especially in politics and business.⁵² Corporate environment idealizes men as employees and women as mothers, evident by the wage discrepancy between men and women, the lack of female representation in higher management positions, and the overall lesser percentage of female participation in the workforce.⁵³ Scholars have also commented on this systemic gender inequality, stating, “Japanese society will be forced to become a friendlier place for women, because of the declining population and the need to increase fertility rates, population, and the workforce.”⁵⁴ Current corporate environment places women in an either-or situation in which they are denied a balance between full-time employment and having a family, significantly influencing their decision of whether or not to have children. Such an environment supports the expectation of women to conform to the ideal gender model, thereby excluding them from the workforce. This suggests that the current corporate environment is based on an outdated structural model and negatively affects the low birth rate.

The Japanese government has responded to public concern for the low birth rate and has intervened through the development of a number of pro-fertility public policies. The development of more childcare and eldercare facilities, increased capacity for existing facilities, and greater economic support for parents have been utilized to encourage couples to have more children. While these policies seek to alleviate the encumbrance of care on women, they fortify the idealized gender role for women by excluding men from such caregiving roles. The government has also been unable to adequately deal with gender inequality in the corporate environment, as well, as stated by Susan Holloway:

⁵² World Economic Forum, “Global Gender Gap Report 2016 – Japan.”

⁵³ Boling, “Demography, Culture, and Policy: Understanding Japan’s Low Fertility,” 316; Schoppa, *Race for the Exits*, 92; Sugimoto, *An Introduction to Japanese Society*, 163; and Hayes, *Introduction to Japanese Politics*, 153.

⁵⁴ Cargill and Sakamoto, *Japan Since 1980*, 259.

The government has had less success, however, in compelling employers to eliminate sexist employment practices that prevent women from staying in the labor force after having a child; nor has there been much progress in creating a culture of work that doesn't preclude the worker's participation in family life.⁵⁵

Most pro-fertility public policies target working mothers and do not focus on single women or men. However, the government has started to draft new policies in the past couple years which aim to encourage male participation in childrearing and limit overtime work.⁵⁶ Perhaps this new direction will yield greater results at improving population growth, considering it makes a stronger effort than previous attempts to foster marriage and father involvement in childrearing. Along with the improved policies, a government campaign showing men as fathers and caregivers in a positive way could help to change gender views such that a caregiving father would be socially acceptable and desirable, especially among companies. This shift from the ideal gender model is the key to improving gender equality and the birth rate.

Conclusion

Aiko's Story

Susan Holloway, a Child Development and Education scholar who researched Japanese mothers, created an imaginary situation to "envision how conditions in contemporary Japanese society affect young women contemplating marriage and family life," which she describes as thus:

An imaginary young college student named Aiko falls into casual conversation with Chihiro, the frustrated mother in our study. When Aiko mentions that she is studying consumer sciences at a nearby university,

⁵⁵ Holloway, *Women and Family in Contemporary Japan*, 5; and R. L. Miller, "The Quiet Revolution: Japanese Women Working around the Law," *Harvard Women's Law Journal* 26 (2003): 163–215.

⁵⁶ Japan Times, "Cabinet Seeks to Raise Percentage of Men Taking Paternity Leave to 80% by 2020," March 20, 2015 (accessed July 27, 2017, <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/03/20/national/cabinet-seeks-to-raise-percentage-of-men-taking-paternity-leave-to-80-by-2020/#.WXpD7-kpC70>).

Chihiro begins to describe her former exciting career as a professional in the field of industrial design. She goes on to chronicle her subsequent departure from the workplace when it became apparent how difficult it would be to manage the job and perform all her household duties with little help from her husband. She describes her persistent sense of failure as a mother, her feeling of estrangement from her husband, and her boredom at her part-time job.⁵⁷

By the end of the conversation, Aiko has decided to “postpone the inevitable choice [between marriage and career] by waiting as long as possible to give in to her boyfriend’s desire to get married.”⁵⁸

The narrative accurately describes the interconnection and impact of the various factors discussed in this article. Although Holloway does not mention the fact that the ideal gender model is reiterated to Aiko through internal, public factors like mass media, the other factors are present in this short story. Internal, individual factors are present in that Aiko now has a personal relationship with the frustrated mother Chihiro, who is unconsciously encouraging Aiko to forgo the ideal gender model. External, economic factors are implied in that Chihiro has taken on a part-time job presumably for the additional income, since it is not for her enjoyment. And finally, external, institutional factors are present in the struggle that Chihiro experienced in trying to balance work and family. This story exemplifies the many influences on a woman’s decision of whether or not to have a child and the systemic nature of Japan’s low birth rate.

There is not any single element responsible for the low birth rate. As seen in Aiko’s story, it is the culmination of Chihiro’s conversation that influences Aiko’s decision to delay marriage, rather than a single detail. Furthermore, increased reinforcement of the ideals does not improve the birth rate, but in fact further alienates women from becoming mothers. Public discourse acknowledges the issue as a national concern in terms of its widespread nature, but ignores the national causes and points the finger at women as the cause. Considering some of the different aspects of Japanese society, it is clear that the low birth rate is an outcome from the systemic problem that occurs when the factors discussed here occur simultaneously in society.

⁵⁷ Holloway, *Women and Family in Contemporary Japan*, 213.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

Internal Factors

Redefining the ideal female gender model in Japan would be no easy task. While the adage “good wife, wise mother” is not so frequently used to describe Japanese women today, the conservative notion lingers.⁵⁹ The remnants of this conservative belief can be seen in the sentiments of some politicians and media figures, who blame women for the population decline and criticize them for not fulfilling the female gender ideal by labeling them “parasite singles,” among other things.⁶⁰

The ideal gender model emphasizes the importance that women should place on being a caregiver, not only to their husbands and children, but parents, as well. Consequently, a woman's personal relationships are a contributing factor in her decision about childbearing that is counteracting the intense pressure to conform to the ideal gender model. The burden of caregiving to husband, parents, in-laws, and potential children that is expected of women is great enough to discourage women from having children, and in some cases from getting married in the first place, as seen in the imaginary scenario with Chihiro and Aiko.⁶¹

As more women choose not to or are unable to fulfill the idealized gender role, women in popular media are being represented in alternative roles at higher rates. More often, female characters are shown as single, in their thirties, and focusing on their careers, as seen in *Last Cinderella*, demonstrating the increasing frequency of these lifestyles. These alternative characters, and the women who lead similar lives in the real world, are still subject to criticism and are encouraged to have children to avoid disapproval from the public.⁶²

External Factors

Women are not always choosing to forgo the idealized gender role of wife and mother, but sometimes have that choice made for them. The hurdles to achieving marriage and motherhood sometimes prove too great to overcome, leading women away from the idealized female gender role, as shown in Aiko's story. Aiko saw the struggles that Chihiro went through in balancing work and family, with Chihiro's career eventually losing out. Rather than blame women for the low birth rate, as some critics do, one

⁵⁹ Shigematsu, *Scream from the Shadows*, 6.

⁶⁰ Goldstein-Gidoni, *Housewives of Japan*, 123.

⁶¹ Boling, “Demography, Culture, and Policy,” 318.

⁶² Goldstein-Gidoni, *Housewives of Japan*, 123.

scholar suggests that “attempts to address the issue of the declining birth rate need to consider a complicated set of issues, some structural and some related to discourses about work and parenting.”⁶³

Economic and institutional influences are among the most reported reasons for later or unrealized marriages and children. While improving the status of both national and personal economies, women who remain in the workforce are the subject of criticism for not having children, despite the conditions that place women in an either-or situation in choosing between work and family.⁶⁴ Conversely, women who leave the workforce to have children are upholding the ideal gender model by becoming mothers but are also aware of the penalty incurred to their personal economy, as seen in Chihiro’s situation from the imaginary scenario. Not only is the direct cost of raising children significant, but the loss of potential income caused when mothers leave the workforce must also be considered. The decision to choose between a personal life and professional pursuits, and the lack of compatibility between the two, contributes to the lack of population growth and has built the fork in the road of women’s lives between the idealized and alternative female gender roles.

Current corporate environment limits a person’s involvement in their family life, driving the division of labor between parents and promoting idealized gender roles for both men and women.⁶⁵ Women are excluded from the labor force and men are excluded from a life with their families, which was also seen in Holloway’s story of the frustrated mother Chihiro. A large portion of Chihiro’s frustration stemmed from this division of labor. If corporate environment reflects the larger condition of women, then addressing gender inequality will aid in equalizing the status of men and women in Japan, both at home and in the office. Tending to this issue will not only allow for a growth in the economy through more active participation by women in the workforce, but also a growth in the population through more active participation of men in childrearing. Although the Japanese government has acknowledged that childbirth is a matter of individual choice, government and corporations have the greatest influence on the lives of the Japanese citizens, and therefore should be the leaders of

⁶³ Holloway, *Women and Family in Contemporary Japan*, 214.

⁶⁴ Kumagai, *Families in Japan*, 144; Kingston, *Contemporary Japan*, 45; and Vogel, *Japan’s New Middle Class*, 271.

⁶⁵ Boling, “Demography, Culture, and Policy,” 316–317.

this change. Hence, this change should not focus on improving the population, but on removing impediments that adversely impact its citizens' lives.

Final Remarks

The dichotomy between the male and female idealized gender roles has long been socially acceptable and is reinforced through corporate environment and social practices. Japan will need to blur the line dividing gender roles in order to boost marriage rates, improve the birth rate, and curb the decline in Japan's total population that is foreseen in the coming decades. The results of the contrasting roles are evident in the fact that "couples are meeting one another at older ages, the length of courtship has lengthened, and the trend of later marriage has further strengthened."⁶⁶ The prevalence of delayed marriage has taken a toll on the national birth rate, and shows that men are having as difficult a time of finding a partner and having children as women.

It is important to view the low birth rate as a systemic issue and as the responsibility of society. If Japan continues to firmly uphold the ideal gender model, the birth rate will not improve, and all the warnings from scholars of economic debt and predictions of population decline will likely come true. The decline in the birth rate should not be the sole responsibility of women, but should be looked at as a national concern with a national solution. Unless Japan can enact a social change that allows more similarities between the roles of men and women, it is unlikely that there will be an improvement to the birth rate. Thus, Japan must bridge the gap between gender ideals and equalize the status of men and women to achieve an improvement in the birth rate. In order to achieve this equilibrium, Japan must institute strong pro-fertility public policies and encourage a change in social mentality that is more accepting of working mothers and caregiving fathers. In time, greater gender equality can be achieved, which will inevitably stabilize the birth rate.

⁶⁶ National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, *Marriage Process and Fertility of Japanese Married Couples*, 2.

EMPLOYMENT CHALLENGES IN JAPAN: AGE AND GENDER DIMENSIONS

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Overview

Japan's two-track employment system finds many individuals working in non-regular employment or for temporary agencies. Most are women and those at the beginning of their careers who have been alienated from traditional employment options. The ageing population combined with low marriage and birth rates further compounds these challenges. Mandatory retirement is also a key issue prohibiting senior workers from employment. This study reviews the most recent, relevant literature, published in both English and Japanese, in order to analyze and interpret the underlying factors behind such challenges. This research also reviews current policies for work and gender equality, considering ongoing structural employment changes in Japan. Issues for youth, seniors, and women in particular are profiled along with ways to improve their employment participation rates. Findings indicate that cultural factors emerge as a major explanation, encompassing stereotypes concerning the traditional role of women in Japanese society and the need for balancing work and family life, in addition to the rice-paper ceiling issues in Japanese companies. Discussion and areas for future research are included.

Changing Labor Markets

In Japan, labor markets are challenging for all individuals who do not fit traditional male salaryman patterns of lifetime employment. With almost zero growth and inflation, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is working to reform the labor market, including equal pay for equal work as well as raising wages for those who lack permanent jobs.¹ For women, the governmental

¹ Henry Hoenig and Mitsuru Obe, "Why Japan's Economy is Laboring: As Abenomics Stalls Prime Minister Abe is Turning His Focus to a Major Economic Drag: Japan's Labor Market," *Wall Street Journal*, April 8, 2016.

policies include increasing female labor force participation and promoting women in leading managerial and executive positions.²

Although the traditional male salaryman pattern of lifetime employment is changing, especially in new companies, the change is slow.³ Some companies protected the permanent salaried employees by increasing the number of non-regular workers they could later dismiss during economic downturns. This second track of employees earns less for the same work, are not represented by unions, and receive little training or opportunities for career advancement.⁴ While some changes are underway to include more diversification of employment, challenges remain.

Those most alienated from the workplace and promotions include women, young people (termed “Freeters” and “Neets”), and older workers who are forced to retire. Freeters are typically in their 20’s and often live with their parents and move from one part-time, low-paying job to another and pay nothing or little to the Japanese pension system. Some work part-time until they find a suitable career job, while some have no other employment choices. Typically, housewives and students are excluded from these underemployed workers. Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) are typically supported by their parents and relatives, may not desire lifetime employment patterns, and may have been classified as “Freeters” when they were working. Researchers note the decline in youth employment in Japan reflects the overall drop in demand for workers that stemmed from past adverse economic conditions in the country.⁵

Older workers, typically over age 65, are often overlooked as resources. There is a call for Japan to raise the age of eligibility for social security benefits or eliminate the mandatory retirement age to provide more employment options for seniors who would like to work.⁶ Yuko Kinoshita

² Jiyeoun Song, “Economic Empowerment of Women as the Third Arrow of Abenomics,” *Journal of International and Area Studies* 22/1 (2015), 116.

³ Leo Lewis, “Curse of the Salaryman,” *The Financial Times*, May 2, 2016.

⁴ Hoenig and Obe, “Why Japan’s Economy is Laboring.”

⁵ Robert L. Clark, Naohiro Ogawa, Makoto Kondo, and Rikiya Matsukura, “Population Decline, Labor Force Stability, and the Future of the Japanese Economy,” *European Journal of Population* 26 (2010): 207–227.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 207–209.

and Kalpana Kochhar⁷ note that life expectancy in Japan is age 84, the highest in the world. As the working age population continues to decline, employing women, young people, and senior workers may be key for the success of the economy. For example, Japanese companies are hiring some seniors and these firms have revised their hiring policies to include flexible scheduling and workplace adaptations for older workers.⁸

Traditional Career Paths

Lifetime employment is the employment pattern that begins when a new college graduate starts at a company on the first of April, obtains education and training from the company, and reaches retirement age within the same company.⁹ This practice assumes a high level of individual employee commitment to the employer and a reciprocal exchange of commitment of the employer organization to the employee. For Japanese companies, long-term employment is more common than for their international counterparts, although the pervasiveness of lifetime employment is often exaggerated.¹⁰

The reality is that lifetime employment arrangements have never extended to all workers. Such practices have been primarily operational within larger companies and are becoming less common. The protracted economic slump in Japan prompted companies to shed the time-honored practices of lifetime employment and seniority-based wages.¹¹ Furthermore, within most organizations where lifetime employment practices are applied, the existence of “implied” security is often limited to the “core” or “regular”

⁷ Yuko Kinoshita and Kalpana Kochhar, “She is the Answer,” *Finance and Development*, March 2016, 17.

⁸ “Japan Hiring More Older Workers,” MRINetwork, April 24, 2015 (accessed July 24, 2017, <http://mrinetwork.com/resources/article-archive/articles/japan-hiring-more-older-workers/>).

⁹ James G. Abegglen, *The Japanese Factory: Aspects of Its Social Organization* (Boston: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1958).

¹⁰ Shiho Futagami, Tomoki Waragai and Thomas Westphal, “*Shukko* in Japanese Companies and Its Economic and Managerial Effects,” *WZB Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung* (1998): 1–22.

¹¹ Kaho Shimizu, “End of Two-Track System No Help to Women,” *The Japan Times*, October 23, 2003.

workforce.¹² The security of the “core” workforce is protected by a buffer of many insecure “non-regular” or “part-time” workers. Non-regular forms of employment, which include temporary employment and jobs offering limited career prospects, are rapidly expanding. Non-regular employment increased from 16.6 percent in 1986 to 37.3 percent in 2017. More importantly, women are disproportionately represented in non-regular employment. These non-regular workers have lower wages, little job security, and limited training opportunities than their regular counterparts, who are typically male. In addition, the non-regular jobs are concentrated in service sectors as well as small to medium-sized businesses.

Two-Track Employment

After the Equal Employment Opportunity Law was enacted in Japan in 1986, many larger Japanese companies introduced two-track employment systems with a fast career path for management and a slow career path for more routine or clerical work. Although the tracks are ostensibly open to both sexes, men have dominated the management career track while women are usually found in the subordinate clerical career path.¹³

The two-track system is a key reason for the wage differential between men and women in Japan and companies have introduced the system to reduce labor costs by effectively keeping wages lower for non-career-track employees.¹⁴ Yet, only 43.3 percent of women are in regular employment, compared with 78.2 percent of regular male employees. Female workers in subordinate career paths lack decent work and wages, vocational training or promotion opportunities; what’s more, the gender segregation and discrimination for female workers starts at the initial hiring. In her survey of wage patterns of Japanese companies that introduced the two-track system, Futagami¹⁵ found that workers at age 25 had little pay differences between the two tracks, but the salary gap widened over time. By age 45, the salaries

¹² Daniel G. Gallagher and Shiho Futagami, “Commitment to Agency, Client, and Work,” Reading, Academy of Management Meeting, San Diego, August 1998, 1–23.

¹³ Shiho Futagami, “Wage Differential between Men and Women” in K. Futagami, ed., *Japanese Compensation, Retirement Money and Pension in the 21st Century* (Tokyo: Chuokeizai-sha, Inc., 2004): 153–167.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 154–155.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

of those on the managerial track were more than twice that of workers on the subordinate, clerical track.¹⁶

Non-Regular Work

Today, many Japanese companies use non-permanent employees including temporary agency workers, contract workers, or part-time workers instead of the permanent clerical track workers to further reduce human resource expenses. The majority of these non-permanent workers are female as well. Thus, the focal point in Japan is shifting from the gap between two tracks (permanent managerial men and permanent clerical women) to the gap between permanent and non-permanent workers and thus increasing gender segregation.

Out of 64.34 million people working in Japan, 54.02 million were employed as regular workers and non-regular workers, while 6.54 million were not employed, including the self-employed and workers in family business, according to the Labour Force Survey by the Statistics Bureau of the Japanese Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. While the rate of regular workers has decreased from 83.4 percent in 1986 to 62.7 percent in 2017, the latest data available, the rate of non-regular workers has increased from 16.6 percent in 1986 to 37.3 in 2017, with a large number of women in this category. Factors influencing the move towards non-regular employment in Japan are mainly those of “global competition, the advancement of technological innovation, changes in the structure of industry, restructuring of firms, and worker, as well as firms, need for flexibility, and so on.”¹⁷

Along with changes in the structure of industry, the structure of employment is also undergoing changes. The proportion of tertiary industries, centered on the service industry, is rising, taking the place of secondary industries associated with manufacturing. Tertiary industries accounted for 72.4 percent of the Japanese workforce in 2014 as noted by the Statistics Bureau of the Japanese Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Shiho Futagami, *Mobility of Human Resources and the New Relationship between an Individual and an Organization* (Tokyo: Taga Publishing Co, 2002), 99; Shiho Futagami, “Non-Standard Employment in Japan: Gender Dimensions,” *International Institute for Labour Studies*, Discussion Paper 200 (2010), 1.

According to the Labour Force Survey by the Statistics Bureau of the Japanese Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, females represent 68.3 percent of non-regular workers and 88.5 percent of part-time workers, while non-regular workers lack job security, vocational training, and livable wages. Meanwhile, the Basic Survey on Human Resource Development by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare in 2016 reports that 37 percent of Japanese companies execute off-site job training and 30.3 percent implement planned on-the-job-training for non-regular workers. Conversely, for regular workers, 74 percent incorporate off-site job training and 59.6 percent implement planned on-the-job-training. Vocational education and training are important to provide workers with opportunities to develop their skills and abilities. Without training benefits, non-standard workers are limited in job mobility.

Non-regular workers are more satisfied with labor conditions (working hours and holidays) than regular workers, while they are less satisfied with job security, wages, fringe benefits, education, and training in addition to human resource development, which are important for job satisfaction.¹⁸ These results point to challenges for non-regular workers in obtaining decent, rewarding work. In fact, the wage differential between regular workers and non-regular workers is significant. As stated in the Basic Survey on Wage Structure in Japan in 2016, the average wage level for non-regular workers is ¥211,800 (\$1,885) per month, 65.8 percent of the wage of regular workers.¹⁹ When workers are 18–19 years old, there is little difference in pay, but the gap widens with age. For workers 50–54 years old, the pay gap is largest at 52.3 percent. The average wage for male non-regular workers is ¥235,400 or 67.4 percent of the wages of male regular workers. The average for female non-regular workers is ¥188,600, which is 72 percent of female regular workers.

Because the majority of the non-regular worker are female, Japan's employment challenge is a gender issue. Similar to other industrialized countries, women in Japan often have part-time and temporary agency jobs, while men hold more of the well-paid, secure jobs: "For women, the outcome of the labor market segmentation is reflected in lower income, limited access

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ "Basic Survey on Wage Structure: Ordinary Workers Data," Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare, Japan (accessed on July 30, 2017, <http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/database/db-l/ordinary.html>).

to qualified jobs and fewer opportunities for vocational training or career development.”²⁰

Temporary Agency Workers

In Japan, the number of temporary agency workers is increasing and estimated to be over 2.63 million; similarly, according to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, the number of registered temporary agency workers has dramatically increased to 1,799,187.²¹ The majority of registered temporary agency workers in Japan are female. Generally, employees are hired by a temporary agency and they work under the direction of a client company. Within this triangular relationship, a temporary agency not only holds the responsibility for the assignment of work to the temporary agency worker, but also controls the extrinsic terms of employment (e.g., wages and benefits), while the client company has a direct influence on the day-to-day work environment and supervision of the worker.²²

Reasons for this growth vary. On the supply side, reasons for becoming a temporary agency worker, based on a survey of female workers²³ are 1) opportunities to be hired in many workplaces, 2) working without feeling the bonds of human relations in one organization, 3) utilizing their professional skills and abilities, 4) flexibility, 5) balancing work and family life, 6) learning and acquiring new skills, 7) earning additional household income, and 8) using temporary agency work as a means to transition toward permanent employment.

On the demand side, reasons for Japanese companies to hire temporary agency workers are 1) to utilize workers' professional skills, 2) to reduce human resources expenses, 3) to obtain human resources with needed skills and talents, 4) to respond to work variations, and 5) to adjust to cyclical changes in the demand for the organization's goods or services. An additional

²⁰ Linda Wirth, *Breaking Through the Glass Ceiling: Women in Management* (Geneva: International Labour Office, 2001), 6.

²¹ “Report on Worker Dispatching Undertakings,” Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Japan (accessed July 24, 2017 <http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/index.html> in 2014).

²² Gallagher and Futagami, “Commitment to Agency, Client, and Work,” 3.

²³ Shiho Futagami, “Organizational Commitment and Work-Related Attitudes of Temporary Agency Workers,” in Kyoichi Futagami, ed., *Strategic Human Resource Development* (Tokyo: Chuokeizai-sha, Inc., 1998): 131–160.

reason why temporary agency work has grown rapidly is deregulation. Since 1999, the utilization of temporary agency work has been applied to almost all occupations.²⁴ Even though they typically have high educational levels, skills, and knowledge, most temporary agency workers are women.

Recently, many Japanese companies increased their utilization of female temporary agency workers as alternatives for the clerical female career paths to reduce human resource expenses. The focal point of the wage gap has just shifted from the gap between two tracks to the gap between regular workers and temporary agency workers. High-skilled female temporary agency workers also feel excluded from the core. Since Japanese companies have traditionally implemented vocational education and in-house training for regular, male workers, the female non-regular workers have little chance to develop their skills or abilities. These gender barriers, then, limit women's options to earn a livable wage.

Women's Unique Employment Challenges

The number of females employed in Japan, which accounted for 35.9 percent of all employed persons in 1985, has gradually increased to 44.3 percent in 2017, according to the Labour Force Survey by the Statistics Bureau of the Japanese Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. In addition, women's educational levels are increasing and the female advancement rate to higher education (including university and junior college) increased from 34.5 percent in 1985 to 57.3 percent in 2017, according to a School Basic Survey 2017 by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan. Yet, the situation for the growing number of female employees is distinctly different from their male counterparts in the Japanese workforce.

Japan's Meiji Constitution viewed people as subjects of the Emperor rather than as citizens of a nation. The Civil Code governing all aspects of society remained in effect until after WWII and emphasized, "a wealthy country and a strong army" supported by "good wives and wise mothers."²⁵ Women were defined solely by their relation to men and were not allowed to participate in politics. From the mid-1970s to the 1990s, according to Mackie,²⁶ feminist groups worked to reform the legal system,

²⁴ Futagami, "Non-Standard Employment in Japan," 11.

²⁵ Vera Mackie, *Feminism in Modern Japan: Citizenship, Embodiment and Sexuality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 32.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 196.

employment practices, and welfare systems. Women's access to education helped to change their views, even though many agree Japan's greatest untapped human resource is highly motivated women wanting to utilize their intellect and creative power and to be recognized for it. Still, the "gender segmentation in the labor market is still deeply affected by the traditional role for women in Japan" and has been slow to change.²⁷ Even the rise in women's entrepreneurship in Japan faces regulative hurdles as well as start-up difficulties. However, research notes that entrepreneurship could be an important way for women to excel in business and avoid traditional labor challenges.²⁸

The deeply rooted social attitude or gender division of labor that men should work to support the family while women should remain at home continues to exist. Mackie²⁹ notes Japanese women have had tenacity, perseverance, and a dogged reluctance to simply exist within the constricting framework of the prevalent "*ryōsai kenbo*" (the "good wife and wise mother") ideology espoused by educators, media, politicians, and the greater Japanese society. These low societal expectations continue to keep Japanese women in traditional roles regardless of their abilities, education, or desires. Further expounding the issue, Lincoln³⁰ notes that care of the elderly is not covered by the national health insurance system and women traditionally assume the care of the elderly, since men are in the workplace and have almost no free time for care-giving. Lack of immigration to Japan means there are no immigrant nurses or care givers available to help. Lincoln³¹ also

²⁷ Futagami and Helms, "Emerging Female Entrepreneurship in Japan: A case study of Digimom Workers," *Thunderbird International Business Review* 51/1 (2009): 73–75; Futagami, "Non-Standard Employment in Japan," 8.

²⁸ Charla Griffy-Brown, "Supporting the Emergence of Women's Entrepreneurship: Regulative, Institutional and Technological Changes in Japan" *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship* 3/1 (2011): 75–78; T. Schweitzer, "Are Women More Entrepreneurial than Men? A New Study Highlights the Similarities and Differences between Male and Female Entrepreneurs," *Inc. Magazine* (2007): 20–23.

²⁹ Mackie, *Feminism in Modern Japan*, 28.

³⁰ Edward J. Lincoln, "Japan's Long-Term Economic Challenges," *Comparative Economic Studies* 53/3 (2011), 461.

³¹ *Ibid.*

points out that while Japanese men are allotted vacation time, few employees take time off, and the average is only seven days of paid vacation per year.³²

Another tradition of Japanese companies is reserving shorter-term work, again mostly clerical tasks combined with serving tea, for women, who are known as “office ladies.” These female employees remain at this level regardless of their qualifications: it is difficult to break into a career track and overcome the long-standing, entrenched gender role biases. Moreover, it is evident that “women are largely excluded from corporate management due to cultural pressures forcing them to quit work once they marry [or have children].”³³

The Abe government has called for expansion of childcare facilities and more benefits to help female workers navigate work-life balance issues for the future.³⁴ Given these societal norms and expectations of women and work, the female labor force ratio in Japan develops in the shape of the letter “M.” The “M curve” shape exists because Japanese women withdraw from the labor market to marry and raise children and this tradition remains. Using the skills of well-educated women is an important goal of Japan’s Prime Minister as a way to revitalize the labor force and his plans call for policies including “expanded parental leave benefits.”³⁵

Managerial Mobility and Board Representation Limited by the Rice-Paper Ceiling

While the ratio of female managers in Japan is gradually increasing, the ratio remained at 11 percent in 2016, compared with 43 percent in the U.S. in 2016, according to the Global Gender Gap Report³⁶ of 2016. With Japan’s aging population and declining workforce, the country must turn to women to close the gaps. Lincoln³⁷ notes the Japanese population has been

³² Scott R. Dixon, “Survey Shows Japanese Workers Least Likely to Take Vacation Time, Most Likely to Hate their Job,” SoraNews 24, December 13, 2013 (accessed July 30, 2017, <http://en.rocketnews24.com/2013/12/13/survey-shows-japanese-workers-least-likely-to-take-vacation-time-most-likely-to-hate-their-job/>).

³³ Futagami, “Non-Standard Employment in Japan,” 8.

³⁴ Song, “Economic Empowerment of Women,” 119.

³⁵ Kinoshita and Kochhar, “She is the Answer,” *Finance and Development*, March 2016, 17.

³⁶ World Economic Forum, *The Global Gender Gap Report 2016*, 29.

³⁷ Lincoln, “Japan’s Long-Term Economic Challenges,” 456.

falling since 2007 and has been reduced by 25 percent in just over 40 years at an unprecedented rate. Projections are that Japan's population of working age will decline by 40 percent by the year 2050.³⁸

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe acknowledged this issue and had made it part of his economic-growth policy referred to as "Abenomics." The Prime Minister established a goal that women would fill 30 percent of all leadership positions in Japan before the calendar year 2020. This is a lofty goal as only one in 10 managers in Japan are women, compared to 43 percent in the U.S. Diversity and more opportunities for women are needed and Abe has increased female representation in his cabinet from 10 percent to 26 percent, although some have questioned the effectiveness of numerical targets. The problem stems from long working hours and demands on female managers to give up employment to have children.³⁹ Because of the declining birthrate, there is also a "shrinking pool of young people" in Japan.⁴⁰ A ranking by the consulting group Grant Thornton found Japan at the bottom of 34 major nations, and with women holding merely 8 percent of leadership roles in Japan compared to the U.S. at 21 percent and Germany at 14 percent.⁴¹

There are also barriers to women in Japanese management since the male-dominated society does not recognize women as equal in the ability to manage others. According to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, the average salary level for women in Japan in 2016 was 73 percent that of men. This is very low, compared with 81.1 percent in the U.S. in 2015, 82.3 percent in Britain in 2015 and 84.5 percent in France in 2014, according to Eurostat 2016. Although some women work in the management track, there are few opportunities for them. In Japanese companies, women account for less than 0.8 percent of CEOs with shares listed on the stock market and represented only 5.74 percent of top executives in 2007, according to research done by

³⁸ Randall S. Jones and Satoshi Urasawa, "Labour Market Reforms in Japan to Improve Growth and Equity," *OECD Economics Department Working Papers* 889, September 2011 (accessed April 25, 2017, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5kg58z6p1v9q-en>).

³⁹ Toko Sekiguchi, "Japan Seeks New Salarywomen," *Wall Street Journal*, September 12, 2014, A9.

⁴⁰ Lincoln, "Japan's Long-Term Economic Challenges," 457.

⁴¹ Eleanor Warnock, "Japan Inc. Hires More Women, But Men Still Hold Top Jobs," *Wall Street Journal*, November 10, 2015.

the Teikoku Databank.⁴² The rate of female board directors is very low in Japan, at 3.3 percent according to the Tokyo Shoko Research done in 2017. According to the Global Gender Gap Report 2016, the Gender Gap Index of Japan ranks 111th out of 144 countries total and 118th in economic participation and opportunity to women, based on the World Economic Forum.⁴³ Gender segregation remains a prominent issue in Japan.

Ultimately, these issues are important for women and the evidence is clear: women at the top bring along other women. The more women who occupy the CEO office, the more there are available to serve in other executive offices. Women who hold executive positions are more likely to be asked to serve on boards of other companies. Studies comparing women and men on their decision making suggest that genders respond to risk differently; and, in most cases, women are found to be more averse to risk than men.⁴⁴ Differences in financial risk-taking are influenced not only by gender but also by age, race, and the number of children a woman has.⁴⁵ This widespread view concerning women's risk aversion in financial decision-making has even been put forward as a major cause of "glass ceilings."⁴⁶ Business leadership and management literature has also depicted women as more ethical than men.⁴⁷ There is widespread agreement in this literature that women are more adept than men in leadership skills and communication, as they also tend to use a more holistic approach to problem solving. In an anthropological study, Fisher⁴⁸ points to biological differences in the way

⁴² Paul Wiseman, "Female CEOs Signal Change at Japan Firms: Country Slowly, Grudgingly Accepts Women's New Roles," *USA Today*, June 8, 2005, 5B.

⁴³ World Economic Forum, The Global Gender Gap Report 2016, 12.

⁴⁴ Catherine C. Eckel and Philip J. Grossman, "Men, Women and Risk Aversion: Experimental Evidence," *Handbook of Experimental Economics Results* 1/113, (2008): 1061–1073.

⁴⁵ Nancy Ammon Jianakoplos and Alexandra Bernasek, "Why Are Women More Risk Averse?" *Economic Inquiry* 36/4 (1998): 620–630.

⁴⁶ Renate Schubert, Martin Brown, Matthias Gysler and Hans Wolfgang Brachinger, "Financial Decision-Making: Are Women Really More Risk-Averse?" *The American Economic Review* 89/2 (1999): 381–385.

⁴⁷ James J. Hoffman, "Are Women Really More Ethical than Men? Maybe It Depends on the Situation," *Journal of Managerial Issues* (1998): 60–73.

⁴⁸ Helen Fisher, "A Century for Women?" *New Scientist* (2003): 53.

men and women think, collect data, and input it into patterns to develop options, evidencing that women are more effective in leadership skills. For example, when women think, they collect more pieces of data; they put data into more complex patterns, see more alternatives, and weigh more variables to make decisions. Women think in webs of factors and not in linear patterns as men do, or in what Fisher calls “web thinking.” Thus, women tend to synthesize, generalize and contextualize. Men, on the other hand, tend to make decisions in a linear pathway and to compartmentalize, get rid of data they regard as extraneous, and to focus only on what they think is important.

Fisher⁴⁹ further reports these differences in decision-making styles manifest themselves within market changes. Women’s web thinking favors long-term planning and the ambiguity of a complex business world. Clearly, the communication skills of women, their team building capacity, and their abilities in handling complex, conflicting information are decision-making skills that benefit the deliberations of higher administration, such as a board of directors. When women “constitute more than half of the population and the consumer base,” as Bratten⁵⁰ points out, it would seem logical and practical to “incorporate a woman’s viewpoint when considering the corporate strategy.”

Chambers⁵¹ agrees that sexism remains fierce in Japan, citing the country’s “rice-paper ceiling” within the Japan’s salary-man-dominated corporate culture. For women rising to Japanese boards, the bamboo ceiling is said to stop their progress, which unlike the “glass ceiling,”⁵² it bends but never breaks to allow entry. Wiseman⁵³ asserts that women who are shut out of opportunities with traditional Japanese companies often seek jobs with

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Clare Bratten, “Boys Club No More,” *Corporate Board Member* (1998): 1–5.

⁵¹ Veronica Chambers, *Kickboxing Geishas: How Modern Japanese Women Are Changing Their Nation* (New York: Simon & Schuster Press, 2007), 119.

⁵² The situation for working women in Japan is an opaque, “rice-paper ceiling” rather than the “glass ceiling” often referred to in the United States. See: Futagami, “Non-Standard Employment in Japan,” 9–10; Futagami, “Working Women in Japan: Future Trends and Possibilities,” Reading, WIN Conference, Tokyo April 2014; Futagami and Helms, “Entrepreneurs: Challenging perceptions,” *Japan Inc.* (2009): 13–15.

⁵³ Wiseman, “Female CEOs Signal Change at Japan Firms,” 5B.

foreign firms based in Japan. He further notes that women have to fight harder than their male peers to be accepted in their positions.

Women in Japan appear to believe more strongly than their male counterparts in the importance of equal distribution and power.⁵⁴ Tipton suggests that inequality and gender discrimination remain pervasive in Japanese society due to the assumptions about the sexual division of labor.⁵⁵ Differentiation by gender, especially in the power-distance dimension, is more pronounced in Japan than in the United States. From their perspective, these women cannot even see top management.

Reversing the Trends

While women rank low in economic participation and opportunity in Japan, the same Global Gender Gap Report indicates the country ranks high in health and survival and in educational attainment.⁵⁶ Lincoln indicates that, “with the rising levels of education [in Japan] over the past century, more women desire to work.”⁵⁷ Data confirms there is also great demand from senior workers for employment. What can leaders do to reverse the negative trends? The focus should be diversity, work-life balance, and decent work. Diversity includes gender, race, culture, ethnicity, abilities, and work experience. It is concerned with understanding that there are differences among employees and that these differences, if properly managed, contribute to the achievement of organizational objectives and can lead to greater performance.⁵⁸ In companies where the ratio of female managers is high, companies have a significantly higher return-on-assets.⁵⁹ Thus, diversity is a good human resource practice for high performance. Senior workers who

⁵⁴ Yvonne E. Stedham and Jeanne H. Yamamura, “Measuring National Culture: Does Gender Matter?” *Women in Management Review* 19/5 (2004): 233–243.

⁵⁵ Elise K. Tipton, “Being Women in Japan, 1970–2000,” in L. Edwards and M. Roces, eds., *Women in Asia: Tradition, Modernity, and Globalization* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2000): 208–228.

⁵⁶ Futagami, “Working Women in Japan.”

⁵⁷ Lincoln, “Japan’s Long-Term Economic Challenges,” 461.

⁵⁸ Futagami, “Working Women in Japan.”

⁵⁹ Bazeet Olayemi Badru, Hauwa Daniyan Bagudu, and Abdulmumini Baba Alfa, “The Vital Role of Gender Diversity on Corporate Outcomes: The Need for Empirical Studies Concerning Frontier Markets,” *Asian Journal of Finance & Accounting* 7/2 (2015), 189.

represent age diversity also can bring a wealth of knowledge to businesses and industries at a time when their productivity and participation is needed.

Work-life balance is an indicator correlated with high corporate performance. In fact, the Total Factor Productivity of Japanese companies introducing childcare leave is significantly higher than those not including the benefit.⁶⁰ It appears that work-life balance is a good human resource management policy. Hence, the “Law Concerning the Welfare of Workers Who Take Care of Children or Other Family Members Including Child Care and Family Care Leave” came into effect in 1995. According to this law, workers are entitled to a one-year leave of absence from their company for childcare and the majority of individuals who have applied for leave are female. Female workers returning to the workplace after a year of childcare leave find it difficult due to the lack of support systems for balancing work and family, including job retraining and day care centers at the workplace.

Even though Japanese women may want to work, to balance their family duties, they are obliged to be non-regular employees, working part-time or as temporary agency workers: “Part-time work for women is often triggered by motherhood, while for men it occurs more often in conjunction with the labor market entry or exit.”⁶¹ Equal pay, opportunities for training, and benefits are needed for part-time workers to encourage more women, young people, and seniors to participate in the labor market.

The primary goal of the International Labour Organization is “to promote opportunities for women and men to obtain productive work, in conditions of freedom, equality, security and human dignity.”⁶² According to Dharam Ghau, the four key components of this decent work are workplace rights, employment, social security and social dialogue⁶³ that all individuals should share. Establishing that “[e]mployment is a vital component of decent work,”⁶⁴ he refers not only to wage jobs but also to self-employment and

⁶⁰ Futagami, “Working Women in Japan.”

⁶¹ Wirth, *Breaking Through the Glass Ceiling*, 6.

⁶² Quoted in Dharam Ghai, “Decent Work: Concept and Indicators,” *International Labour Review* 142/2 (2003), 113.

⁶³ Dharam Ghai, “Decent Work: Concepts, Models and Indicators,” *International Institute for Labour Studies*, Discussion Paper 139 (2002), 1; Futagami, “Non-Standard Employment in Japan,” 6.

⁶⁴ Dharam Ghai, “Decent Work: Universality and Diversity,” *International Institute for Labour Studies*, Discussion Paper 159 (2005), 6.

telecommuting. This must also include full-time, part-time and casual employment, and jobs done by women, men and young people.⁶⁵ For decent work to be obtained, certain conditions must be satisfied. Additionally, there should be “adequate employment opportunities for all those who seek work”⁶⁶ in order to yield a remuneration or livable wage that meets the essential needs of the worker and family members.

Conclusions and Areas for Future Research

One possible solution to employment challenges in Japan is encouraging employers to prepare and facilitate the transition of career paths from temporary agency work into permanent work and to establish clear job paths for women and seniors. Employers can continue to benefit from these employees and their knowledge of the organization while creating more flexible schedules and adding needed assistance programs. Researchers note that knowledge management provides important frameworks to manage the intellectual capital of employees as a valuable organizational and strategic resource.⁶⁷ This is a key improvement needed to provide female temporary agency workers with career opportunities and options. Another way to solve these situations, at the same time, is the equal treatment between temporary agency workers and permanent workers, especially in terms of vocational training. It is vital for Japanese companies and the government, as well as communities, to collaborate to educate and train not only regular workers but also non-regular workers as professionals to improve their skills and abilities, because many highly educated and skilled individuals are forced into non-regular employment.

Future research should follow women’s and senior’s career progress in longitudinal studies to show changes. In addition, case studies of women who have successfully moved up the corporate structure to assume careers in top management or positions on boards are needed to serve as a guide and model to others aspiring to top-level careers in Japan. Reviews of policies

⁶⁵ Dharam Ghai, ed., *Decent Work: Objectives and Strategies* (Geneva: International Labour Office, 2006), 10.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Wen Jang Kenny Jih, Marilyn M. Helms and Donna T. Mayo, “Knowledge Management and Electronic Commerce Supporting Strategic Decisions: The Case of Taiwan,” in M. G. Hunter and F. B. Tan, eds., *Strategic Use of Information Technology for Global Organizations* (New York: IGI Publishing, 2007), 326.

and changes in Japan are also needed to determine which governmental interventions are helping reverse the situation for women, particularly in part-time and non-regular employment positions.

Additional research should follow the result of removing financial disincentives to work as well as the creation of family-friendly work places and childcare resources over time. Further studying of the performance and productivity of Japanese companies who have retained part-time workers and their knowledge management is desirable. Studies should also follow young and senior workers and their move to continuous employment in order to document the benefits these non-traditional employees bring to the overall workplace.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Author's Note: We wish to acknowledge Mr. Raymond Torres, Director, International Institute for Labour Studies (IILS) of the International Labour Organization (ILO), Mr. Steven Tobin, Head of Education Programme, International Institute for Labour Studies (IILS), and Mr. Toshio Suzuki, Executive Advisor of Nippon Keidanren International Cooperation Center (NICC), and Employer Member of the ILO Governing Body. A larger study from which this article was developed was subsidized by the Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science.

**GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION VERSUS
THE MARKET SYSTEM:
THE UNITED STATES-JAPAN AUTOMOBILE
TRADE CRISIS OF THE 1980s REVISITED**

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Introduction and Background

On December 19, 2008, the American government under the Bush administration, agreed to extend financial assistance to the automobile industry. This was the culmination of months of deliberation in the Congress about the future of the business. In spite of the serious implications of refusing to assist the industry, the mood among the American public was not favorable toward a government bailout. Government financial assistance to the “Big 3,” as the three major American automobile companies are called, was in the form of federal loans of \$9.4 billion to General Motors (GM) and \$4 billion to Chrysler. In addition, GM received a Treasury Department loan of \$6 billion, and Ford was granted a line of credit of \$9 billion.¹ Only two months earlier, in October 2008, the United States government had provided assistance to the banking industry in the amount of \$700 billion under the Troubled Assets Relief Program (TARP). The TARP funds, initially identified for the financial sector, were used for the auto-industry bailout. The restructuring of the industry, which began with President Bush, would continue in 2009 under newly elected President Obama. The bailout action, although patently antithetical to the *laissez faire* tenets of capitalism, was embraced by the highly capitalistic financial and automobile industries.

However, the United States government assistance to the automobile industry in 2008 was by no means a new phenomenon. In the mid-1970s, the first major increases in the price of oil – which were implemented by OPEC (Organization of Oil Exporting Countries) – resulted in an economic downturn that affected the global economy. The resulting decrease in consumer demand for goods and services was manifested

¹ Jennifer Chamberlain, “The Big Three: Bailout or Bankruptcy?” *Illinois Business Law Journal*, March 7, 2009 (accessed July 18, 2017 <https://publish.illinois.edu/illinoisblj/2009/03/07/the-big-three-bailout-or-bankruptcy>).

worldwide. The global automobile industry was particularly vulnerable because of the additional factor of increased gasoline prices. In the United States and worldwide, consumer preference for Japanese automobile imports increased due to the fuel-efficiency of Japanese manufactures. The combination of recession and lower demand for American-manufactured automobiles translated into lower sales and profits for the domestic industry. The resulting trade imbalance ignited conflict between the two countries. With Japan experiencing a favorable balance of trade with the United States, both governments intervened in their respective automobile industry. For Japan, government intervention fell under the country's explicit industrial policies that dictated support for industry in the form of trade protection, allocations of foreign exchange, research and development subsidies, loans at below-market interest rates and favorable tax treatment.² The United States government, on the other hand, took a more subtle approach, cloaking its intervention under the free trade doctrine implicit in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). In 1981, after discussions between the American government and Japanese automobile industry representatives, the latter agreed to voluntarily reduce the number of automobiles they exported to the United States. This agreement was made under the Voluntary Export Restraint (VER) program, which, despite being contradictory to the principle of free trade, was considered a legitimate trade policy within GATT.

This study uses a rent-seeking framework to analyze the United States-Japan automobile trade conflict of the 1980s. The central theme of the paper is that decisions made by the governments of the United States and Japan led to the creation of rent-seeking opportunities in their respective automobile industries. In the United States, government intervention created competition between that industry and consumers for the ensuing rents; whereas in Japan, the automobile industry was set to be the sole beneficiary of the rents. The article is organized as follows: the first section traces the development of rent-seeking theory. The form and substance of intervention by the United States and Japanese governments in their respective automobile sector is addressed in the two sections that follow. The overall impact of the voluntary export restraint on economic players in both countries is then analyzed. In the last two sections, liberalization and government intervention are discussed.

² Robert J. Carbaugh, *International Economics* (Cincinnati, OH: South-Western College Publishing, 2000), 217.

The Theory of Rent-Seeking

The sustaining factor of the market system is the price mechanism which works to efficiently allocate resources. It is the function of price to coordinate the wants of individuals, rising when goods are scarce, and falling when there is a surplus. The market lies at the core of the capitalist economic system in which the means of production are owned by a small group of individuals, and government intervention is *verboden*. Realistically, at times, the market does fail to perform its allocative function, and it becomes necessary for government to intervene to address this failure. Such government intervention includes restrictions on economic activity, ranging across the spectrum from protection against imports to the promotion of monopoly power.

In a 1954 article, Arnold C. Harberger presented an empirical model to measure the welfare loss to society due to monopoly power. Using a graph of the market system, he calculated these costs as a triangle contiguous to the market demand and supply curves, and aptly named it “Harberger triangle.”³ Gordon Tullock⁴ used the Harberger triangle as the basis for calculating costs to society due to tariffs and monopoly, concluding that the losses to society were greater than those falling within the Harberger triangle. He identified these additional costs as the resources necessary to sustain monopoly power or a tariff. In 1974, Anne O. Kreuger⁵ investigated the effects of quantitative restrictions on imports imposed by the governments of India and Turkey. She pointed out that these government restrictions created competition for import licenses, and consequently increased total welfare costs. These higher welfare costs, Kreuger found, were because of the combined value of the tariffs and what she termed “rents.” Kreuger ascribed the term rents to the benefits to some economic agents from government regulation, and “rent-seeking” to describe the competition among economic agents for these benefits. While credit must be given to Kreuger for coining this term rent-seeking in her 1974 article, Tullock had applied the very theory seven years earlier.

³ Arnold C. Harberger “Monopoly and Resource Allocation,” *American Economic Review* 44/2 (1954): 77–87.

⁴ Gordon Tullock, “The Welfare Costs of Tariffs, Monopolies and Theft,” *Western Economic Journal* 5/3 (1967): 224–232.

⁵ Anne O. Kreuger, “The Political Economy of the Rent-Seeking Society,” *The American Economic Review* 64/3 (1974): 291–303.

An extensive literature has developed on rent-seeking since the origination of the term. Bhagwati,⁶ Appelbaum and Katz,⁷ and Wenders⁸ are among those who have researched and written extensively on this subject. The theory has since been broadened and applied to other situations besides trade protection and monopoly. For example, Boyce⁹ investigated rent seeking in the allocation of natural resource quotas, while Bishop and Liu¹⁰ applied it to the liberalization in China's labor markets. In the interim, rent-seeking has also undergone definitional changes overtime. Since its inception, rent-seeking has been variously defined as: the resource-wasting activities of individuals seeking transfers of wealth through the aegis of the state; the behavior in institutional settings where individual efforts to maximize value generate social waste rather than social surplus; the pursuit of profits via the use of government coercion; and the expenditure of scarce resources to capture an artificially created transfer.¹¹ In spite of the many definitions of the term, the core argument sustains – rent-seeking activity results from government intervention in the economy, and though some of the players may benefit from such activities, government intervention in the economy leads to inefficiency.

United States Government Intervention

Until the creation of the World Trade Organization (WTO), GATT was the body that oversaw world trade since the United Nations created a new international monetary system in the post-World War II era. In 1944, representatives from United Nations met at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, and established the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as well as the

⁶ J. N. Bhagwati, "Directly Unproductive, Profit-seeking (DUP) Activities," *Journal of Political Economy* 90 (1982): 988–1002.

⁷ Elie Appelbaum and Eliakim Katz, "Transfer Seeking and Avoidance: On the Full Social Costs of Rent Seeking," *Public Choice* 48/2 (1986): 175–181.

⁸ J. T. Wenders, "On Perfect Rent Dissipation," *American Economic Review* 77 (1987): 456–459.

⁹ John R. Boyce, "Rent-Seeking in Natural Resource Allocations," *Public Choice* 96 3/4 (1998): 271–294.

¹⁰ John A. Bishop and Haiyong Liu, "Liberalization and Rent-Seeking in China's Labor Market," *Public Choice* 135 3/4 (2008): 151–164.

¹¹ Steven G. Medema, "Another Look at the Problem of Rent Seeking," *Journal of Economic Issues* 25/4 (1991): 1049–1065.

International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), commonly known as the World Bank. The GATT was signed in 1947, with the initial intention of extending the agreement to create a new entity by 1948, to be named the International Trade Organization (ITO). This new body would join the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund as the third Bretton Woods organization. However, this plan did not materialize. Instead, on January 1, 1995, GATT was replaced by the WTO rather than the planned ITO. From its creation in 1947 to its dissolution at the end of 1994, GATT promoted liberal trading principles among member countries. The GATT functioned through a series of meetings known as 'rounds,' at which member countries negotiated and came to agreement on trade concessions. Among the consensuses achieved by GATT were tariff reductions, anti-dumping legislation, and removal of barriers to trade.

The decision of the United States government to encourage the use of voluntary export restraint (VER) as a trade strategy began with the Truman administration in 1952, and continued through the Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon administrations. To the United States, the VER was a preferred strategy to the outright imposition of quotas on imports. United States preference for the VER lay in the fact that, although export restraints were contrary to Articles XI and XIII of GATT that prohibited quotas against exports and imports, the VER was self-imposed by the exporting country. It was also bilateral, existing only between the two trading partners. Thus, while the real purpose of the VER was to reduce imports, only the exporting country could implement it, and implementation was on a voluntary basis.¹²

Nominally, the use of the VER was inconsistent with the United States Most Favored Nation (MFN) policy. This trade policy stipulated nondiscrimination in the application of tariff and trade concessions to all other GATT signatories. However, the VER worked in favor of the United States, compared to quotas on foreign goods. In urging exporting countries to use the VER, the United States could maintain its adherence to free trade, while at the same time implementing protectionist policies to reduce imports from other countries. Further, because the VER was voluntary and bilateral, the United States was protected from having quotas imposed on its exports by countries not party to it. Superficially, the VER was a strategy that was

¹² William McClenahan, "The Growth of Voluntary Export Restraints and American Foreign Economic Policy, 1956–1969," *Business and Economic History* 20 (1991): 180–190.

self-imposed by Japan. In fact, its use was encouraged by the United States government, rendering its implementation contradictory to the free-trade principles of capitalism.

Japanese Government Intervention

The post-World War II era was a period of expansion for the Japanese economy. Japan moved from exporting textiles in the 1950s to being an exporter of major goods such as automobiles, steel, and ships two decades later. In the late-1980s, Japan experienced a rapid increase in asset prices. This period is referred to as the bubble era,¹³ and is determined to have been prompted by the sharp appreciation of the Japanese yen, the elevation of stock prices above their real values, and three decades of sustained economic growth that gave Japanese automobile assemblers an advantage over their foreign competitors.

Several factors contributed to the emergence of the Japanese bubble. First, the yen doubled in value against the U.S. dollar, from 1985 to 1993. In 1985, one U.S. dollar was valued at 250 yen; by April 1993, one U.S. dollar exchanged for 113 yen. In effect, Japanese interest rates declined to historically low levels. In 1987, the official Japanese discount rate on bank borrowing was at 2.5 percent, half of what it was in 1985. The combination of currency appreciation and low interest rates translated into high consumption and investment in the Japanese economy.

Second, with easy access to money and increasing asset prices, firms were reluctant to borrow from banks. As asset prices rose, their increase reinforced the value of hidden assets on corporate balance sheets, which elevated stock prices beyond their real value. Corporations shifted their financing from debt to equity by issuing convertible and warrant bonds. Banks shifted their focus from relationship lending to speculating in real estate and the stock market.

Finally, as mentioned earlier, thirty years of sustained economic growth had given the Japanese automobile assemblers a significant advantage over their international competitors. The bubble burst in December 1989 after several increases in the official discount rate in the preceding period by the Bank of Japan. The Japanese stock market crashed

¹³ Chris Lin, *The Japanese Automotive Industry: Recent Developments and Future Competitive Outlook* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Office for the Study of Automotive Transportation, University of Michigan, May 1994), 38.

in early 1990, and by the spring of 1992, the Nikkei index was at 16,500 after falling from a high of 38,000 in the previous two years.¹⁴

The 1980s Japanese bubble was a contributing factor, but the Japanese economic model was also critical to the success of the economy. Inherent in the model was an industrial policy that consisted of government control of the economy.¹⁵ The Japanese Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) was instrumental in implementing the country's industrial policy. Its strategies, *inter alia*, consisted of trade protection measures, support to companies in the form of allocations of foreign exchange, research and development subsidies, loans at below-market interest rates, loans that were repaid only if the firm became profitable, favorable tax treatment, and joint government-industry research projects intended to develop promising technologies. The Japanese automobile industry benefitted from the industrial policy, and became the leading global exporter. The intervention of the Japanese government in the economy was within the framework of the East Asian Model, a phenomenon that had ultimately led to the rapid growth of East Asian economies in the post-World War II period. Perhaps, the last word on the intervention of the Japanese government in the economy should be left to the Governor of the Bank of Japan, Yasushi Mieno, who made the following statement at the annual meeting of the World Bank in October 1991:

Experience in Asia has shown that although development strategies require a healthy respect for market mechanisms, the role of government cannot be forgotten. I would like to see the World Bank and the IMF take the lead in a wide-ranging study that would define the theoretical underpinnings of this approach and clarify the areas in which it can be successfully applied to other parts of the globe.¹⁶

¹⁴ Ibid., 39.

¹⁵ Carbaugh, *International Economics*, 216.

¹⁶ Yasushi Mieno, Reading, World Bank Annual Meeting, *World Bank Press Release* 16, Bangkok, October 1991; cited in C. Johnson, "Comparative Capitalism: The Japanese Difference." *California Management Review* (1993), 51.

The VER in Perspective

Japan was accepted into GATT in 1955, in spite of global resentment due to its role as aggressor in World War II. This was also the period in which the United States government began its use of VERs as a trade strategy. The initial United States-Japan VER was the restriction on Japan's exports of tuna. With Japan's membership in GATT and its rise as a competitive exporter, the United States government continued to promote VERs on Japanese exports of velveteen (1956), cotton textiles (1957), and sewing machines together with a range of other goods (1958). By 1960, under United States trade policy, there were more than 30 products on its Japanese VER list. In 1969, the United States placed Japanese steel on the VER list, while wool, electronic articles and textiles, and a number of other products made the list in 1970.¹⁷

In October 1973, OPEC implemented the first global increase in the price of oil. This resulted in a global recession, which was further intensified by a greater oil price increase in 1979. The United States, along with the Netherlands, suffered the additional blow of an embargo on oil shipments by the OPEC countries because of their apparent support of Israel. The recession and the increase in the price of gasoline led to a decline in the demand for automobiles worldwide. In the United States, the domestic automobile industry experienced a reduction in sales and profits. At the same time, American consumers were increasing their demand for Japanese automobiles, which were of higher fuel efficiency than those manufactured by American companies. By 1981, the Japanese share of the United States automobile market was 22 percent. In the same year, Chrysler had to be saved from bankruptcy by a subsidized United States government loan.¹⁸

The American automobile industry lobby called upon the government for protection from Japanese imports. After discussions with U.S. trade representatives, the Japanese announced its decision to implement the VER in May 1981. Under the terms of agreement, Japanese automobile manufacturers would limit exports of automobiles to the United States until 1994. Berry et al¹⁹ report that the reduction in Japanese imports due to the

¹⁷ McClenahan, "The Growth of Voluntary Export Restraints," 180–190.

¹⁸ Steven Berry, James Levinsohn, and Ariel Pakes. "Voluntary Export Restraints on Automobiles: Evaluating a Trade Policy." *American Economic Review* 89/3 (1999): 400–430.

¹⁹ Ibid.

VER led to an increase in the price of Japanese automobiles. Sales and prices of American cars also increased, as did the profits of their manufacturers.

The Japanese factories did not suffer from the VER. The United States restriction on Japanese exports by way of the VER was on the number of vehicles, not the dollar value of trade. The VER also covered automobiles imported directly from Japan, not those assembled in the United States by Japanese companies. The Japanese manufacturers were able to circumvent the VER by shipping unassembled cars to Taiwan and South Korea for assembly and subsequent shipping to the United States. They also upgraded the quality of their products by introducing new luxury cars such as the Lexus, Acura, and Infiniti, developed by Toyota, Honda and Nissan. The higher prices of these new models reduced the negative effects of the VER, as higher revenues and profits were guaranteed for a lower number of units. However, the most effective strategy used by the Japanese manufacturers was direct investment in automobile plants in the United States. Honda was the first to establish an automobile factory when it opened its plant in Marysville, Ohio, in 1982. By 1990, Nissan, Toyota, Mazda, and Mitsubishi were all manufacturing automobiles in the United States.²⁰

The Impact of the VER – Winners and Losers

In the early years, 1981 to 1983, the VER had no impact on the American economy due to the recession. In this period, the United States economy was beset with high interest rates, high unemployment, and low demand for automobiles. The VER had a slight impact in 1984 and 1985, but its effects were felt mainly between 1986 and 1990. This latter period was one of recovery for the U.S. economy. Low interest rates and low gasoline prices led to an increase in the demand for new automobiles. The results of research by Berry et al²¹ are that in the period of 1986 to 1990, the price of Japanese cars increased by 14 percent while that of American manufactures increased by 1 percent. The researchers also report that the dollar value of increased profits of United States automobile makers was \$2 billion (approximately 8 percent) per year between 1986 and 1990.

²⁰ David Benjamin, "Voluntary Export Restraints on Automobiles," *PERC Reports* 17/3 (1999) (accessed May 7, 2017, <https://www.perc.org/articles/voluntary-export-restraints-automobiles>).

²¹ Berry, Levinson, and Pakes, "Evaluating a Trade Policy," 400–430.

In addition, John C. Ries²² used stock price movements of seven Japanese automakers and sixty-nine of their suppliers to study the effects of the VER on Japanese automakers. He concluded that the VER increased profits of producers of passenger cars, as well as large suppliers and producers of specialized parts and services. Ries also concluded that the profits were the result of restrictions on the number of automobiles the Japanese could export rather than on the dollar value of trade.

If the winners under the VER were the American and Japanese automobile manufacturers, then who were the losers? According to Berry et al, the price increases on domestic and Japanese automobiles equated to a loss to American consumers of \$13 billion over the period of the VER, 1981 to 1994. The welfare loss to the United States economy totaled \$3 billion.²³ Ries concluded that while Japanese manufacturers benefited, suppliers did not share in the windfall, as the effect of VER on the profits of auto suppliers depended on the price of parts.²⁴

In 1985, the United States International Trade Commission published its report on the assessment of the American automobile industry.²⁵ The project entailed the quantification of the effects of the VER on the automobile industry, and on United States employment and consumers. The VER came into effect in 1981, but the report covered the period 1979 to 1984. Inclusion of the pre-VER years allowed for comparison with the earlier years of the VER, 1981 to 1984. Compared with the pre-VER years, the report concludes that during the period of the VER, prices of both domestic and Japanese automobiles increased, thus raising the cost to American consumers. Profits to domestic producers and the number of jobs in the automobile industry also increased. Data from the International Trade Commission report are replicated in Table 1 below.

²² John C. Ries, "Windfall Profits and Vertical Relationships: Who Gained in the Japanese Auto Industry from VERs?" *The Journal of Industrial Economics* 41/3 (1993): 259–276.

²³ Berry, Levinson, Pakes, "Evaluating a Trade Policy," 400–430.

²⁴ Ries, "Windfall Profits and Vertical Relationships," 259–276.

²⁵ United States International Trade Commission, *A Review of Recent Developments in the U.S. Automobile Industry Including an Assessment of the Japanese Voluntary Restraint Agreements* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1985).

Table 1. United States Automobile Industry (1979 to 1984)²⁶

Item	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
Auto Production (thousands of units)	8,413	6,377	6,253	5,072	5,980	7,400
Imports of Japanese Automobiles (thousands of units)	1,617	1,992	1,911	1,801	1,871	1,970
Avg. Price of Domestic Automobiles Sold in US, 1981-1984 (US dollars/unit)	-	-	8,929	9,889	10,505	10,998
Avg. Price of Japanese Automobiles Sold in US, 1980-1984 (US dollars/unit)	-	6,709	7,292	7,539	8,317	9,300
Increase in Avg. Price of Japanese Automobiles in US from VER, 1981-1984 (US dollars/unit)	-	-	78	170	426	659
Net US Auto Industry Sales* (millions of US dollars)	88,413	72,100	80,734	79,495	108,003	131,000**
Net US Auto Industry Profit or (Loss)* (millions of US dollars)	(400)	(4,667)	(2,296)	(553)	5,330	10,400**
Employment in US Auto Industry (number of employees)	929,214	740,191	723,946	622,885	656,970	720,448**
Additional US Auto Industry Jobs from VER, 1981-1984 (number of jobs)	-	-	5,400	9,100	25,600	44,100

*Total for six domestic producers of automobiles in the United States.

**Data are for January to June 1984.

Government Intervention Versus Liberalization – An Observation

In the market system, there is a sense of inevitability that the government will intervene in the economy. As Medema posits, “the issue is not more versus less government (or big versus small government), but rather to whose interests government gives effect.”²⁷ This perspective is evident in the actions of both the Japanese and American governments with respect to the trade conflict that beset the automobile industry in the 1980s. While in Japan various factors such as the reaffirmation of ancient Confucian values, self-sacrifice, and educational reform have been cited as being responsible

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Medema, “Another Look at the Problem of Rent Seeking,” 1050.

for the growth of the economy in the post-World War II period, a major factor has been intervention in the economy by the Japanese government by way of its industrial policy. In the United States, intervention in the economy has been mainly through fiscal, monetary, and trade policies.

Much has been written about the economic successes and failures of East Asian countries, including Japan and the Asian Tigers (Singapore, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Taiwan) through application of the East Asian model, which sanctioned government intervention in the economy. At the urging of the Japanese government, the World Bank economists conducted research and prepared a report on the East Asian model. The report was published in book form and titled, *The East Asian Miracle*.²⁸ The conclusions made in this document were disappointing to the Japanese government, as they undermined the idea of an East Asian Model and negated the belief that government intervention had contributed to the success of the East Asian economies. The World Bank, in fact, asserted that the growth of the Japanese economy (and the economies of East Asia) was not because of government intervention, but rather, had been the result of western liberalization policies such as fiscal and market discipline. The typical western view was thus perpetrated, which, in effect, supported the Washington Consensus that advocated globalization and free trade. As if to confirm the World Bank's conclusion, the East Asian economies were devastated by the financial crisis of the 1990s.

In spite of the World Bank view, voices were raised against the rigidity of the Washington Consensus and in support of government intervention in the economy. Joseph Stiglitz argues that the policies of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) contributed to bringing about the East Asian financial crisis, as well as the Argentine economic crisis.²⁹ In addition, he criticizes the policies of the World Bank, the IMF and the World Trade Organization (WTO), which he claims are based on neoliberal assumptions that are fundamentally unsound. In Stiglitz' own words:

Behind the free market ideology there is a model, often attributed to Adam Smith, which argues that market

²⁸ World Bank, *The East Asian Miracle: Economic Growth and Public Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 259–368.

²⁹ Joseph Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2003).

forces—the profit motive—drive the economy to efficient outcomes as if by an invisible hand... Smith's conclusion is correct. It turns out that these conditions are highly restrictive. Indeed, more recent advances in economic theory—ironically occurring precisely during the period of the most relentless pursuit of the Washington Consensus policies—have shown that whenever information is imperfect and markets incomplete... then the invisible hand works most imperfectly. Significantly, there are desirable government interventions which, in principle, can improve upon the efficiency of the market. These restrictions on the conditions under which markets result in efficiency are important... If competition were automatically perfect, there would be no role for antitrust authorities.³⁰

Therefore, the view of the neoclassical public choice school is that government intervention in the economy creates rents, economic actors expend resources in the pursuit of these rents, and that such expenditures are wasted from society's perspective. Thus, Stiglitz' observations are in direct contrast with the neoclassical position that strictly prohibits government intervention in the economy.

Summary and Conclusions

This study set out to analyze rent-seeking arising from government intervention in the economy to address the United States-Japan automobile trade conflict of the 1980s. Both governments intervened in an effort to assist their respective automobile sectors. The American government subtly applied pressure on Japanese automobile manufacturers to implement voluntary export restraints (VERs) and reduce their exports to the United States. Under the industrial policy of the Japanese government, the automobile industry benefitted from special treatment that included subsidies, loans and tax concessions.

In the end, the automobile manufacturers in both countries earned high profits from increased prices of their products, while United States consumers paid higher prices for both domestic and Japanese automobiles.

³⁰ Ibid, 73.

American consumers were also denied the right to choose the type of vehicle they preferred to purchase. The American economy experienced a welfare loss, but there was a subsequent increase in the number of jobs in the automobile industry because the Japanese established new factories in the United States. However, whether through the VERs or industrial policy, both the American and Japanese governments intervened in the economy, stifling competition and consequently, manipulating the functioning of the price mechanism that is at the core of the market system. The result was the creation of rents, and competition among economic players for these rents. The automobile industries of both countries were the winners gaining profits in the process, as was the American economy, due to the increase in automobile industry jobs. As expected, when rents are present, there must be losers, and this fell on the American consumers through higher prices for automobiles. Yet, three decades after the Japanese VER was implemented, government intervention again became necessary for the continued survival of the American automobile industry.

SPECIAL SECTION

Bibliographical Essay

**OUTSIDE OF A SMALL CIRCLE:
SŌTŌ ZEN COMMENTARIES ON DŌGEN’S *SHŌBŌGENZŌ*
and the Formation of the 95-Fascicle Honzan (Main Temple) Edition**

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Florida International University*

“Sutras and Sastras have teachers; so do the Raised Fist
and Eyeball.” – Dōgen, “Kankin” fascicle (paraphrase)

On the Construction and Deconstruction of the Honzan Edition

The primary aim of this work-in-progress, bibliographical essay is to informally introduce and examine some materials and observations regarding the extent and content of voluminous, multifaceted traditional (especially from Edo period, with some modern examples) commentaries on the masterwork of Eihei Dōgen 永平道元 (1200–1253), founder of the Sōtō Zen sect. This is done to show how the diverse set of works helped shape the formation of the most famous version of the treatise known as the *Shōbōgenzō* 正法眼藏 (*Treasury of the True Dharma Eye*), even though it is not favored by most scholars in Japan today. That version is known as the Honzan (Main Temple of Eihei-ji) edition that includes 95 fascicles (non-sequential chapters), and forms the basis for major complete translations into English, including those by Kosen Nishiyama and John Stevens, Hubert Nearman, Gudo Nishijima and Chodo Cross, and Kazuaki Tanahashi with a team of collaborators (who make numerous changes). A notable exception is the forthcoming Stanford Soto Zen Translation Project based on the 75-fascicle edition plus the 12-fascicle edition, with an additional 16 fascicles.

A careful analysis of the history of traditional commentaries reveals that the first compiler of 95 fascicles, Hanjō Kozen, 35th abbot of Eihei-ji, did not initiate this edition until around 1690, nearly 450 years after Dōgen died. Other editions consisting of 75, 60, 12, or 28 fascicles were already well known and discussed in Sōtō circles continually since the Kamakura period; the first three groupings were organized and debated by Dōgen himself, who first referred to his collection of sermons in 1245 as “*Shōbōgenzō*,” a title he used for two other works. In addition, later versions with 83, 84, and 89 fascicles were available. According to a postscript by his disciple Ejō, Dōgen’s unrealized aim was to complete 100 fascicles. Several alternative editions to Kozen’s effort, which aimed to be

a complete compilation in chronological order of all the works Dōgen authored in Japanese vernacular (*kana*), rather than Sino-Japanese (*kanbun*), were proposed during the eighteenth century. Then, a revised version of the 95-fascicle edition that was still incomplete (missing five fascicles) was published over the course of twenty years beginning in 1796, as part of the 550th anniversary memorial of the master's death. Gentō Sakuchū, a charismatic teacher who led reform and artistic movements while serving as the 50th abbot of Eiheiji temple, oversaw this publication. A modern typeset edition of the 95 fascicles did not appear before 1906. Since the 1970s, this version of the text has been for the most part rejected by mainstream Japanese scholarship, especially at Komazawa University, in favor of a version that combines older groupings, especially the 75- and 12-fascicle editions with miscellaneous fascicles also included.

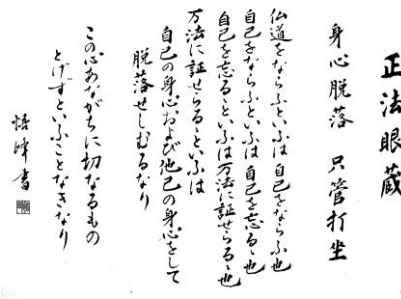


Figure 1. Cover of Honzan Ed. Figure 2. Calligraphy of “Genjōkōan”

An introduction to an excellent English translation notes, “Until it was first published in 1811, *Shōbōgenzō* had existed only in manuscript form and was presumably little known outside of a small circle within the Sōtō hierarchy” (Waddell and Abe, xii).¹ Aside from the fact that the date is a bit misleading for reasons to follow, the suggestion that interest in the text was severely limited to a small circle prior to the nineteenth century does not do justice to all of the various versions and commentaries that were constructed over the course of several centuries. Nevertheless, the

¹ The authors do point out that Rinzai priests Mujaku and Hakuin also paid attention to *Shōbōgenzō*, with the former joining sectarian critics led by Tenkei and the latter very sympathetic and supportive of Dōgen’s writings.

translators' implication that Dōgen's text took a long time to take shape is relevant.

The *Shōbōgenzō* is a provisional and fluid work; this was true for Dōgen, when we take into account his own corrections, deletions, and emendations as seen in handwritten manuscripts still extant, and therefore the situation of textual uncertainty applies even today. William Bodiford notes:

The *Shōbōgenzō*, however, is not just a single text, or even just different versions of one text. It consists of many different books (*maki* or *kan* 巻), which are bound together as ordered fascicles (*sasshi* 冊子) of the whole. Dōgen composed the books not as independent works, but as related parts of a larger whole that consists of a beginning, middle, and end. Dōgen repeatedly revised the individual books, and he rearranged their order at least two or three times. Subsequent generations compiled new versions of Dōgen's text, adding or rejecting individual books and rearranging them thematically or chronologically.

How was it that the Honzan version took so long to come into existence, why does its reputation persist despite challenges and what are the alternative versions that should be considered for a serious study of the work? The missing link for understanding this topic bridging the origins of the sect as well as the author's intentionality and contemporary interpretations and appropriations is to survey critically the ample set of commentarial writings produced during the Edo period. Though usually portrayed as a part of an extended phase when there was at most a limited revival of *Shōbōgenzō* studies following a dearth of scholarship in late medieval Japan, this essay demonstrates that the Edo commentaries are a remarkably rich resource consisting of dozens of texts by numerous commentators. We present below forty authors responsible for over eighty different commentarial works during the Edo period. The most prolific Edo authors, who contributed collectively nearly half of the writings, may have favored the notion of having some version of a 95-fascicle edition, but they also regularly took into account other available compilations. These authors are:

万仞道坦 Banjin Dōtan—16 works

面山瑞方 Menzan Zuihō—9 works

瞎道本光 Katsudō Honkō—6 works

卍山道白 Manzan Dōhaku—6 works

It should be noted that while Tenkei Denson produced just two texts, he and others in his faction played a crucial role in shaping textual hermeneutic debates, while putting forward his own version of 78 fascicles based on philosophical reflections derived from a philological analysis of the Chinese Zen sources Dōgen cited. The Manzan-Banjin-Menzan faction took great pains to refute and even repudiate Tenkei's approach, which earned a reputation for heresy since it called into question Dōgen's abilities with Chinese. Terms like "parasites," "worms," and "pitiable fools" were used freely. Their works were written during a time of intense intra-sectarian disputes about the meaning of Dōgen's compositions, which led to a ban or prohibition against publishing the then-controversial *Shōbōgenzō* that was proposed by the sect and enforced by the shogunate from 1722 to 1796. However, the majority of commentaries were actually penned during this time, partly as a way of circumventing the proscription, since explanatory texts were thought of differently from actual editions. The main debate concerned whether Dōgen used the large amount of Chinese sources he cites appropriately, since he frequently alters or recasts their wordings in examples of what some observers refer to as the master's "creative misreading" that bring out deeper levels of meaning by reading between the lines or plumbing the hidden profundities in seemingly ordinary phrases. A prime example is when he interprets in the "Uji" ("Being-Time") fascicle the conventional term for "sometimes" 有時 (*uji* or *arutoki*) to suggest that "all beings (*u* 有) are all times (*ji* 時), and all times are all beings."

Alternatively, some observers ask, was it simply the case that Dōgen was not as infallible as presumed? This debate involved many of the same figures, including Tenkei and his supporters questioning Dōgen's facility with Chinese, as opposed to Banjin, Menzan, Honkō, and Manzan promoting Dōgen, who took part in another discord involving the process for selecting temple abbacy succession. In any case, many of these and numerous other Edo-period commentators were remarkable figures, who produced much philosophy, philology, and calligraphy regarding Dōgen and numerous other Zen texts, including those usually associated with the Rinzaï

sect, in addition to contributing in other ways to the growth of the religious institution.

Since World War II, based on studies of Edo commentaries in addition to the discovery in the 1920s of crucial long-lost Dōgen materials, especially the 12-fascicle edition of the *Shōbōgenzō* and the *Mana Shōbōgenzō* (or collection of 300 kōan cases in Chinese script), the 95-edition has been challenged by nearly all recent Japanese scholars. They generally prefer an edition based on the division of 75 fascicles + 12 fascicles, plus other miscellaneous sections, for a total of anywhere from 92 to over 100 fascicles. Sometimes this editing effort results in 95 fascicles, but it is different from the standard 95-edition in sequence and some of the content, whereas some versions of the Honzan edition actually contain 96 fascicles. To clarify the different meanings associated with the term “95-fascicle edition,” since the distinctions are not usually made clear, we propose using the following categories:

95K—the original Kozen version in the 1690s, which has 96 fascicles in some versions (one was spurious and dropped)

95H—the Honzan edition first published by Gentō that included only 90 fascicles by 1816, because the editor chose to leave out 5 fascicles that were later added to it

95M—any modified version that alters some aspects of the sequence of fascicles, which applies to some of the available English translations as well as numerous eighteenth-century and some later Japanese editions

95D—a “de facto” 95-fascicle version that represents 75+12+8 others = 95, although the total number varies

Following this brief introductory section, which includes at its end a list of selected contemporary sources, is an attempt to develop a comprehensive list of traditional commentaries, starting with the Kamakura era (1185–1333), in addition to selected examples from the modern era. A set of explanatory notes accompanies the list to explain some of the main features of *Shōbōgenzō* scholarship in each historical period: Kamakura, Muromachi (1336–1573), Edo (1603–1868), and Modern (1868–). The

significance of this interpretative context was discussed with Eitan Bolokan, an Israeli researcher translating Dōgen into Hebrew, who pointed out that Moshe Halbertal, an eminent scholar of Maimonides at Hebrew University, once remarked that the more commentaries there are about the works of a pivotal thinker, the more it clarifies the significance and depths of his words. On the other hand, this also points to the fact that these teachings were not so coherent, consistent, and easy to grasp, but rather complicated, subversive and multifaceted, so generations of students need to try to clarify them from different standpoints.

To explain briefly the significance of the text and its author, Dōgen founded Sōtō Zen in early Kamakura-period Japan and based his philosophy of just-sitting meditation (*shikan taza*) on studies of Chan he had conducted in China that lasted four years from 1223 to 1227, during which he attained enlightenment under the tutelage of mentor Rujing at Mount Tiantong monastery. The *Shōbōgenzō* was written beginning about five years after Dōgen's return to Japan, when he "came back empty-handed (*kūshū genkyō*), knowing only that his eyes are vertical and nose horizontal, and that the rains pour down while clouds float above the mountains." That is, he had a head full of ideas based on his studies and practice of meditation, rather than hands loaded with regalia or ritual objects as trophies. The title is based on a Zen saying in the crucial dialogue between Sakyamuni and Mahakasyapa that implies the text represents recorded insights (*gen*) into the quintessential reservoir (*zō*) of Buddhist truth (*shōbō*). The text consists of a series of sermons, lectures, and essays, most of which were delivered to an assembly of monks in a growing monastic community, first at Kōshōji temple in Kyoto until 1243 and then at Eiheiiji temple, which opened a year later in the remote provinces north of the capital, near the sacred peak of Mount Hakusan. The sermons were recorded and edited either by Dōgen himself or his main disciple and scribe, Ejō (1198–1280), who was involved in the further editing of various versions after Dōgen's death.

Appreciated for its intricate and inventive way of citing Chinese sources with elucidations in Japanese vernacular, the *Shōbōgenzō* has long been the cornerstone of the Sōtō approach to theories of non-dual reality encompassing all humans in addition to sentient beings living in accord with rigorous reclusive training based on the unity of practice and realization (*shushō ittō*). This view sees enlightenment not as a final goal but a continuing process of self-cultivation. The text is also highly prized in the Japanese intellectual historical tradition for its eloquent exposition of the metaphysics of impermanence (*mujō*) that has a resonance with the works

of Chōmei (*Hōjōki*) and Kenkō (*Tsurezuregusa*), among other non-Zen Buddhist writers of the period. Moreover, the *Shōbōgenzō* is increasingly celebrated in worldwide studies of comparative philosophy of religion by Kyoto School thinkers in Japan and numerous Western interpreters. Dōgen is appreciated for presaging a modern worldview by examining the existential quest for spiritual awakening in the context of a dynamic view of existence and a deconstructive approach to discourse, while maintaining a strict commitment to unvarying ethical standards yet accommodating the shifting concerns of particular situations and relativity of human perspectives.

As important as it is for historical and philosophical reasons, the *Shōbōgenzō* remains a mysterious and confusing text that has given rise to numerous misunderstandings or misleading appropriations about its background and intentionality. Modern scholars in Japan have shown that, largely because the collection of essays was not published in the master's lifetime and, in fact, was still being revised and edited by Dōgen and Ejō at (or after) the time of his death, there are many basic misconceptions about its construction. Indeed, the first statements typically made about the what, when, and why of the work can be called into question. The *Shōbōgenzō* is usually depicted as consisting of 95 fascicles and written over a period of nearly twenty-five years (1231–1253) aimed for monks practicing at Dōgen's best-known religious site today, Eihei-ji. In contrast to this stereotype, there are, as mentioned, many different editions with varying numbers of fascicles that were primarily composed (over two-thirds) during an intense period of activity from 1240 to 1244, which was prior to the establishment of Eihei-ji. The main fascicles composed at Eihei-ji are part of the 12-fascicle edition that in many ways has a different rhetorical favor and ideological bent than the previously written fascicles.

Even a cursory look at some of the titles of Edo-period commentaries reveals how much diversity and conflict transpired concerning the meaning and significance of the *Shōbōgenzō* as seen in relation to the various editions, although any sense of discord was eventually eclipsed for the sake of preserving sectarian identity by a unified vision of the 95-fascicle edition. Our aim is not to try to show that the 95-edition is wrong or flawed, but that it represents but one of numerous options, including editions of 75, 60, 12, and 28 fascicles, among other variations, so we can understand the reason that it is no longer preferred in mainstream scholarship. So far, very little has been written about the role of traditional commentaries in Western research, and what does appear tends to reveal a

dubious standpoint based on two misleading assumptions. According to William Bodiford, an expert on the various editions, “Today, when someone remembers Dōgen or thinks of Sōtō Zen, most often that person automatically thinks of Dōgen’s *Shōbōgenzō*. This kind of automatic association of Dōgen with this work is very much a modern development... In earlier generations, only one Zen teacher, Bokusan Nishiari (1821–1910), is known to have ever lectured on how the *Shōbōgenzō* should be read and understood... The study of Dōgen, and especially his *Shōbōgenzō*, has become the norm in the 20th century.” Another scholar argues that, “prior to the last decades of the Tokugawa period, the *Shōbōgenzō* was largely unread.” However, while Nishiari was an important Meiji-period figure, who helped initiate Genzō-e study retreats now held annually at Eihei-ji and other temples since 1905, he and his colleagues clearly built their repertoire of knowledge on studies of dozens of Edo-period works that can no longer be overlooked.

One misleading assumption is a significant overestimation of a period of supposed dormancy of the text that is said to have lasted four hundred years from around 1300, when two main early commentaries were written, to 1700, when there was a revival of interest. It is said, for example, “By the end of the fifteenth century most of Dōgen’s writings had been hidden from view in temple vaults where they became secret treasures.” It is true that after the first commentaries produced by the early 1300s, one in prose for the 75-fascicle edition and one in verse for the 60-fascicle edition, there were no other major works until the mid-1600s. But, based on other kinds of activities that took place with regard to the text, thus giving evidence of intense interest lasting through at least the middle of the fifteenth century, the so-called dormancy probably persisted less than 200 years (mid-1400s to mid-1600s, at the most). Furthermore, dormancy is not at all surprising in that much of Dōgen’s corpus was being read and circulated in certain circles, but not formally commented on in an era otherwise dominated for both Sōtō and Rinzai Zen sects by *Shōmono* 抄物 or *Missan* 蜜参 textual materials. These documents were passed in esoteric fashion directly by a teacher to a single or a small handful of disciples. This was also an era prior to the explosion of woodblock printing that occurred in late 17th century Japan. Nevertheless, it is clear that copies of various editions of *Shōbōgenzō* were still being made the whole time as two major editions were produced in the 1400s: one in 84 fascicles by Bonsei at Daijōji temple founded by Gikai based on expanding the 75-fascicle edition; and

the other in 83 fascicles by Kakuin at a branch of Eihei-ji temple by expanding the 60-fascicle edition.

The inactivity of the Muromachi period is significantly overestimated, ironically as a kind of echo of the narrative of Edo revivalists of Dōgen eager to account for why there was an apparent lack of scholarly studies. According to that view, the hiddenness of the text reflected the philosophical point that reading it was not needed by the enlightened and, conversely, paying too much attention was a sign that its true meaning had been forgotten.

The second misleading assumption is a rather drastic underestimation of productivity during the Edo-period revival as part of the movement known as Restoring the Origins of the Sect 宗統復古 (*shūtō fukko*). This was begun in the early Edo period by Ban'an Eishu 万 (萬) 安英種 (1591–1654), who moved Kōshō-ji temple from the outskirts of Kyoto to the town of Uji and commented on many important non-Sōtō Zen classics, including the records of Rinzai and Chinese kōan collections. Gesshū, an abbot of Daijō-ji temple who wrote the first Edo-period commentaries on *Shōbōgenzō* that are extant, continued the reform efforts. Figures such as Manzan, Menzan, and Tenkei, all Gesshū disciples despite severe disagreements between Tenkei and the others are generally mentioned in brief discussions of the era (see Appendix V). For example, a brief essay by Nishiyari cites with idiosyncratic evaluations just three Edo commentaries (*Monge* by Menzan, *Shiki* by Zōkai, *Ichijisan* by Honkō), as if this was a complete record, although he does mention two more items that were controversial, *Benchū* by Tenkei, who criticized Dōgen, and *Zokugen kōgi* by Otsudō, who refuted Tenkei. A full list goes significantly well beyond these few names to cover dozens of commentaries.

During this time, the debate between Tenkei and Manzan over temple succession was more or less the same debate that occurred in regard to interpreting the *Shōbōgenzō*, particularly Dōgen's use (or misuse?) of Chinese sources as well as his occasional attacks on some Chinese Chan teachers. Tenkei's point was that a freewheeling revision of the master's texts based on his own sense of correcting the questionable Chinese usage in many *Shōbōgenzō* passages was acceptable because, ultimately, it took part in the freewheeling spirit of Dōgen, or it was at least preferable to devoted copying. For the Manzan-Menzan-Banjin faction, that effort was not permissible, even though these leaders were in agreement with Tenkei in commenting on Song Chinese texts, including kōan collections. A third

faction included Shigetsu and Honkō, who disagreed with Tenkei but tried to be more objective in their analysis than the Manzan group. Yet another clique included Tenkei offshoots Genrō Ōryū 玄樓奥龍 (1720–1813) and Fūgai Honkō 風外本光 (1779–1847), composers of the *Iron Flute* (*Tetteki tōsui*) kōan collection.

In the Edo period, the most vigorous activity in commentarial literature took place during the period of the publication ban of 1722–1796, a phase that covered Menzan's entire career. Then, to break an impasse caused by Manzan's advocacy of an 89-fascicle edition derived from the 75-edition and Tenkei's promotion of a 78-fascicle edition based on the 60-edition, first Kozen and then Gentō a century later worked on publishing the 95-edition. The guiding organizational principle was to capture in the chronological order of their composition all of Dōgen's vernacular writings, including "Bendōwa," which was not included in other editions but, after being discovered in the seventeenth century, was positioned as the first fascicle since it was written earliest, in 1231. The heyday of the Honzan edition lasted through World War II, especially with the prominent 3-volume paperback edition edited by Etō Sokuō and published in 1939 by Iwanami bunko. By the postwar era, Etō's version was discredited for various reasons and taken out of print. This version of the Honzan edition was more or less replaced by the newer 75+12 editions, especially in another Iwanami bunko publication edited by Mizuno Yaoko in 1990, who developed an important chart for understanding the relation between the various editions (translated as Appendix III–A and B). In these versions, "Bendōwa" is included as a supplemental fascicle. Significant scholarship by Ishii Shūdō, Kagamishima Genryū, Kawamura Kōdō, Itō Shūken, Tsunoda Tairyū, and many others has continued to make advances in the post-Honzan direction, with a recent theme emphasizing about half a dozen "alternative" versions 別本 (*beppon*) of fascicles, particularly "Bukkōjōji" and "Daigo" that, if understood, are seen as being crucial to the shaping of the entire collection.

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² Kawamura considers the most important: *Goshō* by Senne-Kyōgō in 1283–1308 on the 75-edition; *Ichijisan* by Honkō in 1770 on the 95-edition; *Shiki* by Zōkai in 1779 on *Goshō* as seen in the context of Honkō's 95-edition; *Benchū* by Tenkei in 1726, putting forward a 78-fascicle edition; *Naippō* by Rōran in 1791, supporting Tenkei in light of criticism by Manzan, Menzan, Banjin, and others; and *Monge* by Menzan in the 1760s, later revised by Fuzan in 1776, on some fascicles from the 95-edition (the simple, direct style led to the moniker Baba Menzan or "Grandma Menzan").

³ This highlights *Goshō*, Menzan's *Monge*, Honkō's *Sanchū*, Zōkai's *Shiki*, Tenkei's *Benchū*, Rōran's *Naippō*, Menzan's *Shōtenroku*, Mujaku Kōsen's *Shōtenroku zokuchō*, Nishiari's post-Edo *Keiteki*.

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The lists below, divided by period, are consecutively numbered in chronological order, while recognizing that some dates for authors and the works they produced are overlapping or, alternately, unknown. Additionally, some of the entries have a brief notation explaining the work’s significance.

Many of the works have either generic or obscure titles, so that translations are tentative in numerous instances.

Kamakura Period (1185–1333)

There were only two major commentaries produced during the Kamakura period by Senne-Kyōgō and Giun, but these both remain the most important and influential in the history of the tradition, although these have barely been introduced into the world of English scholarship on Dōgen. By the end of the Kamakura period, there were four main editions, two with important commentaries:

75 fascicles, mainly used at Senne's Yōkōan temple in Kyoto, established after he left (or perhaps never went with Dōgen to) Eihei-ji, and also at Keizan's Yōkō-ji and Sōji-ji temples in Noto peninsula; an interlinear prose commentary, *Kikigaki*, was written by Senne, the only commentator who actually heard most of Dōgen's original sermons, in 1283 (or earlier), and this was supplemented by his disciple Kyōgō in *Kikigakishō* in 1308; the text is known collectively as *Goshō* or *Gokikigakishō*, although the works can stand independently

60 fascicles, which includes 7 fascicles from the 12-fascicle edition that are not included in the 75-fascicle edition, mainly used at Eihei-ji under Ejō and Giun and at Hōkyō-ji temple founded by Jakuen, Dōgen's main Chinese disciple who was followed by Giun; then, Giun wrote poetic commentary with capping phrases in 1329 while he served as 5th abbot of Eihei-ji

12 fascicles, mainly used at Keizan's temples; this text, long rumored but not identified as such until a manuscript found at Yōkō-ji in 1927; it includes one fascicle, "Ippyakuhachihōmyōmon," that was never part of the Honzan edition, thus creating a new 96-fascicle edition

28 fascicles, apparently kept privately by Ejō at Eihei-ji and known as *Himitsu*, or Private, *Shōbōgenzō*, which includes fascicles not found in and thus is supplementary to the 60-fascicle edition

Senne also edited the first volume of Dōgen's 10-volume *Eihei kōroku* (*Extensive Record*), which includes *kanbun* sermons given at Kōshōji, as well as the ninth and tenth volumes that cover Dōgen's *kanbun* poetry with over 250 examples. Giun, along with Gien and others, assisted Ejō in transcribing and editing some of the *Shōbōgenzō* fascicles, especially in 1279 when he worked on "Kōku," "Ango," and "Kie sambō," before discovering a manuscript of the then-lost *Hōkyōki* in 1299 and becoming abbot at Eiheiji in 1314. At this juncture, there simply was no sense of creating a 95-fascicle edition, which was mainly triggered later by Manzan's 89-fascicle edition produced in 1684, just a few years before Kozen's text that took him several years to complete. It would take another century before the project of completing an authoritative edition was realized in a woodblock print.

1. 孤雲懷奘 Koun Ejō (1198–1280)

光明藏三昧 Kōmyōzō zanmai [Samadhi Treasury of "Kōmyō"] 「正法眼藏光明」卷の敷演. Contemplative elaboration on "Kōmyō" by Dōgen's main disciple

2. 詮慧・経豪 Senne (n.d.) and Kyōgō (n.d.)

正法眼藏聞書抄 Shōbōgenzō kikigakishō [Recorded Comments on Shōbōgenzō]

七十五巻本に関する最古の註釈書で、道元禅師の直弟子詮慧・経豪の共著。詮慧の註釈メモ『聞書』（十巻）を参釈合収した経豪の註抄三十一冊。別に「影室鈔」ともいう

Dōgen's direct disciples, Senne and Kyōgō, are authors of the oldest commentaries on the 75-fascicle edition. Kyōgō's 31-part (1308) remarks on Senne's 10-volume Kikigaki text (c. 1283) are known as Inner Chamber Comments (Kageshitsusho 影室鈔) and the combined text, since Senne's work is no longer extant independently, is known variously as Kikigakishō, or Goshō 御鈔, or Shōbōgenzō shō; this was the only interlinear prose commentary prior to the Edo period

3. 義雲 Giun (1253–1333)

正法眼藏品目頌著 Shōbōgenzō hinmokuujaku [Verses with Capping Phrases on Shōbōgenzō]

六十巻本の品目と各巻の注意を七言絶句で頌し、一転語を著けたもの. This includes Giun's 7-character, 4-line *kanbun* verse poems, along with capping phrases, explicating the various fascicles of the 60-fascicle edition. This was the only other major commentary prior to the Edo period

4. 大智祖繼 Daichi Sokei (1290–1367)

大智和尚偈頌二首 Daichi oshō geju nishu [Two Verse Comments by Priest Daichi]; this includes two kanbun poems, one on the theme of receiving a copy of the text of *Shōbōgenzō* and the other on the “Zazenshin” fascicle by Daichi, an anomalous 14th century Sōtō monk who traveled to study Zen poetry in China; in the Edo period there were numerous commentaries interpreting his overall poetry collection

Muromachi-Period (1336–1573)

The Muromachi period is usually portrayed as a fallow phase in Dōgen scholarship, during which the *Shōbōgenzō* was neglected as part of what Hee-Jin Kim calls the “dark age of sectarian studies,” which emphasized not the study of texts but personal relationships that were sometimes recorded and eventually published but were generally kept privately in archives. That stereotype is true to the extent that there were no major commentaries composed, and the Sōtō sect seemed preoccupied with different forms of expression, particularly Shōmono materials including Kirigami (lit. “paper strips”), in addition to recorded sayings texts of leading masters such as Gasan and Tsūgen that often incorporated comments on the Five Ranks (*goi*) and other aspects of Chinese Chan thought, including many topics and references usually associated with the Japanese Rinzai sect. During this phase, not only *Shōbōgenzō* but also almost all other Dōgen writings were not subjected to critical analysis or interpretation. Only a small handful of works were in circulation, including *Eihei goroku* (a highly condensed version of the *Eihei kōroku* first published in 1358), *Fukanzazengi*, *Gakudōyōjinshū*, and *Tenzokyōkun* (and perhaps other essays that in 1667 became part of the *Eihei shingi* collection). Dōgen’s other major work, *Eihei kōroku*, was not printed or commented on until the Edo period.

Meanwhile, the *Shōbōgenzō*, which was not yet in a published form, was apparently available in manuscripts held at numerous temples, but with so much variety and variability to the versions that the notion of forming a standard edition that could be recognized as authentic by all parties, while introduced, was far from being realized. However, in contrast to the commonly held view that the *Shōbōgenzō* was only used in a formal or symbolic sense of generating prestige by a temple or teacher owning a copy but without necessarily even reading it, there clearly were important scholastic activities related to organizing and, by doing so, at least indirectly interpreting the significance of the collection. Although some sectors of

Sōtō Zen became known for good works, such as building bridges and irrigation, or for folk religious elements, such as exorcisms in which *Shōbōgenzō* sayings such as “genjōkōan” 現成公案 were sometimes used, the absence of textual commentaries does not necessarily reflect an overall lack in erudition, as is often reported.

Some of the main activities of the Muromachi period were the publication in the 1350s of Giun’s recorded sayings, including his *Shōbōgenzō* commentary that was continually copied by his followers, and the organization of an 83-fascicle edition (at Eihei-ji) and an 84-fascicle or Bonsei edition (at Daijō-ji, with an 83-fascicle variation). Both of these combined the 75-fascicle edition with additional fascicles culled from the 60-fascicle edition, including some of the fascicles also contained in the 12-fascicle edition. The 83-edition was compiled in 1433 by Kakuin Eihon (1380–1453) at Rurikō-ji temple, based on Giun-follower Sōgo’s copy of the 60-chapter edition, while adding twenty-three extra chapters from a 1430 copy of the 75-fascicle edition. This edition represents an early effort to compare the 60- and 75-fascicle versions, and it is noteworthy that Kakuin considered the 60-fascicle edition more authoritative. Moreover, in addition to Sōgo’s copies of Giun’s commentary and various fascicles of *Shōbōgenzō*, many copies of the 75-fascicle edition were being made throughout the period, including in 1333, 1339, 1472, 1500, 1532 and 1546, thus showing the primacy of this version. A notable copy of the 60-edition was produced in 1510, and this scribal activity continued through the Edo period.

Moreover, the main sectarian biography of Dōgen, the *Kenzeiki*, which is important for understanding the sequential development of the *Shōbōgenzō* in connection with other events in Dōgen’s life, was produced in 1452 as part of the 200th death anniversary. It was repeatedly copied in the following centuries before Menzan emended it significantly in the *Teiho Kenzeiki* in 1752 for the 500th death anniversary. Therefore, if there was dormancy in terms of scholarly interest, it lasted far less than two hundred years, rather than the four centuries that is frequently mentioned. Nevertheless, there may have been a sense that *Shōbōgenzō* was a sacred writing that defied analysis or simply was beyond understanding due to its arcane references to Chinese sources, and it took various external factors generated by changes in Japanese society for intense interest in commenting extensively on Dōgen’s masterwork to be renewed.

Edo Period (1603–1868)

The Edo period saw the beginning of 1,000-day retreats for studies of the *Shōbōgenzō*, as well as the role of lectures given at Sōtō seminars, such as Kichjōji and Seishōji temples in Tokyo. This helped trigger an explosion of dozens of commentaries written by many leading teachers examining the philosophy and philology of Dōgen's writings, including reference works such as dictionaries, lexicons, concordances, and citation indexes, in addition to elucidations of hermeneutic issues interpreting the text's meaning from both personal/experiential and objective/holistic standpoints. Other stimulations included the impact of Neo-Confucian-oriented textual studies and the effects of the new Ōbaku sect brought from southeastern China in the mid-seventeenth century, causing a revival of reading and writing in *kanbun* as well as attention to the issue of ethical behavior related to theoretical expositions based on studying traditional continental texts, especially voluminous Song dynasty Chan sources. In addition, the Edo-period *danka* (parish) system established by the shogunate forced all Buddhist sects to emphasize the identity and value of their respective approaches distanced from rival viewpoints, thus elevating the status of Dōgen's magnum opus as the major claim to fame of Sōtō Zen. There was also a concerted effort by Menzan to stamp out the proliferation of Kirigami-based teachings for representing too much concession to esotericism at the expense of conventional scholasticism.

Near the beginning of the Edo period, several important commentaries were composed by Ban'an (not extant), Gesshū, who wrote the earliest one available that greatly influenced both the Manzan and Tenkei factions, and other monks. Gesshū favored the 84-fascicle edition, and copies were made of his version in 1680 and 1708. This helped set the stage for subsequent developments in studies of the philosophy and philology of the *Shōbōgenzō* as well as practices related to the text, such as extended periods of retreat along with ritualized sermons and prepared lectures. An underlying factor in new approaches to interpreting *Shōbōgenzō* was the controversy about whether succession should be based on face-to-face transmission sometimes, requiring a change of lineage, as apparently endorsed by *Shōbōgenzō* "Menju" and promoted by the Manzan faction (this effort started in 1657 even before Manzan), in contrast to the older cross-lineage process (*garanbō*) of succession supported by the Tenkei faction.

The controversy about succession was linked to two other main intra-sectarian debates: (a) whether and to what extent Dōgen may have

misunderstood the many Chinese sources he cited, a position supported by Tenkei along with Rinzai scholastic monk Mujaku Dōchū, so that both were considered heretical by mainstream Sōtō monks, or creatively developed and refined the Chinese sources for his own philosophical purposes, as supported by the Manzan-Menzan-Banjin faction; and (b) the distinct practices of attaining *kenshō/satori* for Tenkei and of emphasizing goalless *shikan taza* for Manzan's faction, which refuted Tenkei's views on sectarian transmission and his evaluation of Dōgen's philology evident in *Shōbōgenzō*.

In the late seventeenth century, Manzan compiled an 89-fascicle edition in 1684 and Kozen compiled a 96-fascicle edition (with one fascicle that proved spurious). Tenkei, whose original commentary was on the 60-fascicle edition favored by Giun (although probably for different reasons), eventually countered in the 1730s with a 78-fascicle edition in which he revised and even rewrote some fascicles, although this was not published due to the ban. The underlying point involving succession and philology controversies was a classic discord between the themes of the continuity of identity (Manzan) and the emphasis on individuality and difference (Tenkei). In any case, tracking the citations (*shutten* 出典) used by Dōgen influenced all factions, including Tenkei and Menzan. Due to his knowledge of Song Chan texts in citing the works of Hongzhi and kōan collection commentaries, Giun's commentaries were greatly appreciated.

The prohibition on publishing the *Shōbōgenzō* lasting from 1722–1796 was proposed by the mainstream Sōtō temple institution, which was concerned with stifling the multiplicity of (supposedly false) approaches to interpreting Dōgen by Tenkei, Mujaku, and others, and the Bakufu government supported this stance. However, that period of three-quarters of a century was perhaps the most fruitful for commentaries and reference works by various eminent masters, including Menzan, Banjin, Zōkai, Shigetsu, Honkō, Rōran, and more. Many of these commentaries continued to refer to the 75-fascicle and 60-fascicle versions, especially the Senne-Kyōgō *Goshō* commentary on the former edition. A number of commentaries acknowledged or supported the newly developed 95-fascicle version, but often had discrepancies or disagreements about the order and sequence of the fascicles in question. Generally, “Genjōkōan,” an anomalous work that was written in 1233 as a letter to a lay follower, a trend popular among Chan teachers but not used again by Dōgen, remained the first fascicle in various editions (75, 60, one of the 95 versions including

Tenkei's *Benchū*, Menzan's *Shōtenroku*, Rōran's *Naippō*, and Zōkai's *Shiki*. But it was not so in Manzan's 89-fascicle edition (it was "Makahannya haramitsu") or in most versions of the 95-fascicles, including Honkō's *Sanchū* ("Zazenshin") and Gentō's Honzan edition ("Bendōwa").

In addition to commenting on *Shōbōgenzō*, there were extensive commentaries written on other Dōgen texts, ranging from *Eihei goroku* to *Eihei shingi*, *Fukanzazengi*, and *Gakudōyōjinshū*, which had been in circulation during the late medieval period, to newer trends such as looking at the full version of *Eihei kōroku*, *Mana Shōbōgenzō*, and *Sanshōdōei* (Japanese *waka* poetry collection), all texts previously unavailable. Sōtō commentators also investigated Mahayana sutras and Song Chinese texts, including various kōan collections, such as *Hekiganroku*, *Shōyōroku*, *Mumonkan*, *Ninden gammoku*, plus the records of Dongshan, Rin'ai, Yunmen, and many more.

The Honzan edition of 95-fascicles was first published from 1796–1806 by Gentō, the 50th abbot of Eihei known for wide-ranging efforts to maintain the Manzan-inspired (actually started by Ban'an and Gesshū before him) attempt to "restore" 復古 the thirteenth-century teachings of Dōgen and Ejō. This edition was part of the 550th death anniversary celebration of Dōgen held in 1802; another important example of restoration was the production of the *Teiho Kenzeiki zue* illustrated edition of Menzan's annotated biography of Dōgen originally produced by Kenzei, the 14th abbot of Eiheiji several centuries before. The Honzan edition was completed with a boxed set issued in 1815, although five fascicles (Den'e, Busso, Shisho, Jishō zanmai, and Jukai) were still withheld from release until they were included for the first time in an 1852 (600th anniversary) edition.

5. 月舟宗胡 Gesshū Sōko (1618–1696)

正法眼藏謄写 *Shōbōgenzō tōsha* [Transcribed Edition of *Shōbōgenzō*]

6. 版撓晃全 Hanjō Kozen (1627–1693)

正法眼藏九十六卷ノ結集謄写 *Shōbōgenzō Kyūjūrokumaki no kesshū tōsha* [Complete Transcribed Edition of 96-fascicle *Shōbōgenzō*]

7. 卍山道白 Manzan Dōhaku (1636–1715)

正法眼藏ノ編集校定 *Shōbōgenzō no henshū kōtei* [Revised Edition of *Shōbōgenzō*]

(卍山本八十九卷) (Manzanbon Hachijūkyūmaki) [Manzan's 89-fascicle *Shōbōgenzō*]

永平正法眼藏序・四篇 Eihei Shōbōgenzō jō—yonben [Prefaces to Dōgen’s Shōbōgenzō—four versions]

跋永平正法眼藏・二篇 Batsu Eihei Shōbōgenzō—niben [Postscripts to Dōgen’s Shōbōgenzō—two versions]

跋正法眼藏安居卷 Batsu Shōbōgenzō Ango maki [Postscript to Shōbōgenzō “Ango”]

答客議並序跋類 Tōkaku gibeijo hatsurui [Answers to Various Kinds of Queries]

8. 天桂伝尊 Tenkei Denson (1648–1735)

a. 正法眼藏弁解 Shōbōgenzō benge [Comments on Shōbōgenzō]

b. 正法眼藏弁註 Shōbōgenzō benchū [Annotations on Shōbōgenzō]

六十巻本を真本とした江戸期最初の註釈書。Initial Edo period commentary on the 60-fascicle edition; note that Tenkei also devised his own 78-fascicle edition by adding 18 fascicles to the 60-fascicle edition with corrections in addition to revisions of the original text, while also rejecting some fascicles outright even though he included references to his version of a 95-edition

9. 徳翁良高 Tokuō Ryōkō (1649–1709)

永平正法眼藏序 Eihei Shōbōgenzō jō [Preface to Eihei Shōbōgenzō]

10. 定山良光 Jōzan Ryōkō (d. 1736)

正法嫡伝獅子一吼集 Shōbōchakuden shishi’ikushū [Collected Lion Roars from the Direct Lineage of the True Dharma]

11. 無著道忠 Mujaku Dōchū (1653–1745) Note: a Rinzai monk

正法眼藏僭評 Shōbōgenzō senpyō [Critical Comments on Shōbōgenzō]

臨濟禪の立場から『正法眼藏』（叡山結集八十四巻本）各巻（溪声山色・伝衣・嗣書・心不可得・神通・仏向上事・行持・授記・栢樹子・説心説性・諸法実相・密語・仏経・面授・春秋・菩提分法・自証三昧・大修行・他心通・王索仙陀婆）の所説を論難したもの。Explicating differences between Shōbōgenzō teachings and Rinzai Zen based on various fascicles used in Manzan’s 84-fascicle edition, including “Keisei sanshoku,” “Den’e,” “Shisho,” “Shinfukatoku,” “Jinzū,” “Bukkōjōji,” “Gyōji,” “Juki,” “Hakujushi,” “Sesshin sesshō,” “Shohō jissō,” “Mitsugo,” “Bukkyō” (Buddhist Sutras), “Menju,” “Shunjū,” “Bodaibunpō,” “Jishō zanmai,” “Daishugyō,” “Tajinzū,” “Ōsaku sendaba”

12. 面山瑞方 Menzan Zuihō (1683–1769)

a. 正法眼蔵聞解 *Shōbōgenzō monge*, 現成公案 “Genjōkōan,” 弁道話 “Bendōwa,” 三昧王三昧 “Zanmai ō zanmai” [Recorded Comments on Three *Shōbōgenzō* Fascicles]; see also Fuzan Gentotsu

b. 正法眼蔵渉典録 *Shōbōgenzō shōtenroku* [Record of References Cited in *Shōbōgenzō*]

六十巻本を本輯とする九十五巻本（面山編輯本）の渉典. References from Menzan's 95-fascicle edition pertinent to the 60-fascicle collection.

c. 正法眼蔵關邪訣 *Shōbōgenzō byakujaku ketsu* [On Correcting Misunderstandings of *Shōbōgenzō*]

天桂の『辨解』（後に「辨解」と改む）に対する論難. Criticisms of Tenkei's *Shōbōgenzō benge*

d. 正法眼蔵述品目賛 *Shōbōgenzō hinmoku jutsuzan* [Poetic Remarks on *Shōbōgenzō*]

面山編輯の九十五巻本（本輯六十巻、別輯三十五巻）に、義雲の「頌著」に倣って各巻の注意を述べ、偈によって賛したもの. Poetic comments on Giun's poems and capping phrases on the 60-fascicle edition, based on the versions used in Menzan's 95-fascicle edition (including the collection of 60 fascicles with an additional 35 fascicles)

e. 正法眼蔵和語鈔 *Shōbōgenzō wagoshō* [On the Use of Japanese Vernacular in *Shōbōgenzō*]

f. 正法眼蔵編集・謄写 *Shōbōgenzō henshū—tōsha* [Edited Transcribed Edition of *Shōbōgenzō*]

g. 正法眼蔵渉典和語鈔 *Shōbōgenzō shōten wagoshō* [Comments on the Use of Japanese Vernacular in the Standard Edition of *Shōbōgenzō*]

和語・漢語に涉つての語録. On recorded sayings cited in *Shōbōgenzō* based on Japanese and Chinese sources.

h. 雪夜爐談竝序跋辯 *Yukiyorodan hō jobatsuben* [Preface and Postscript to Fireside Chat on a Snowy Evening]

i. 議永平排遣楞嚴円覚弁 *Gi Eihei oshiyuiryō toshimitsukakuben* [Reflections on How to Discern Complete Enlightenment in Light of Criticism of Dōgen's *Shōbōgenzō*]

13. 乙堂喚丑 Otsudō Kanchū (~1760)

正法眼蔵続統緒講義 *Shōbōgenzō zokugen kōgi* [Supplemental Lectures on *Shōbōgenzō*, or: One Continuing Thread]

天桂の「辨註」に於ける授記・面授・嗣書の三編を中心に、その所説を弁駁したもの。Refuting the theories contained in Tenkei's Shōbōgenzō benchū, based mainly on examining the “Juki,” “Menju,” and “Shisho” fascicles

14. 指月慧印 Shigetsu Ein (1689–1764)

a. 正法眼蔵序・二篇 Shōbōgenzō jō—niben [Prefaces to Shōbōgenzō—two versions]

b. 拈評三百則不能語 Nenpyō Sanbyakusoku funōgo [Prose Comments on the Inexpressible Truth of the 300-case Shōbōgenzō]; the initial work on the Mana (Kanbun) Shōbōgenzō composed in 1235 featuring kōans without comments, and its connections to the Kana (Vernacular) Shōbōgenzō

15. 直指玄端 Chokushi Gentan (~1767)

正法眼蔵弁註浄書 Shōbōgenzō benchū jōsho [Clarifications of Tenkei's Annotations on Shōbōgenzō]

16. 万(萬)侶道坦 Banjin Dōtan (1698–1775)

a. 正法眼蔵秘鈔 Shōbōgenzō hishō [Private Comments on Shōbōgenzō] 『正法眼蔵聞書抄』からの万侶による抜鈔. Banjin's comments on the Kikigakishō commentary

b. 正法眼蔵傍訓 Shōbōgenzō bōkun [Additional Investigations of Shōbōgenzō]

c. 正法眼蔵諫蠹録 Shōbōgenzō kantoroku [Responses to Criticisms of Shōbōgenzō]

天桂伝尊の「正法眼蔵辨註」に対する論難. Counter-criticisms of Tenkei's Shōbōgenzō benchū

d. 正法眼蔵補闕録 Shōbōgenzō hoketsuroku [Additional Comments on Critiques of Shōbōgenzō]

e. 正法眼蔵涉典補闕録 Shōbōgenzō shōtenzoku hoketsuroku [Critical Comments on References Cited in Shōbōgenzō]

七十五巻本に依る涉典註解、面山の涉典の闕を補うもの. Remarks on Menzan's studies of references cited in the 75-fascicle edition

f. 正法眼蔵面授巻弁 Shōbōgenzō Menju makiben [Discussion of Shōbōgenzō “Menju”]

g. 正法眼蔵仏祖巻弁 Shōbōgenzō Busso makiben [Discussion of Shōbōgenzō “Busso”]

h. 正法眼蔵第五十三仏祖巻辯 Shōbōgenzō dai gojūsan Busso makiben

[Discussion of Shōbōgenzō's 53rd fascicle, “Busso”]; note that numbering system varies

i. 正法眼藏大修行卷弁 Shōbōgenzō Daishugyō makiben [Discussion of Shōbōgenzō “Daishugyō”]

j. 正法眼藏第六十大修行卷辯 Shōbōgenzō dai rokujū Daishugyō makiben [Discussion of Shōbōgenzō's 60th fascicle “Daishugyō”]; note that numbering system varies

k. 正法眼藏秘鈔 Shōbōgenzō hishō [Private Comments on Shōbōgenzō]

l. 永平破五位辯 Eihei ha goiben [Discussion of Dōgen's Approach to Five Ranks]

m. 無情說法語 Mujō seppō hōwa [Discussion of Shōbōgenzō “Mujō seppō”]

n. 三教一致辯 Sankyō itchiben [Discussion of “Three Teachings are One”]

o. 正法眼藏諫蠹錄 Shōbōgenzō kantoroku [Responses to Criticisms of Shōbōgenzō]

p. 高祖破斥臨濟德山大滙雲門等弁 Takaso sunaseki Rinzai Tokusan Daii Unmon nadoben [Considering Criticisms by Dōgen of Linji, Deshan, Guishan, Yunmen, etc.]

17. 午菴道鏞 Guan Dōyō (1701~) (a.k.a. Kōon)

天桂不知正法眼藏之由來事 Tenkei shirazu Shōbōgenzō no yuraigoto [Reasons for Tenkei's Misunderstandings of Shōbōgenzō]

18. 衡田祖量 Hirata Soryō (1702–1779)

面山編集正法眼藏謄写 Menzan henshū Shōbōgenzō tōsha [On Menzan's Edited Transcribed Edition of Shōbōgenzō]

19. 洞明良瓚 Tōmyō Ryōsan (1709–1773)

a. 正法眼藏謄写 Shōbōgenzō tōsha [Transcribed Edition of Shōbōgenzō]

b. 校閱正法眼藏序 Kōestu Shōbōgenzō jō [Preface to Shōbōgenzō Manuscript]

20. 瞎道本光 Katsudō Honkō (1719–1773)

a. 正法眼藏却退一字參 Shōbōgenzō kyakutai ichijisan (a.k.a. Shōbōgenzō sanchū 正法眼藏參註) [Annotated Studies of Kanji References in Shōbōgenzō]

瞎道による九十五卷本の本文漢文訳と漢文註. This represents the first annotations and comments on the kanbun sections of the 95-fascicle edition as compiled by Honkō

- b.** 正法眼藏座禪箴抽解經行參 Shōbōgenzō Zazenshin chūkai kyōgyōsan
[Practical Instructions Based on Interpretations of Shōbōgenzō
“Zazenshin”]
- c.** 正法眼藏生死卷穿牛皮 Shōbōgenzō “Shōji” makisengyūhi [Piercing the Ox
of Shōbōgenzō “Shōji”]
- d.** 正法眼藏都機卷禿若掃記 Shōbōgenzō Tsuki makitokushō sōki [Account of
Sweeping Aside Misreadings of Shōbōgenzō “Tsuki”]
- e.** 錯不錯・野狐變 Shaku fushaku—yakoben [Mistaking or Not Mistaking—
Story of the Shape-Shifting Wild Fox]
正法眼藏大修・深信因果卷に引用される「百丈野狐」話に因む語を評釈したもの。
This interprets the kōan of “Baizhang’s Wild Fox” based on the Shōbōgenzō
“Daishugyō” and “Jinshin inga” fascicles
- f.** 正法眼藏品目頌金剛莖草參 Shōbōgenzō hinmonkuju kinkōjisōsan [Diamond
Notes on Giun’s Verse Commentary on Shōbōgenzō]

21. 慧亮忘光 Eryō Bōkō (1719–1774)

- a.** 正法眼藏玄談科釈 Shōbōgenzō gendan kaseki [Deep Conversations
Interpreting Shōbōgenzō]
- b.** 正法眼藏新刻校讐辨 Shōbōgenzō shinkoku kōshūben [Evaluating the New
Edition of Shōbōgenzō]
本山版九十五卷の年時順編輯例次開版本に対し、七十五帖本に準ずべきで、余他の
巻は七十五帖の後に例次することが、宗祖の撰定の祖意に違失しないことを述べる。
On the sectarian ancestral implications of organizing the Honzan Edition of
the 95-fascicle Shōbōgenzō in relation to the 75-fascicle edition as well as
various fascicles not found in the 75-fascicle edition

22. 父幼老卵 Fuyō Rōran (1724–1805)

- a.** 正法眼藏那一宝 Shōbōgenzō naippō [Precious Comments on Shōbōgenzō]
老卵は天桂伝尊の法孫。「辯註」に準拠して、九十五巻に註釈。Rōran, a Dharma-
heir of Tenkei, interprets the 95-fascicle edition as influenced by Tenkei’s
Benchū commentary
- b.** 正法眼藏那一宝稿本 Shōbōgenzō naippō kōhon [Definitive Edition of
Precious Comments on Shōbōgenzō]

23. 玄透即中 Gentō Sokuchū (1729–1807)

- 正法眼藏九十五巻本山版梓行 Shōbōgenzō Kyūjūgomaki honzanhan shigyō
[Official Honzan Edition of the 95-fascicle Shōbōgenzō]

24. 雑華藏海 Zakka Zōkai (1730–1788)

a. 正法眼藏傍註 *Shōbōgenzō bōchū* [Additional Annotations on *Shōbōgenzō*]

b. 正法眼藏私記 *Shōbōgenzō shiki* [Personal Notes on *Shōbōgenzō*]

瞎道を『正法眼藏』参究の師とし、「影室鈔」に拠って参究した達意的註釈。
Interpretative annotations investigating Kyōgō's Inner Chamber Comments through studies of Katsudō Honkō's *Shōbōgenzō kyakutai ichijisan*

25. 如得龍水 Jōtoku Ryōzui (~1787)

正法眼藏ノ手入レ *Shōbōgenzō no te'ire* [Revised Edition of *Shōbōgenzō*]

26. 斧山玄鋤 Fuzan Gentotsu (~1789)

正法眼藏聞解 *Shōbōgenzō monge* [Recorded Comments on *Shōbōgenzō* (based on and often attributed to Menzan)]

面山瑞方の法孫、玄鋤による九十五巻本の註釈。In the lineage of Menzan, Fuzan interprets the 95-fascicle edition that the master compiled

27. 大愚俊量 Taigu Junryō (1759–1803)

本山版正法眼藏校讐・開版作業 *Honzanban Shōbōgenzō kōshū—kaihan sakugyō* [On the Compilation and Publication of the Honzan Edition of the *Shōbōgenzō*]

28. 慧輪玄亮 Erin Genryō (~1813)

正法眼藏ノ手入レ *Shōbōgenzō no te'ire* [Revised Edition of *Shōbōgenzō*]

29. 祖道穩達 Sodō Ontatsu (~1813)

本山版正法眼藏校讐・開版作業 *Honzanban Shōbōgenzō kōshū—kaihan sakugyō* [On the Compilation and Publication of the Honzan Edition of the *Shōbōgenzō*]

30. 黙室良要 Mokushitsu Ryōyō (1775–1833)

正法眼藏著語 *Shōbōgenzō jakugo* [Capping Phrase Comments on *Shōbōgenzō*]

31. 無著黄泉 Mujaku Kōsen (1775–1838)

a. 正法眼藏涉典統紹 *Shōbōgenzō shōten zokuchō* [Further Remarks on Menzan's "References Cited in *Shōbōgenzō*"]

b. 正法眼藏抄謄写 *Shōbōgenzō shōtōsha* [Comments on Transcribed Edition of *Shōbōgenzō*]

32. 本秀幽蘭 Honshū Yūran (~1847)

a. 正法眼蔵ノ註ト手入レ Shōbōgenzō no chū to te'ire [Revised Edition with Annotations of Shōbōgenzō]

b. 正法眼蔵抄謄写 Shōbōgenzō shōtōsha [Transcribed Edition of the Senne-Kyōgō Commentary on Shōbōgenzō]

33. 惟一成允 Tadaichi Seiin (~1861)

正法眼蔵ノ手入レ Shōbōgenzō no te'ire [Revised Edition of Shōbōgenzō]

34. 祖道穩達・大患俊量 Sodō Ontatsu (d. 1813) and Taikan Junryō (n.d.)

彫刻永平正法眼蔵録由・凡例並巻目例次 Chōkoku Eihei Shōbōgenzō rokuyu—hanreihō makimokureiji [On Polishing the Records of Shōbōgenzō—Examining the Customary Sequence and Ordering of Fascicles]

本山版（永平寺開版）『正法眼蔵』九十五巻の録由、編輯例次について述べたもの。
Discussing the formation of the Honzan Edition of the 95-fascicle Shōbōgenzō with particular examples of the editing of the text

35. 万瑞 Banzui (n.d.)

正法眼蔵和語梯 Shōbōgenzō wagotei [Further Comments on the Use of Japanese Vernacular in Shōbōgenzō]

和語のみに限っての註. Remarks on Japanese vernacular citations

36. 全巖林盛 Zengan Rinsei (n.d.)

正法眼蔵撃節集 Shōbōgenzō gekisetsushū [Collected Comments Keeping to the Beat of Shōbōgenzō]

『正法眼蔵』八十四巻本（梵清謄写本系）の各巻の注意を七言八句の偈を似て頌したもの. Zengen, in the Bonsei lineage at Daijōji temple, provides 7-character 8-line poetry explaining various fascicles of Bonsei's 84-fascicle edition of Shōbōgenzō

37. 徳峰尚淳 Tokumine Naoatsu (n.d.)

a. 正法眼蔵聞書抄謄写 Shōbōgenzō kikigaki shōtōsha [Transcribed Edition of the Senne-Kyōgō Commentary on Shōbōgenzō]

b. 正法眼蔵参究紀行 Shōbōgenzō sankyū kigyō [Records of Investigations of Shōbōgenzō]

c. 正法眼蔵和語鈔謄写 Shōbōgenzō wagoshō tōsha [Comments on the Use of Japanese Vernacular in Transcribed Edition of Shōbōgenzō]

38. 柏峰良樹 Kashimine Yoshiki (n.d.)

正法眼藏抄謄写 *Shōbōgenzō shōtōsha* [Comments on Transcribed Edition of *Shōbōgenzō*]

39. 法忍 Hōnin (n.d.)

書寫正法眼藏序並口號三首 *Shosha Shōbōgenzō jōhō kukōsanshu* [Three Verse Comments Introducing a Transcript of the *Shōbōgenzō*]

40. 大癡 Taichi (n.d.)

正法眼藏和語梯拾要 *Shōbōgenzō wagotei jūyō* [Essential Comments on the Use of Japanese Vernacular in *Shōbōgenzō*]

万端の「和語梯」を伊呂波順に例字編輯して刊行したもの. Further examples of instances of the Japanese syllabary as cited in Banzui's work on vernacular references

41. 心応空印 Shinnō Kuin (n.d.)

正法眼藏逆驢乳 *Shōbōgenzō horyoji* [Milking the Donkey of *Shōbōgenzō*]

面山の『關邪訣』の所説を反駁し、師祖天桂の所説を弁護したもの. Comparing Tenkei's theories as contrasted with Menzan's theories in *Shōbōgenzō byakujaku ketsu*

42. 作者未詳 Author Unknown

正法眼藏過刻 *Shōbōgenzō kakoku* [Corrected Readings of *Shōbōgenzō*]

七十五卷本の語註. Linguistic remarks on the 75-fascicle edition

Modern Period (1868–Present)

The following list covering briefly the period of modern Japan, from the Meiji era to the present, is highly selective and includes only a relatively small handful of representative editions and scholarly studies from among the hundreds of works now available. These range from finely detailed scholarly reference and interpretative materials to many introductory primers (*nyūmon* 入門), how-to-read-it books (*yomikata* 読み方), discussion topic works (*wadai* 話題), reflective comments (*shinshaku* 新釈), and even comic book (*manga* 漫画) versions. In addition, there are other kinds of publications, such as a host of “translations into contemporary Japanese” (*gendaigoyaku* 現代語訳), since the original language used by Dōgen, like that of Chaucer and many other examples of traditional religious or literary works, could not possibly be understood by the typical current

reader without the crutch of paraphrases and simplified sentence structure or vocabulary.

Ōuchi Seiran, a prominent lay teacher and activist for modern Buddhist reforms, edited the first modern typeset edition of the 95-fascicle text published in 1885. Ōuchi was largely responsible for creating the *Shushōgi*, a tremendously abbreviated version of the *Shōbōgenzō* (which he read seven times in preparation) that does not mention meditation and is used mainly for Sōtō liturgy and confessionals. In 1879, Teizan Sokuichi (1805–1892) published an emendation of Ejō’s text on “Kōmyō.” The summer of 1905, a few years after the 700th anniversary, saw the first annual Genzō-e, or *Shōbōgenzō* summer study retreat, held at Eihei-ji and other temples for intensive investigations of particular fascicles, recalling Edo-period 1,000-day retreats as well as teachings delivered at Kichijō-ji and Seishō-ji, Edo period seminaries in Tokyo, by leading masters such as Menzan.

Oka Sōtan (1860–1921), a dharma-disciple of Nishiari, who was first exposed to the text when he heard lectures in 1841 by Daitōsu Guzen (1786–1859) at Kichijō-ji and later trained under Gettan Zenryū (d. 1865), led this effort. Followed and in some ways surpassed by another disciple, Kishizawa Ian (1865–1955), Nishiari wrote the main commentaries (*Keiteki*) of the early twentieth century that in part assessed the value of some of the main examples of Edo-period commentaries. Nishiari’s interpretations were severely attacked by a former disciple, Yasutani Hakuun (1865–1973). Another early commentator was Akino Kōdō (1858–1934). The term Genzō-ka 眼藏家, or “Dōgen specialist,” started to be used for eminent scholar-monks. The next year, 1906, was marked by the publication of the first official and complete typeset version of the 95-fascicle Honzan edition; this edition was used as the basis for the massive *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* Buddhist texts compilation in 100 volumes, with the *Shōbōgenzō* appearing in vol. 82 #2582. The initial modern example of *Dōgen’s Complete Works* was published in 1909 by the Eihei-ji branch temple in Tokyo, Chōkokujī.

Since World War II, there have been many multi-volume versions generally referred to as *Zen’yakuchū* 全訳注 (*Complete Annotated Modern Translations*), that provide interpretations, commentaries, and paraphrases with notes and clarifications of various editions (either the 95-fascicle edition or the 75-fascicles + 12-fascicles edition), usually with varying degrees of accuracy and reliability. There are at least four major postwar editions all known as *Dōgen zenji zenshū* (*Dōgen’s Complete Works*),

although they have different editing styles and results in the respective versions of the text. A convenient, but at this point rather hopelessly outdated from a technical standpoint, online edition of the 75-fascicle + 12-fascicle + others edition is found at: <http://www.shomonji.or.jp/soroku/genzou.htm>.

Through the various periods, with their permutations, from the medieval to the modern period, including the postwar phase, the original *Goshō* commentary on the 75-fascicle edition has remained the single most important interpretative guidepost influencing so many other commentators. But it is the Edo-period commentaries that most greatly impact the seminal modern scholarship of Kagamishima Genryū as highlighted in a 1965 book, *Dōgen zenji no in 'yō goroku – kyōten no kenkyū*, which documents Dōgen's sources found in Chinese Chan and other Mahayana Buddhist writings. Since then, there have been several main trends in *Shōbōgenzō* studies in Japan.

The first main trend was to continue the Edo-period focus on developing citation indices to determine how and why Dōgen referred to Chan texts. This led Ishii Shūdō, for example, to argue the reason Dōgen seems to misread Chinese is that he relied on an obscure source called the *Zongmen tongyaoji* 宗門統要集 (*Shūmon tōyōshū*), which was popular at the time of his travels to the continent but eventually fell out of fashion or was eclipsed by other versions of Zen stories in numerous Song-Yuan editions.

A second major trend was stimulated by timely ethical issues involving questions of social discrimination and nationalism, which compelled contributors to the Critical Buddhism (Hihan Bukkyō) methodology to emphasize the priority of what Dōgen referred to as the “new draft” of the 12-fascicle collection compared to the “older drafts” of the 75-fascicle and 60-fascicle collections. This was seen vis-à-vis Dōgen's own ethical stance as contrasted with contemporary practice. Whether it was approved or not, this standpoint has caused nearly all scholars to accept that the 12-fascicle edition must be juxtaposed with the 75-fascicle edition.

Finally, the most recent important trend in textual hermeneutics of the *Shōbōgenzō* has been to examine internal evidence involving the way Dōgen was revising or sometimes rewriting various fascicles, a process seen in manuscripts that included deletions and insertions. There were several alternative or changed versions known as *beppon* 別本, which reveal important convergences with other texts, especially *Eihei kōroku*.

- 43. 穆山瑾英 Bokusan Kin'ei** (a.k.a. Bokusan Nishiari 西有, 1821–1911)
a. 正法眼蔵ノ手入レ Shōbōgenzō no te'ire [Revised Edition of Shōbōgenzō], 95 fascicles
b. 正法眼蔵開講備忘 Shōbōgenzō kaikōbibō [Introductory Notes to the Shōbōgenzō]
c. 正法眼蔵啓迪 Shōbōgenzō keiteki [Edifying Comments on Shōbōgenzō]
 禪師御提唱、富山祖英師述・樽林皓堂編で、六十巻本を定本に行われた西有禪師の提唱録。ただ、惜しいことに現在では半分の三十巻分しか現存しないらしい。Nishiari's sermons on the 60-fascicle edition, edited by disciples Tōyama Soei and Kurebayashi Kōdō and published in 1930; unfortunately, half the original text or 30 fascicles is no longer extant. Also, in the late 1890s, Nishiari published his lecture notes on Shōbōgenzō, plus annotated editions of Zōkai's Shiki, Menzan's Wagoshō and Byakujaketsu, and Otsudō's Zokugen kōgi, plus comments on other Edo-period works
- 44. 岸沢惟安 Kishizawa Ian** (1865–1955)
 『正法眼蔵全講』 Shōbōgenzō zenkō (n.d.) [Complete Commentary on Shōbōgenzō], 95 fascicles
 老師御提唱。九十五巻全巻に対する提唱。Kishizawa's 24-volume sermons on the 95-fascicle edition
- 45. 弘津説三 Kōzu Setsuzan** (n.d.)
 承陽大師聖教全集解題 Shōyōdaishi seikyō zenshū kaidai (1909)
 [Explanations of the Complete Sacred Works of Dōgen], 95 fascicles
- 46. 大正新脩大藏經** (1912–24)
 Taishō shinshū daizōkyō, [Taishō-era Collection of Buddhist Tripitaka], vol. 82.2582, 95 fascicles
- 47. 神保如天, 安藤文英師, Jinbō Nyoten** (1880–1946) and **Andō Bun'ei** (n.d.)
 『正法眼蔵註解全書』 (1914, rpt. 1957) Shōbōgenzō chūkai zensho [Annotated Collection of Shōbōgenzō], 95 fascicles
- 48. 衛藤即応 Etō Sokuō** (1888–1958)
a. 『正法眼蔵』 Shōbōgenzō [Shōbōgenzō], 95 fascicles
 校注岩波文庫〔絶版〕、後に国書刊行会・3巻本）本山版 95 巻本にしたがって編集されたもの。他に拾遺を収めている。第3巻の末尾には「字彙」を収録しており、良い。

Published in three volumes by Iwanami bunko and later by Kokushoin gyōkai, this edition by a professor and former president of Komazawa University (Komazawa Daigaku 駒澤大学), a higher education institution in Tokyo founded by Sōtō Zen in the 1880s that still supports the largest department of Buddhist studies in the world, is an edited version of the Honzan edition; it also includes other materials; there is a useful dictionary at the end of vol. 3

b. 宗祖としての道元禪師 Shūso toshite no Dōgen Zenji [Zen Master Dōgen as Founding Patriarch], a spirited defense of the orthodox standpoint as opposed to secular appropriations of Dōgen as a worldwide philosopher by Kyoto School figure such as Watsuji Tetsurō and Tanabe Hajime; published in 1244 by Iwanami shoten, with a recent translation by Ichimura Shohei

49. 澤木興道 Sawaki Kōdō (1880–1965)

『澤木興道全集』, Sakaki Kōdō zenshū, 18 vols. [Complete Works of Sawak]

50. 大久保道舟 Ōkubō Dōshū (1896–1944)

『道元禪師全集』 (1930, rpt. 1969–1970, and 1989) Dōgen zenji zenshū [Dōgen's Complete Works], 95 fascicles

筑摩書房版、春秋社版とある。なお、博士には筑摩書房版に収録された『正法眼蔵』だけを抜き出した全1巻の『正法眼蔵』という本もあるが入手は困難。

Published first by Chikuma shobō, then reedited and reprinted, and again reprinted by Shunjūsha; but, the Shōbōgenzō in the latter is not the exact same version as in the first volume of the 1969 Chikuma edition

51. 本山版縮刷『正法眼蔵』 (1952)

Honzanban shukusatsu Shōbōgenzō, [Honzan Pocket Edition of Shōbōgenzō], 95 fascicles

鴻盟社・全1巻、玄透即中が刊行した本山版95巻本を、縮刷したもの。全1巻であるため使い勝手が良い。Published in one volume by Ōtorimeisha in a handy pocket edition, this is the 95-edition compiled by Gentō Sokuchū as sanctioned by the Sōtō Zen Main Temple (Eihei-ji)

52. 正法眼蔵, 2 vols. (1970–72), 75-fascicles + 12-fascicles

Shōbōgenzō; published by Iwanami shoten in the Nihon shisō taikēi, vols. 12&13, edited by Terada Tōru, a French literature scholar who wrote on Dōgen's view of language, and Mizuno Yaoko, a Genzō-ka

53. 永平正法眼藏菟書大成, 27 vols. (1974–82), plus 10 vols. (1992–2000)
 Eihei Shōbōgenzō shūsho taisai; [Formative Works for Dōgen’s Shōbōgenzō]; a comprehensive collection of many common and obscure reproductions of the texts, with facsimiles of various versions as well as multiple manuscripts of different editions and collections

54. 曹洞宗全書, 18 vols. (1970–73), plus 10 vols. (1988–93), 95 fascicles
 Sōtō shū zensho [Complete Works of Sōtō Sect] 『正法眼藏』, vol. 1

55. 水野弥穂子 Mizuno Yaoko (1921–2010)
 『正法眼藏』 (rpt. 1990-1993) Shōbōgenzō, [Shōbōgenzō], 75 fascicles + 12 fascicles + 5 others
 岩波文庫・4巻本, 校注 筑摩書房版『道元禪師全集』に収録された『正法眼藏』の見解にしたがって、編集されたもの。現在最も容易に入手可能。In four volumes published by Iwanami bunko based on a revision of Ōkubō’s Chikuma edition, this is the most accessible version establishing the new tradition of multiple divisions in the text

56. 道元禪師全集, 7 vols. (1998–1993)
 Dōgen zenji zenshū, [Dōgen’s Complete Works], 75-fascicles + 12-fascicles + 16 others; with the same name as an earlier Ōkubo edition as well as another more recent edition, published by Shunjūsha with multiple editors including Kawamura Kōdō for vols. 1–2 containing the Shōbōgenzō is still considered the standard modern edition that contains several “alternative” versions 別本 (*beppon*)

57. 石井修道 Ishii Shūdō (1944–)
a. 『宋代禪宗史の研究』 Sōdai zenshūshi no kenkyū [Studies of the History of Song Dynasty Zen] (1988) (Tokyo: Daitō Shuppansha)
b. 『中国禪宗史話—真字『正法眼藏』に学ぶ』 Chūgoku zenshūshiwa: Mana “Shōbōgenzō” ni manabu [Discussions of the History of Chinese Zen: Studying the Mana Shōbōgenzō] (1987) (Kyoto: Zen bunka kenkyūjo)

58. 鏡島元隆 Kagamishima Genryū (1912–2001)
 『道元禪師の引用経典・語録の研究』 Dōgen zenji no in’yō goroku—kyōten no kenkyū [Studies of Dōgen’s Citations of Zen Recorded Sayings and Buddhist Sutras] (1965) (Tokyo: Mokujisha)

本書の「凡例」に挙示する道元禅師披見の禅宗燈史書・諸家語録類等. The impact of Buddhist sutras and Chinese Zen recorded sayings on the text's formation.

59. 河村孝道 Kawamura Kōdō (1933–)

『正法眼蔵の成立史的研究』 *Shōbōgenzō no seiritsu shiteki kenkyū* [Historical Studies of the Formation of the *Shōbōgenzō*] (1987) (Tokyo: Shunjūsha)

正法眼蔵三百則〈真字正法眼蔵〉金沢文庫所蔵本. Studies of the impact of Dōgen's collection of 300 kōan cases in kanbun, or Mana *Shōbōgenzō*, based on the Kanazawa Bunko edition

60. 袴谷憲昭 Hakamaya Noriaki (1943–)

道元と仏教—十二巻本『正法眼蔵』の道元 *Dōgen to Bukkyō—Jūnikanbon Shōbōgenzō no Dōgen* [Dōgen and Buddhism—The 12-Fascicle *Shōbōgenzō*] (1992) (Tokyo: Daizō shuppan, 1992)

62. 西嶋愚道和夫 Nishijima Gudō Wafu (1919–2004)

正法眼蔵提唱録』, 12 vols. (1979–1985) (Tokyo: Ita ryōgokudō)

Conclusion

To offer a few concluding remarks on appreciating the role played by extensive pre-modern commentaries on *Shōbōgenzō*, this essay has focused primarily on the impact regarding the historical formation of the 95-fascicle edition in relation to other versions. Future studies may explain the intricate connections between the philosophical implications and the philological analyses provided by the commentaries. Beginning especially with Tenkei's challenge suggesting that Dōgen had misunderstood Chinese, Edo commentators realized that before moving forward with an interpretation of Dōgen's idiosyncratic manner of citing sources, they needed to take into account and respond to this critique. Therefore, their philosophical views were based on examinations of the rhetorical underpinnings of Dōgen's discourse, including his unique appropriation of texts combining Japanese vernacular explications with Song dynasty locutions. In many ways, that concern remains the main area of attention for current researchers in the field, whose methods were previewed and are still largely determined by Edo-period predecessors. One crucial lesson is to learn from the lengthy scholastic history to distinguish between pseudo-linguistics, which derives from ideological assumptions superimposed on

the text based on what it “should” say in terms of Zen theory and/or practice, and an open-ended hermeneutic approach to philology. This outlook enables the text to speak for itself in revealing a distinctive set of discursive contexts that are evaluated in light of contemporary standards for historical assessment.

Another factor to take into account in assessing the situation of Edo commentaries is that so many of the authors were multifaceted figures. Best known in this regard are Gesshū, a calligrapher and artist; Menzan, who wrote over a hundred works, including analyses of earlier commentaries; and Gentō, who also was prolific in scholarship and calligraphy. Numerous other figures were very active in a variety of ways, so that their comments on one particular text represent the tip of an iceberg, so to speak, in terms of overall productivity. Moreover, nearly all were involved in wide-ranging institutional reform as well as spiritual revitalization movements.

Finally, this article not only sheds light on the historical formation of the *Shōbōgenzō*, but also indicates how its interpretive traditions were shaped by ongoing editorial efforts to construct the authoritative version of the text. The research on commentaries furthermore shows the outline of what is understood today as the evolution from *sankyū* (studies based on religious practice) to *kenkyū* (objective historical analysis). As such, the complex history of forming the *Shōbōgenzō* bears a strong affinity to the evolution of diverse methodologies of *shūgaku* (denominational studies propagating a point-of-view about the meaning of the text). These standpoints include traditionalism (*dentō-shūgaku*) in addition to reform (*shin-shūgaku*), flexible (*yasashi-shūgaku*), and critical (*hihan-shūgaku*) approaches, which debate whether and to what extent Dōgen's stance was unchanging and varied or shifting and fluid as a provisional (*toriaezu* 取りあえず) body of writing that embodies his own philosophy of the tentative fullness of being-time (*uji*). As Ejō writes of “Kuyō shobutsu” in the 12-fascicle edition, “During the summer retreat of 1255, I made an edited copy from my late master's draft. It was not a polished version, as he would have surely made additions and deletions. Since that is no longer possible, I am leaving the draft intact.”

Therefore, the creation of an authoritative text, such as the 95-fascicle edition, functioned as a catalyst for developing somewhat contested and conflicting hermeneutic traditions that over time may have disputed or sought to replace authority based on a revamped sense of authenticity, or being true to the author's intentionality as best it can be determined. These interpretive models were at once an outcome of the editing process and a

strong element in eventually deconstructing its results, once held as the unquestioned authority and now seen as preliminary and in need of correction.

Note that Appendix I, II, III, and IV present various lists and tables documenting the different versions of the *Shōbōgenzō* and their roles in the formation of the 95-fascicle edition, whereas Appendix V features a multi-epochal flow-chart highlighting key stages in the process of commentary and text formation.



Figure 3. Steven Heine with Ishii Shūdō and Wakayama Yūkō reviewing a rare photo-facsimile edition stored at Komazawa University in 2016

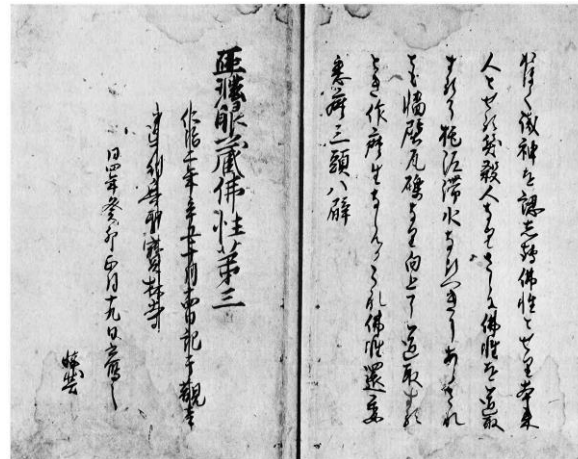


Figure 4. The cover page of "Busshō" fascicle manuscript showing revisions and deletions made by Ejō in the 1240s

Appendices I-V

Appendix I. Shōbōgenzō Editions Timeline

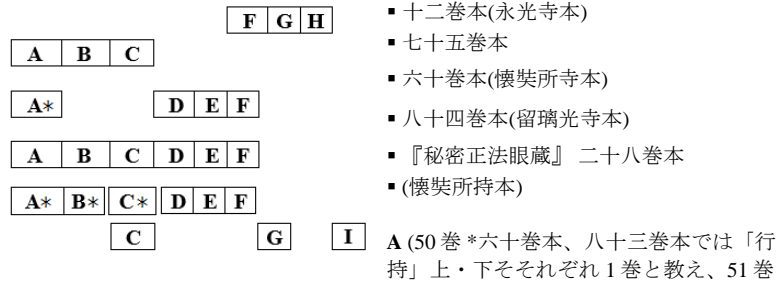
No. Fascicles	Compiler	Date	Manuscript	Period
75 Old Draft ¹	Dōgen	1245	1492-95	Kamakura
60 Old Draft ¹	Dōgen	1245	1329	Kamakura
12 New Draft	Dōgen	1247	1446 (1930)	Kamakura
100 An aspiration ²	Dōgen (acc. Ejō)	n/a		Kamakura
28 Private (Himitsu) ¹	Ejō	n.d.	? (1998)	Kamakura
75 Goshō comments	Senne-Kyōgō	1308	1598 (1779)	Kamakura
60 Hinmoku	Giun	1329	1406	Kamakura
84 Daijōji temple	Bonsei	1419		Muromachi
83 Rorikōji temple	Kakuin	1492	1510	Muromachi
84 Bonsei revised	Gesshū	1658		Edo
82 Early Edo effort	Manzan	1664		Edo
89 First Edo edition	Manzan	1684		Edo
93 Initial attempt	Kozen	1690		Edo
96 Complete	Kozen	1693		Edo
78 Benchū	Tenkei	1730	1881	Edo
95 After Kozen ³	Various editors	1700s		Edo
90 Honzan edition ⁴	Gentō ⁵	1796-1815		Edo
95 Woodblock	Honzan	1852		Edo
95 First typeset	Ōuchi Seiran	1885		Meiji
95 Completed	Honzan	1906		Meiji
95 First modern	Zenshū	1909		Meiji
95 Taishō canon	Taishō editors	1912-1924		Taishō
95 Iwanami bunko	Etō Sokuō	1939		Prewar
93 New Zenshū	Ōkubo Dōshū	1969-70		Postwar
88 Iwanami shoten	Terada-Mizuno	1970-72		Postwar
93 Etō redone	Mizuno Yaoko	1990-93		Postwar
103 Revised version	Zenshū	1988-93		Postwar

¹ Fascicles in Dōgen's hand include "Gyōji" part 2, "Sansuikyō" from the 28-edition, "Shisho" (two versions), "Soshi seirai," "Shohō jissō"; other early manuscripts by Ejō and others: "Busshō," "Shinfukutoku," "Zazenshin," "Kūge," "Keisei sanshoku," "Jippō," and from the 28-edition, "Raihaitokuzui," "Den'e," "Bukkyō" (Buddhist Teachings), "Shunjū"; ² According to Ejō's postscript to "Hachidainingaku," the final fascicle in the 12-edition, this was Dōgen's wish before his death, but Ejō also implies Dōgen preferred the New Draft version; ³ Various versions by Tenkei, Menzan, Rōran, Zōkai, Honkō, and others in the 18th century during the Prohibition; ⁴ Five fascicles deliberately left out; ⁵ Gentō also edited Eihei kōroku, Eihei shingi, Teiho Kenzeiki zue, and led in sectarian reforms and literary and visual aesthetics

Appendix II. Locations for Delivery of 95(6)-Fascicle Edition

Anyō'in	1 fascicle	1231	Kyoto
Kannon'in	2 fascicles	1233	Kyoto
Kōshōji	42 fascicles	1238-43	Kyoto
Hatano residence	1 fascicle	1242	Kyoto
Rokuhara temple	1 fascicle	1243	Kyoto
Kippōji	2 fascicles	1243-44	Echizen
Yamashibu	5 fascicles	1243	Echizen
Mountain retreats	2 fascicles	1244	Echizen
Daibutsuji/ Eiheiji	9 fascicles	1245-46	Eiheiji
Unclear	11 fascicles	unclear	Eiheiji
Total	96		

Appendix III-B. Various Shōbōgenzō Compilations (Japanese version)



とする):

現成公案・摩訶般若波羅蜜・佛性・身心學道・即心是佛・行佛威儀・一顆明珠・古佛
心・大悟・坐禪儀・海印三昧・空華・光明・行持(上下)・怎麼・觀音・古鏡・有時・授
記・全機・都機・畫餅・谿聲山色・佛向上事・夢中說夢・看經・諸惡莫作・道得・神通
・阿羅漢・葛藤・栢樹子・三界唯心・無情說法・法性・陀羅尼・洗面・十方・見佛・遍
參・眼晴・家常・龍吟・祖師西來意・發無上心・優曇華・如來全身・虛空・鉢盂・安居
B(6卷*八十三卷本は「春秋」1卷を欠く): 坐禪儀・春秋・梅花・洗淨・他心通・王索
仙陀婆

C (19 卷 * 八十三 卷本)：「詞書」1 卷を欠く：心不可得・禮拜得髓・山水經・傳衣・佛教・嗣書・說心說性・諸法實相・佛道・密語・佛經・面授・佛祖・菩提分法・三昧王三昧・轉法輪・大修行・自証三昧・出家

D (1 卷): 法華轉法華

E (1 卷): 菩提薩捶四掇法

F(7卷): 三時業・發菩提心・四馬・袈裟功德・出家功德・供養諸佛・歸依佛法僧寶

G (4 卷): 受戒・深信因果・四禪比丘・八大人覺

H (1 卷): 一百八法明門

I(5 卷): 別本心不可得・別本佛向上事・別本佛道(道心)・生死・唯佛與佛

Appendix IV. Sequence in 95-Fascicle and Several Other Editions

(according to Mizuno, 75 & 12 form one group, 60 & 28 form another)

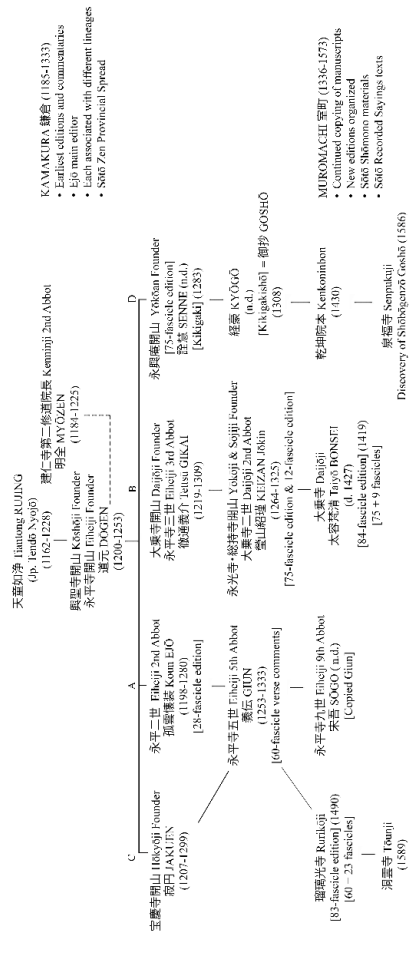
95-Honzan	75	60	12	28	84	89	Kōzen ^a	Date
1. Bendōwa						85	95	1231.8/15
2. Makahannyaharamitsu	2	2			2	1	1	1233.4-7
3. Genjōkōan	1	1			1	2	2	1233.8
4. Ikkyū Myōju	7	7			7	3	3	1238.4/18
5. Jūundōshiki						86	4	1239.4/25
6. Sokushin zebutsu	5	5			5	4	5	1239.4/25
7. Senjō	54	54			54	6	6	1239.10/23
8. Raihai tokuzui	28			8 ^b	28	7	7	1240.3/7
9. Keisei sanshoku	25	25			25	8	8	1240.4/20
10. Shoaku makusa	31	31			31	9	79	1240.10/1
11. Uji	20	20			20	10	10	1240.10/1
12. Kesa kudoku		41	3		81	13	9	1240.10/1
13. Den'e	32			12	32	12	80	1240.10/1
14. Sansuikyō	29			14	29	11	11	1240.10/18
15. Busso	52			22	52	14	12	1241.1/3
16. Shisho	39			19	39	15	13	1241.3/27
17. Hokke ten hokke		12			77	17	14	1241.4-7
18. Shinfukatoku	8			4	8	16	15	1241.4-7
19. Shinfukatoku b				3			16b	1241.4-7
20. Kokyō	19	19			19	18	17	1241.9/9
21. Kankin	30	30			30	19	74	1241.8/15
22. Bussō	3	3			3	20	21	1241.10/14
23. Gyōbutsu igi	6	6			6	21	18	1241.10/15
24. Bukkyō (Teachings)	34			13	34	22	19	1241.11/14
25. Jinzū	35	35			35	23	20	1241.11/16
26. Daigo	10	10			10	24	22	1242.1/28
27. Zazenshin	12				12	25	52	1242.3/18
28. Bukkyōjōji	26	26		1 ^b	26	27	25	1242.3/22
29. Immo	17	29			17	26	23	1242.3/20
30A. Gyōji 1	16	16			16	28	26	1243.1/18
30B. Gyōji 2	17	17						1242.4/5
31. Kaiin zanmai	13	13			13	29	78	1242.4/20
32. Juki	21	21			21	30	28	1242.2/25
33. Kannon	18	18			18	31	27	1242.4/26
34. Arakan	36	36			36	32	29	1242.5/15
35. Hakujuishi	40	40			40	33	30	1242.5/21
36. Kōmyō	15	15			15	34	31	1242.6/2
37. Shinjin gakudō	4	4			4	35	32	1242.9/9
38. Muchū setsumu	27	27			27	36	24	1242.9/21
39. Dōtoku	33	33			33	37	33	1242.10/5
40. Gabyō	24	24			24	38	34	1242.11/5
41. Zenki	22	22			22	39	35	1242.12/17
42. Tsuki	23	23			23	40	38	1243.1/6
43. Kūge	14	14			14	41	36	1243.3/10
44. Kobusshin	9	9			9	42	37	1243.4/29
45. Bodaisatta shishōbō		28			78	43	86	1243.5/5
46. Kattō	38	38			38	44	39	1243.7/7
47. Sangai yuishin	41	32			41	45	40	1243.7/1
48. Sesshin sesshō	42			27	42	46	57	1243

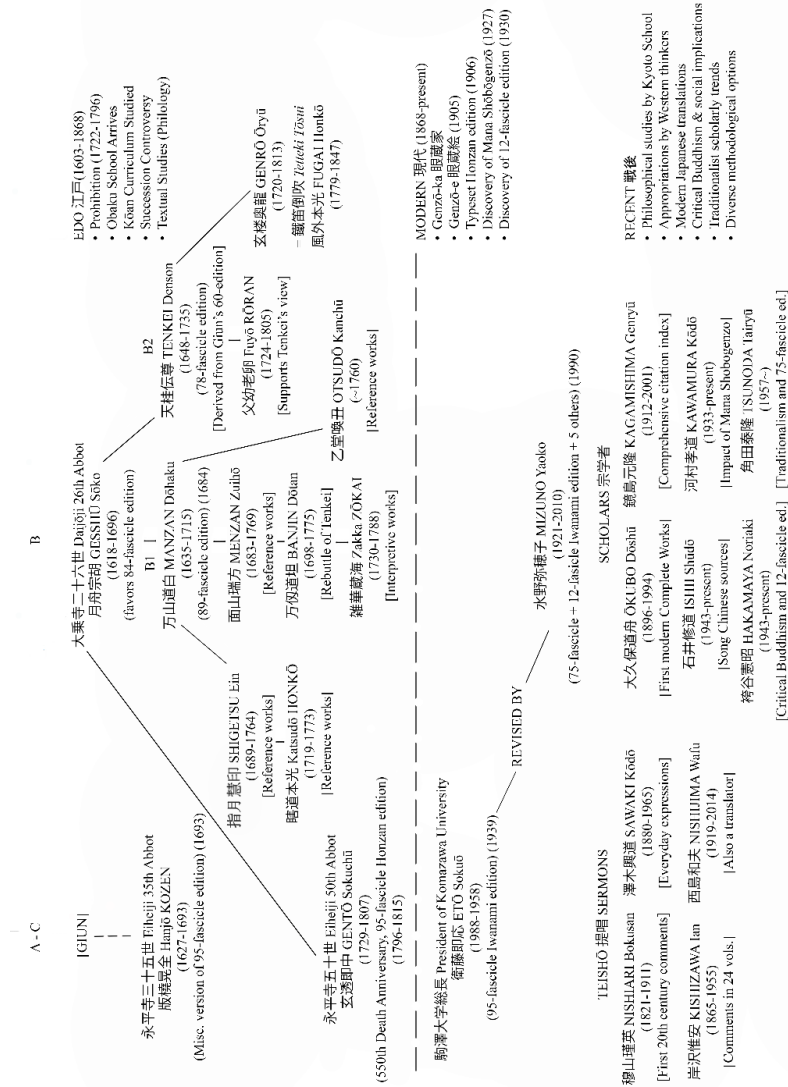
49. Butsudō	44			9	44	48	43	1243.9/16
50. Shohō jissō	43			6	43	47	41	1243.9
51. Mitsugo	45			15	45	49	72	1243.9/20
52. Bukkyō (Sutras)	47			25	47	50	42	1243.9
53. Mujō seppō	46	46			46	51	47	1243.10/2
54. Hōsshō	48	48			48	52	44	1243.10
55. Senmen	50	60			50	5	46	1239.10/23 6
56. Darani	49	49			49	53	56	1243
57. Menju	51			26	51	54	45	1243.10/20
58. Zazengi	11	11			11	55	51	1243.11
59. Baika	53				53	56	48	1243.11/6
60. Jippō	55	45			55	57	73	1243.11/13
61. Kenbutsu	56	47			56	58	49	1243.11/19
62. Henzan	57	37			57	59	50	1243.11/26
63. Ganzei	58	44			58	60	54	1243.12/17
64. Kajō	59	43			59	61	53	1243.12/17
65. Ryūgin	61	51			61	62	55	1243.12/25
66. Shunjū	37				37	63	65	1244
67. Soshi seiraii	62	52			62	64	61	1244.2/4
68. Udonge	64	54			64	65	58	1244.2/12
69. Hotsu mujōshin	63	53			63	66	62	1244.2/14
70. Hotsu bodaishin		34	4		80	80	59	1244.2/14
71. Nyorai zenshin	65	55			65	67	82	1244.2/15
72. Zanmai ō zanmai	66			10	66	68	60	1244.2/15
73. Sanjūshichibodaibun	60			11	60	69	63	1244.2/14
74. Tenbōrin	67			16	67	70	66	1244.2/27
75. Jishō zanmai	69			17	69	71	64	1244.2/19
76. Daishugyō	68			18	68	72	67	1244.3/9
77. Kokū	70	56			70	73	68	1245.3/6
78. Ho'u	71	42			71	74	69	1245.3/12
79. Ango	72	57			72	75	70	1245.6/13
80. Tajinzū	73				73	76	75	1245.7/4
81. Ōsaku sendaba	74				74	77	76	1245.10/22
82. Ji kuin mon						87	71	1246.8/6
83. Shukke	75			24	75	78	77	1246.9/15
84. Hachidainingaku			12	20		89	96	(1253.1/6) ^c
85. Sanjigō		8			76	79	84	(1253.3/9)
86. Shime		39	9		79	81	91	(1255.4-7)
87. Shukke kudoku		58	1		82	82	81	(1255.4-7)
88. Kuyō shobutsu		59	5		83	83	85	(1255.4-7)
89. Kie buppōsosonbō		60	6		84	84	83	(1255.4-7)
90. Jinshin inga			7	5			89	(1255.4-7)
91. Shizen biku			10	23			90	(1255.4-7)
92. Yuibutsu yobutsu				28			93	unknown
93. Shōji				2			87	unknown
94. Butsudō (Dōshin)				7			88	unknown
95. Jukai			2	21		88	92	unknown
96. Ippyakuhachihōmyōmon			11					unknown

^a One fascicle, "Shinzō," originally #94, was considered spurious and deleted from the edition^b Different versions for the 28-fascicle edition^c Parenthesis indicates copies made by Ejō

Appendix V. History of Shōbōgenzō Editions

HISTORY OF SHŌBŌGENZŌ EDITIONS





Essays

DISCOURSE ON FOOD IN WORLD WAR II JAPAN

Junko Baba

University of South Carolina

Between a high, solid wall and an egg that breaks against it, I will always stand on the side of the egg. The eggs are the unarmed civilians who are crushed and burned and shot by them... And each of us, to a greater or lesser degree, is confronting a high, solid wall. The wall has a name: It is The System. The System is supposed to protect us, but sometimes it takes on a life of its own and then it begins to kill us and cause us to kill others - coldly, efficiently, systematically. – *Haruki Murakami*

Food consumption during wartime is not only the usual fundamental source of energy, especially for soldiers in combat; it is also “an important home-front weapon essential for preserving order and productivity” of the citizens.¹ This study analyzes the sociopolitical and cultural meaning of food in Japan during World War II by examining social commentary and criticism implied in selected post-war literature about the war by popular writers, when the role of food during wartime in the lives of ordinary citizens could be depicted without censorship. These literary works offer insight into the inner lives and conflicts of ordinary Japanese citizens, including civilians and conscripted soldiers, under the fascist military regime during the war.

The criticism of the military government and social commentary in these works with respect to food can be categorized into political and cultural aspects. Research on the political aspect of food can be summarized in the phrase “plenty versus shortage”; focusing primarily on the control exercised by the state, which has the effect of carrot-and-stick manipulation. The study of the cultural aspect focuses on the Westernization of Japanese food, which appears to have contributed to the ambivalence in particular of the Japanese urban citizen in treating the allies as enemies, an ambiguity that lingered despite the military government’s anti-Western propaganda.

This analysis incorporates food studies to examine the sociocultural aspects of food that permeated Japanese interpersonal relationships and sense

¹ Katarzyna J. Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine: Food, Power and National Identity* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2006), 117.

of identity during the war.² From a sociocultural point of view, attitudes towards food can be discussed as a means of “sociocultural identity” at different levels, i.e. gender, class, ethnicity and nation.³ Membership in the community can occasionally be negotiated or exchanged through “communication” by expressing belonging or “attaining desired states.”⁴

These states can enhance group solidarity among members.⁵ Finally, food can be a “profoundly moral issue” because, at the moral minimum, in David M. Kaplan’s phrasing, “we should neither eat people nor deprive them of food. We probably have an obligation to prevent starvation and to feed the hungry.”⁶ The insights of the studies from which these initial quotations are taken are woven into the following discussion, which analyzes the sociocultural aspects of portions of Japanese post-war literature dealing with World War II.

First, this study analyzes the effect of the government’s manipulation of food on soldiers. Second, the paper discusses urbanite struggles, the crisis management of food shortages under governmental rationing and surveillance, and urbanite conflicts with the military and farmers. Particularly, the extent to which Western food affected the Japanese nation during the war will be studied. All the selected post-war literature is either highly autobiographical or has a documentary component.⁷ Literary works employed in this study include the writings of military personnel on

² Claude Fischler, “Food, Self, and Identity.” *Social Science Information* 27/2 (1998), 275.

³ Peter Scholliers, *Food, Drink and Identity* (New York: Berg 2001), 7–8; David M. Kaplan, *Philosophy of Food* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2012), 9–12.

⁴ Roland Barthes, “Psychology of Contemporary Food Consumption,” in Carol Counihan and Penny Van Esterik, eds., *Food and Culture: A Reader*. (NY: Routledge, 2009), 8.

⁵ Eugene Newton Anderson, *Everyone Eats* (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 10.

⁶ Kaplan, *Philosophy of Food*, 10.

⁷ The only exception is Tsuboe Sakai’s *Twenty Four Eyes*, because it was one of the very few works that has explicit criticism of the government through comment on its food policies. The work covers the period from 1928 to 1946.

the frontline, such as *Fires on the Plain*,⁸ *Devil's Gluttony*,⁹ *Soldiers in the Tree*,¹⁰ and *Soldiers in the Jungle*.¹¹ Japanese civilians are treated in *Twenty-Four Eyes*,¹² *Black Rain*,¹³ *Grave of the Fireflies*¹⁴ and "American Hijiki."¹⁵

Before moving to the main discussion, it is imperative to provide a brief historical background to World War II Japan. Due to the drastic increase of urban populations, owing to the rapid Western industrialization of the country that began in 1868, Japan had gradually begun to rely more heavily on the import of vital food.¹⁶ This was the major reason for the country's involvement in a series of major global wars, including the Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895), Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905), World War I (1914–1918), and World War II (1941–1945). The aggression of the military government escalated into a rampage when the Imperial Japanese Kwantong army in Manchuria took military action at their discretion to establish the puppet state of Manchukuo in 1932. This was followed by the assassination of Prime Minister Inukai by young naval officers, caused by his attempts to block the military action in Manchuria. Subsequently, Japanese aggression in East Asia escalated into the Second Sino-Japanese War of 1937. This

⁸ Shohei Ooka, *Fires on the Plain*, trans. Ivan Morris (Boston: Tuttle Publishing, 2001).

⁹ Seiichi Morimura, *Akuma no hoshoku* [Devil's Gluttony] (Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 2011).

¹⁰ Ryuta Horai, "Ki no ue no guntai" [Soldiers in the Tree] *Subaru*, May (2013). The original draft of this play was the last work of the late popular writer Yasushi Inoue based on an actual story from the interview of the protagonists visiting Okinawa and completed by Horai after his death (NHK Special in May 2013).

¹¹ Ashihei Hino, *Mitsurin to Heitai* [Soldiers in the Jungle] (Tokyo: Shakai Hihyosha, 2013).

¹² Sakae Tsuboi, *Nijyuu shi no hitomi* [Twenty-Four Eyes] (Tokyo: Kadokawa, 2010).

¹³ Masuji Ibuse, *Black Rain*, trans. John Bester (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1969).

¹⁴ Akiyuki Nosaka, *Hotaru no haka* [Grave of the Fireflies] (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1968).

¹⁵ Akiyuki Nosaka, "American Hijiki" in *Hotaru no haka* [Grave of the Fireflies] (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1968).

¹⁶ Lizzie Collingham, *The Taste of War*, 2.

military expansionism eventually collided with an international economy as dominated by Britain and the United States.¹⁷ Within two years of Pearl Harbor, Japan was suffering a full-scale American blockade, preventing imports from the Asian market it had come to rely so heavily on.¹⁸ Eventually, the vulnerability of the military government's food policies would result in military losses from starvation, malnutrition and associated diseases amounting to 60% of military deaths in the war and severe starvation among Japanese citizens in the homeland.¹⁹

It should not be overlooked, however, that early in the Pacific War there was no food shortage in the military. The navy and air force were relatively better off than the army was in general and food was even at times plentiful in limited sectors of the army. In the Japanese homeland, many farmers in particular enjoyed entitlement rights to food,²⁰ especially to rice, owing to government protections that ensured agricultural productivity during the war. In view of the poverty and starvation during the Great Depression, which affected Japan from 1929 until 1935, afflicting farmers much more than their urban counterparts, the wartime protections may have been deserved. However, the special protection during the war invited conflict with the urban population, which previously had 25 percent more rice than farmers living in rural areas.²¹

In addition to the consideration of the food issue during the war in terms of "plenty versus shortage," it is also important to note that for the Japanese the Pacific War was in fact a cultural conflict between conservative Japanese culture and liberal American consumer culture: At the political level, governmental anti-Anglo-American propaganda, commonly known as *kichiku beiei* (Anglo-American Demon Beast) permeated Japanese society, and government prohibitions went into effect that banned many aspects of American consumer culture which had permeated the cities before the war and which the government itself had previously promoted.²² Most prominent

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid, 229–230.

¹⁹ Ibid., 1–10.; Akira Fujiwara, *Uejinishita Eiyuutachi* [War Heroes Starved to Death] (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, 2011), 138.

²⁰ Cwieretka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, 131.

²¹ Collingham, *The Taste of War*, 52.

²² Right up into 1941 large posters accompanied by the text of brief articles reporting various aspects of pro-American news and popular culture were

among these was the prohibition of English loanwords, English being designated an enemy language, which extended to can labels, food manufacturer's company names, names of cafes and restaurants, and menu items.²³

At the civilian level, there was a conflict between a liberal urban population immersed in pre-war American consumerism and popular culture, including American-style casual dining, jazz and Hollywood movies.²⁴ Yet, on the other hand, there was a rural population that adhered to a Japanese conservative culture compatible with ultra-nationalism and with anti-Anglo American propaganda, as promoted by a military government that considered "Western liberalism to be un-Japanese and unworthy."²⁵ Therefore, the conflict between urban Japan and rural Japan derived not only from the unequal distribution of food, but also from differences in cultural and political orientation.

Finally, the unique social structure in which ordinary Japanese people lived will be explored here. Under the reinforced military regime during the war,²⁶ the entire nation was controlled by the National General Mobilization Law implemented in 1938,²⁷ which included severe censorship and surveillance. In particular, the military government rigidly exercised a top-down thought control of the nation. The *Kempeitai*,²⁸ the elite police of

still being posted nationwide by *Domei tsushinsha*, the government-affiliated press association; see Juichi Inoue, *Senzen Showa no Sekai, 1926–1945* [Showa Period Before the War] (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2011), 209).

²³ Itsuo Ooishi, *Eigo o Kinshi seyo – Shirarezaru senjika no Nihon to America* [Forbid English – Unknown Facts of Japan and U.S. during the War] (Tokyo: Goma Shobo, 2007), 52–84.

²⁴ Junichi Inoue *Senzen Showa no Sekai*, 207–211. United States was the most important trade partner as well for Japan in the pre-war period.

²⁵ Collingham, *Taste of War*, 57.

²⁶ Raymond Lamont-Brown points out that Tokyo's involvement with the *Kempeitai* since early days "had a great influence in and on Japanese politics throughout the 1930s" and enhanced "the military cadres in Japanese government." Lamont-Brown, *Kempeitai – Japan's Dreaded Military Police*. Gloucestershire (UK: Sutton Publishing, 1998), 25–26.

²⁷ *Nihon Daihyakka Zensho* (Tokyo: Shogakukan, 1986), 383.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 35–44. The total number of *Kempeitai* in China at the height of hostilities was estimated to be 16,408. In Japan, the total was 10,679 and

the Japanese military forces, exercised extraordinary autocratic authority, frightening military personnel and civilians alike,²⁹ even more than Japan's enemies. They were "the visible arm and the guardians of the law, the public censors and overseers of private morals and thought as well as arbiters of decorum," and anyone could be "presumed guilty on arrest."³⁰

By 1939, units of approximately ten households, called *tonarigumi*, were ordered into various larger-sized neighborhood associations called *chonaikai*, an organization that emerged spontaneously in major cities.³¹ From 1940 onward, the government's policy of bottom-up control made the participation of every household in these neighborhood associations obligatory. Members were trained to serve as defense forces in case of an enemy attack on the homeland, performing such functions as firefighting in air raids, and were instructed in the proper distribution of rations under government supervision.³²

These associations were placed under control of local governments, and nearly half of their leaders served concurrently as city officials. These officials exerted enormous authority over members of the group, being privy to the private information, including incomes and assets, of their members, and members could even be deprived of their food rations unless they remained in compliance with the leaders.³³ Furthermore, associations were scrutinized and supervised by the *Kempeitai* via the *Tokkō*, a special unit of police who carried out mutual surveillance among their members.³⁴ Thus, top-down and bottom-up controls were tightly linked.

followed by 1,927 in Korea. The work of these personnel also included gathering intelligence although they were mainly responsible for torturing of POWs. *Kempeitai* prisoners were also sent to Unit 731, the "human experiment" unit. They also took charge of women from captive populations who were forced into prostitution from threat of starvation.

²⁹ Lamont-Brown, *Kempeitai*, 18.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, vii.

³¹ Yokichi Watanabe, *Senjika no nihonjin to tonarigumi kaiho* [Japanese and the Neighborhood Associations during the War] (Tokyo: Gentosha, 2013), 17.

³² Michael Wright, "In Search of 'Silver Rice': Starvation and Deprivation in World War II-Era Japan," *Studies on Asia* 1/1 (2010): 57–85.

³³ *Ibid.*, 17–21.

³⁴ Lamont-Brown, *Kempeitai*, 14–16.

At the core of this thought control was the *kokutai*,³⁵ the national political framework that incorporated faith in State Shinto, thus promoting Japanese patriotism through loyalty to the emperor, the legendary successor of a Shinto god, and in turn promoting an acceptance of the war as a kind of spiritual endeavor. This allegiance was ultimately carried out through *bushido* (the ethical code of samurai),³⁶ which advocated a spirit of fighting “without surrender” and the choice of “death for honor”; thus, self-sacrifice for the group was emphasized.³⁷ The allegiance was also endorsed and upheld through legal sanctions, since Japanese POWs who repatriated were brought to trial and punished in the home country.³⁸ The same stoic spiritualism, described by Ruth Benedict as the anticipation of a “victory of spirit over matter,”³⁹ was advocated during severe food shortages through the slogan “the more shortage of food there is, the more we must raise our physical strength by other means.”⁴⁰ In effect, this political indoctrination was enforced by the nation’s educational system, whose core teaching encouraged the worship of the emperor, and by the relatively new mass medium of radio.

It is most obvious that food is essential for the survival of military forces, since it provides the energy that fuels combatants. In fact, the Japanese military was “one of the best-fed armed forces in the world” with 4,000 calories per person a day in 1929. Based on the research of the Army Medical School reported in 1942, the average for the army military ration for the Kanto area, the vicinity of Tokyo, dropped to 3,350 calories, slightly

³⁵ Joseph. M. Kitagawa, “The Japanese *Kokutai*,” *History of Religions* 13/3 (1974), 204.

³⁶ Lamont-Brown pointed out that the *bushido* code adopted by *Kempeitai* was particularly corrupt in the way the POWs were harshly treated since the original *bushido* code is based on “the five main tenets of righteousness, courage, humanity, propriety and sincerity” and did not include “cruelty.” (Lamont-Brown, *Kempeitai*, 9).

³⁷ Kaplan, *Philosophy of Food*, 572–579.

³⁸ Fujiwara, *Uejinishita Eiyuutachi*, 226.

³⁹ Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1989), 22.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 24.

lower than the required 3,500 calories a day, yet they could still afford to sell leftover military rations to the dealer.⁴¹

During the 1930s, the promise of better food in the military attracted underage volunteers from poorer families who, owing to a shortage of food in the homeland, enjoyed an improved diet in the military. These volunteers regarded military meals as “food in paradise,”⁴² often recalling it as the “most memorable experience of their time in the military.”⁴³ One boy volunteer for the navy commented, “I was always starving... [It] was my first time eating minced meat cutlets and curry with rice.”⁴⁴

In general, men in the navy and air force were relatively well fed, with Unit 731 in Manchuria the best-nourished unit in the army until the very end of the Pacific War.⁴⁵ In the navy, the ships, which were stocked with ammunition for a minimum of thirteen weeks, were also stocked with sufficient provisions, such as rice and wheat. Therefore, sailors and marines rarely starved.⁴⁶ Naval officers were the most privileged elite, enjoying Western-style dishes and live music.⁴⁷ The navy normally provided between 3,377 and 3,563 calories per day in 1942. Its air force division enjoyed an even higher daily ration of 4,542–5,000 calories.⁴⁸

In *Twenty-Four Eyes*, Ms. Ooishi, a young female teacher from the city teaching at a rural school, laments the way some of her students from poor families have volunteered to join the air force, motivated by food:

These boys could not stand to eat bitter bread made with
acorns they picked in the mountain... Some boys
volunteered to join the air force simply because they

⁴¹ Shunya Ichinose, *Kogun Heishi no Nichijyo Seikatu* [Daily Lives of Imperial Soldiers] (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2009), 176.

⁴² Kenji Sato, et al., *Nihon rikugun to nihon kaigun no nazo* [The Enigma of the Japanese Army and Navy] (Tokyo: PHP Kenkyusua, 2013), 89.

⁴³ Cwierka, *Moderen Japanese Cuisine*, 840.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 102.

⁴⁵ Morimura, *Akuma no hoshoku*, 202.

⁴⁶ Nao Kumagaya, *Teikoku Rikugun no Kisochishiki* [Basic Knowledge of the Imperial Army] (Tokyo: Kojinsha NF Bunko, 2014), 262.

⁴⁷ Sato, et al., *Nihon rikugun to nihon kaigun no nazo*, 174–175.

⁴⁸ Masao Fujita, *Kaigun Ryoshokushi* [History of Navy Food] (Tokyo: Shioshobo Kojinsha, 2014), 182.

thought they could savor sweet bean soup. Some of them were from poor families who were manipulated by the fantasy of eating to their heart's content by joining the air force. Whatever their motivation was, they were still treated as wartime heroes.⁴⁹

In 1935, Unit 731, located in the Manchurian city of Harbin, was “the Japanese army’s principal bacteriological-warfare research and experimental organization.” It was “demolished at the approach of Soviet troops in August 1945.”⁵⁰ *Devil’s Gluttony*, a work of literary nonfiction based on interviews with more than thirty former military personnel of Unit 731, provides a horrifying view of the testing of the effects of biological weapons on human subjects. The human subjects were prisoners of war (called *maruta*, literally *lumber*), who received abundant food and healthy diets, their health being necessary for their usefulness as test subjects, since “bacteria grew better in the rich protein and carbohydrate intake.”⁵¹ Most of the *maruta* eventually suffered “either death or excruciating pain, as if in Hell.”⁵² The experiments on the *maruta* tested the effects of bacteria causing diseases such as cholera and typhoid. The “most abundant luxury of food” used to fatten *maruta* was available to the military personnel of this unit, who were among the most well-fed members of the Imperial Japanese Army.⁵³

Japanese boy volunteers in Unit 731, like other recruits from poor families, were attracted to the unit through the abundance of food. They themselves were unwitting victims of these cruel experiments, although to a lesser degree than the *maruta*.⁵⁴ These boys were employed in experiments

⁴⁹ Tsuboi, *Nijyuyon no hitomi*, 97. This passage is set between 1932–1934, during the period in which poverty and starvation hit the rural area. The work seems significant in showing the sympathy of an urbanite for the rural victims.

⁵⁰ Cook, Haruko, and Theodore F. Cook. *Japan at War* (New York: The New Press, 1992), 158.

⁵¹ Morimura, *Akuma no Hoshoku*, 204.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 26.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 236–237.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 128–131. While advocating Japanese acceptance of responsibility for their aggression in invading other countries, which included the commissions of atrocities, as in Unit 731, Morimura also criticized Japanese fascist military government for victimizing its own people.

in which their hands were put in freezing water to determine how much cold their skin could tolerate until the pain became intolerable. After the experiments, they were rewarded with their favorite confections such as *manju* and *yokan*, traditional Japanese sweets made with bean jam.⁵⁵ The boys were also used for experiments with a vaccination for typhoid fever, which required them to be infected through the ingestion of tainted *manju*.⁵⁶ The craving for sweets, a factor in the enlistment of many poor boys deprived of sugar at home, provided those enlisted in Unit 731 with a consolation for extreme acts of forced painful degradation.

The Imperial Japanese Army in the Pacific and Southeast Asia was afflicted by serious shortages of field rations after the Battle of Midway in 1942, when the tide of the war turned against Japan. More than three-fourths of war deaths occurred in 1944 and 1945.⁵⁷ Yet, even after the Japanese navy lost much of its aircraft carriers and control of the air, the army continued to deploy infantrymen to the Pacific Islands, where the problem of replenishing food supplies was extremely challenging because of the distance from the mainland and American control of the seas.⁵⁸ For example, in the Philippine campaign, including Leyte Island, 80% of the 500,000 Japanese troops died of starvation. In the Burma campaign, including Imphal in India, almost 80% of 164,500 troops perished in this way.⁵⁹

Lizzie Collingham reports that, in addition to “full scale American blockade,” starvation was largely caused by the Japanese imperial government’s weakness in logistics,⁶⁰ such as their building more warships rather than the cargo ships needed for transporting food supplies. Additional factors were “misguided agricultural policies,” the “ruthless requisitioning of rice” in invaded Asian countries, and an unrealistically limited food supply for foot soldiers on the Asian front lines, where battles over food were waged between Japanese soldiers and local populations.⁶¹ The battles in the Philippines involved many local residents, including those who waged

⁵⁵ Ibid., 235.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 236–237.

⁵⁷ Ichinose, *Kogun Heishi no Nichijyo Seikatu*, 238.

⁵⁸ Fujiwara. *Uejinishita Eiyuutachi*, 14.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 136–138.

⁶⁰ Collingham, *Taste of War*, 229–282.

⁶¹ Ibid., 242, 240.

guerrilla warfare against the Japanese. Starving Japanese soldiers often murdered Filipinos in order to plunder their food.⁶²

One of the most dreadful shortages on the frontlines was a deficiency in salt, which is essential for survival. In *Soldiers in the Jungle*, Ashihei Hino depicts the terrible salt deficiency at the Battle of Imphal of 1944 in India, under an unbearable scorching sun and with starvation. Seeing debilitated horses licking each other's tails that contain salty sweat, the starving soldiers, many of whom were sick with malaria, were told to lick their sweaty forearms for salt.⁶³ Viewing Corporal Itoshima desperately licking his arms, his fellow soldiers "exchanged glances, guffawing and continually licking their forearms." However, their laughter "included the feeling of commiseration," which "only those who share the military life at the battle fields could understand."⁶⁴

In a passage from Shohei Ooka's *Fires on the Plain*, Tamura, an abandoned ailing soldier, is told to kill himself with a hand grenade if the overcrowded hospital refused him for treatment.⁶⁵ Sick and starving he wanders around in the jungle of Leyte, eventually shooting and killing a Filipino woman while looking for food in her dwelling and finding salt. Later, he meets fellow soldiers in the jungle, and they let him join them in exchange for sharing the salt that he has stolen. Tamura thinks, "a few handfuls of salt would constitute a bond of comradeship."⁶⁶

The sharing of salt or food, a sign of camaraderie, had a special significance in the Japanese military. The saying, "*onaji kama no meshi*," or "the fellowship of sharing the same meal," reflected the army's principle of serving all soldiers on the battlefield, regardless of rank, identical food in identical aluminum containers to enhance solidarity and to illustrate a shared destiny.⁶⁷

Another passage illustrates an extreme situation involving the sharing of food. There is nothing left to eat and "even the salt finally gives out."⁶⁸ Tamura encounters a fellow Japanese soldier who is dying. The

⁶² Fujiwara, *Uejinishita Eiyuutachi*, 111–113.

⁶³ Hino, *Mitsurin to Heitai*, 15.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 128.

⁶⁷ Sato, *Nihon rikugun to nihon kaigun no nazo*, 89.

⁶⁸ Ooka, *Fires on the Plain*, 176.

soldier, pointing to his arm, says to Tamura: “You poor fellow! When I’m dead, you may eat this.”⁶⁹ Tamura realizes that “for some reason, these words, intended as an invitation, acted instead as a ban.”⁷⁰ In this instance, the desperate hunger ultimately brings to the forefront the moral prohibition against cannibalism, as the dying soldier even within this ostensibly sordid situation shows an element of nobility in his gesture of self-sacrifice, the ultimate form of camaraderie, in terms of sharing food.⁷¹

It is appropriate now to turn to civilian life and food management in the Japanese homeland during the war. The average per capita calorie consumption rationed by the government in Tokyo was 1,405 in 1945⁷² and in Nagoya, it was 1,364 in 1944.⁷³ However, the actual number of calories consumed could have been lower. Consequently, it is reported that “100 % of urban Japanese dwellers had suffered weight loss.”⁷⁴

Official rationing was first implemented in 1938 and “expanded incrementally to include almost every basic necessity by 1942.”⁷⁵ Rationing took place under the slogans, “Luxury is the enemy” and “Do not desire until victory is achieved.” Food rations were systematically controlled, monitored, and distributed in a limited amount to each household through the neighborhood associations that were in each community nationwide.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 183.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 184.

⁷¹ Cannibalism among Japanese soldiers in New Guinea was reported in American army documents. See Collingham, *Taste of War*, 297.

⁷² Ohara Institute for Social Research at Hosei University, *Taiheiyo sensoo ka no roodoo jyotai* [Labor Conditions under the Pacific War] 1964, (accessed December 26, 2014, <http://oohara.mt.tama.hosei.ac.jp/rn/senji1/rn/senji1-148.html>).

⁷³ Akiko Kumazawa and Masako Tanahashi, *Senjika ni okeru Nagoya shimin no eiyo sesshu jyotai* [Nutrition Intake of Citizens in Nagoya during the War], *Eiyogaku Zasshi* 5 (1968): 255–260.

⁷⁴ Secretary of War, “The Effects of Bombing on Health and Medical Services in Japan,” *United States Strategic Bombing Survey* (Neuilly sur Seine, France: Ulan Press, 1947), 90.

⁷⁵ George Solt, “Ramen and U.S. Occupation Policy,” in Eric C. Rath, eds., *Japanese Foodways, Present and Past* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 188.

Additional food could be purchased only on the black market⁷⁶ or obtained through barter with farmers.

The novel *Black Rain*, based on the diaries of the *hibakusha* in Hiroshima, whose main concern was also dealing with a food shortage,⁷⁷ contains an anecdote about the government altering a detail in a famous classical poem in order to make the work of art conform in a documentary manner to current government policy. The poem, by Kenji Miyazawa, printed in a school textbook, shows respect for the frugality of the Japanese farmer, admiring the hardship endured by the farmer for his limiting himself to four *go* of brown rice per day.⁷⁸ The figure given in the poem exceeds by one third the actual daily brown rice ration at the time and so the authorities had the poem altered, changing four *go* to three *go*.⁷⁹ Critical of the distortion of the poem, Mrs. Miyaji, one of the protagonist's neighbors, casually speaks of the government's alteration as an "insult to learning."⁸⁰ Shortly afterward, she is warned by a state authority that "Irresponsible talk in wartime is a matter that's too serious for the ordinary civil or criminal code." The narrator comments: "By that time, everybody was taking care of what they said in front of others."⁸¹

Thus, members of the neighborhood associations appear to have been extremely conscious of mutual surveillance. For example, the character Mr. Nojima who, having studied in the U.S. is rumored by neighbors to be friendly with a leftist scholar who was corresponding with Americans, must be extremely cautious, keeping a low profile and showing kindness to everybody in the district so that his neighbors do not grow suspicious and report him to the police.⁸² Likewise, Nojima's wife and her father entertain

⁷⁶ While buying food on the black market was illegal and subject to imprisonment, this activity was a necessity for survival. See Wright, "In Search of 'Silver Rice,'" 65.

⁷⁷ The title "Black Rain" refers to the rain that includes radiation after the atomic bomb was dropped. Anti-war sentiment seems implied by several descriptions of radiation-contaminated food.

⁷⁸ The name of the poem, not mentioned by Ibuse, is *Ame ni mo makaezu* ("Be not Defeated by the Rain").

⁷⁹ Ibuse, *Black Rain*, 64. Four *go* is about 600 grams, three *go*, about 450.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 64.

⁸¹ Ibid., 66.

⁸² Barthes, "Psychology of Contemporary Food Consumption," 29.

the neighbors with their limited supply of homegrown peaches from their yard. Gifting food, included among the “rites of hospitality,”⁸³ facilitates group membership and communication. However, the excessive hospitality here can be interpreted as a way to deflate criticism and reduce the scrutiny of neighbors. Moreover, the awareness of mutual surveillance can be extended to cooking, especially when the food is obtained from the black market: “The only fish we felt free to broil as we pleased was what we got on the ration. We didn’t like to broil fish we had bought on the black market in case the smell got to the neighbors, so we boiled it or made soup with it instead.”⁸⁴

It should also be noted that ingenuity in cooking was strongly encouraged and initiated by the government, and special recipes and cooking methods using “relatively unknown foodstuffs” were disseminated through the associations by official dietitians.⁸⁵ Some instructional cookbooks were customized for home use based on a version originally published by the military, which included instructions on eating wild plants and insects.⁸⁶

The ingenuity of housewives is seen when mothers cooked wild plants for their children’s snacks: “In every home, parched beans made up to ninety percent of such snacks for the children, and the wild plants made [for] a kind of change.” Grubs, “the young of the long-horned beetle,” were broiled in soy sauce and given to undernourished children.⁸⁷

To supplement the food supply during the severe food shortage, any available urban spaces including schoolyards were turned into vegetable gardens. In 1943 and 1944, every urban household grew its own vegetables, using pots or boxes when there was no garden space available.⁸⁸ Pumpkins were commonly cultivated because they are nutritious and every part is edible, and were believed easy to grow and store. This was promoted in a campaign of “one pumpkin stock per household.”⁸⁹ However, Shigeko, in *Black Rain*, complains that she can harvest only “a bare dozen” pumpkins a year, and is

⁸³ Ibid., 29.

⁸⁴ Ibuse, *Black Rain*, 68.

⁸⁵ Collingham, *Taste of War*, 132.

⁸⁶ Sato, *Nihon rikugun to nihon kaigun no nazo*, 150.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 69.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 144.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 138.

therefore impelled to cook even the stalks of the pumpkins she has.⁹⁰ Shigeko concludes a summary of the food shortage with a sharp condemnation of war: “I realized, too, that war’s a sadistic killer of human beings, young and old, men and women alike.”⁹¹

Due to a lack of entitlement rights to food and suffering from food shortage, city dwellers objected to and reacted against military personnel and farmers who were more privileged recipients of food. Toward the end of the war, in the homeland, the demoralization of military personnel grew out of control. *Black Rain* documents the theft by the army of provisions such as rice, corn beef and wine. The narrator states, “It was outrageous for soldiers on active service...when food shortage was at its height... [to] cheat civilians out of army reserve stores that have been left in their charge.”⁹²

In the spirit of “an eye for an eye,” it seems that covert revenge of civilians against corrupt military authorities and rapacious soldiers was exacted through food. A collective practical joke played on an arrogant army lieutenant, who “took his boots off and was sprawled out over a whole seat” on a very crowded train, is reported in *Black Rain*.⁹³ When he started to take a nap, one passenger “tipped half a cooked rice-ball into each of the officer’s boots,” and another passenger, trying to ensure “the very maximum effect” of the joke, carefully shook “each boot in turn, to make sure the rice had gone right down to the toes.”⁹⁴ Because of the scarcity of food, the narrator comments on the rice ball as a “noble sacrifice.”⁹⁵ Inasmuch as “self-sacrifice” is an encouraged social value during war, this humor can also function as sarcasm. While the direct criticism of authority was severely censored and punished, this practical joke seems to have solidified a group of civilians in their misery. Under a new government policy, farmers benefited from a higher official price for rice and the encouragement of peasant landowning, both of which were designed to increase agricultural productivity and prevent rural depopulation during the war.⁹⁶ Even during the years immediately

⁹⁰ Ibuse, *Black Rain*, 67.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 150.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 122.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 72.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 67.

⁹⁶ Ohara Institute for Social Research at Hosei University, *Taiheiyo sensoo ka no roodoo jyotai* [Labor Conditions under the Pacific War], 1964

preceding the worst rice shortage of 1945, daily allocation of rice for farmers for each member of the family was around 600 grams, which was higher than the army's ration of approximately 464, and considerably higher than the starving urbanites' ration of 234.⁹⁷

Consequently, the farmers' newfound privileges of food and power, along with their aforementioned cultural and nationalistic orientation, led to conflicts with urban dwellers. This urban versus rural conflict was manifested in the mutual bullying by rural children and urban children after approximately 450,000 children were evacuated from cities to rural areas by April 1945. One anecdote depicts the conflict of an urban child who has mixed feelings of superiority and inferiority in his wearing sophisticated Western clothing while eating from his fancy metal lunch box only "barley and other rice substitutes." He stands in ambivalent contrast to his rural classmates in their kimonos or shoddy Western clothes, who are enjoying pure white rice in their cheap wooden lunch boxes.⁹⁸

Both *Black Rain* and *Graveyard of Fireflies* portray farmers as vicious. Shizuko in *Black Rain* and the war orphan narrator of *Graves of Fire Flies* complain that farmers near the cities where they live are cunning and demand the barter of vegetables for clothing because of the falling value of currency. The war orphan, after giving his dead mother's expensive kimono in a trade with farmers, exhausts all his belongings for barter, and has no choice but to steal farm produce. One day he is caught by a farmer when stealing potatoes:

"Please forgive me." I apologized to the farmer as I knelt on the ground. [My little sister] Setsuko was behind me, shivering in fear. When the farmer refused to accept my apology, [I further explained]: "My little sister is sick. She cannot live without me." "Give me a break," replied the farmer. "Don't you know farm theft is fraud?" He tripped me, and after I had fallen, he grabbed me by the collar, telling me, "Hey, walk fast. I will put you into jail." [He took me to the policeman], who commented in a

(accessed December 26, 2014, <http://oohara.mt.tama.hosei.ac.jp/rn/senji1/rn/senji1-148.html>).

⁹⁷ Collingham, *Taste of War*, 234.

⁹⁸ Cook and Cook, *Japan at War*, 231–234.

leisurely manner: “It seems like there was an air raid in Fukui tonight.” [A little later], the policeman calmed the farmer’s anger, and soon after he let me go with a warning.⁹⁹

Although the police officer would censor any hint of criticism about the authorities’ food policy, as shown earlier, he demonstrates a leniency and nonchalance toward the orphan that stands in sharp contrast to the harsh reprimand the orphan has received from the farmers. It seems that the rising social status of farmers during the war was not taken seriously, in part because of their unprecedented food privileges.

Finally, to be examined is the impact of the popularization of Western style dining before, during, and after the war among the Japanese populace. While formal French menus were limited to elites, such as diplomats or naval officers earlier in the Meiji era,¹⁰⁰ Western-style dishes prepared with Japanese influence, called *yoshoku*, became popular in the 1930s. These were promoted as a part of American culture and life style. The popularization of *yoshoku* was made possible through military diets and its dissemination in department stores, cafeterias, and cafes in the large cities, which introduced these dishes of home cooking.

The Westernization of the military diet, which affected other private sectors, including home cooking, played a pivotal role. The Japanese military initially modeled itself on the German army, and later, on the American army and the British navy, including their diets, under Imperial Japan’s *fukoku kyohei* (rich country with strong soldiers) policy, which had been in place since 1871.¹⁰¹ The advantages of these diets over traditional Japanese fare included high calorie protein, with the inclusion of meat and deep-fried foods,¹⁰² cost-effectiveness, and the homogenization of the military diet, which overcame “regional differences” of traditional Japanese food.¹⁰³

⁹⁹ Nosaka, *American Hijiki*, 36.

¹⁰⁰ Collingham, *Taste of War*, 42; Fujita, *Kaigun Ryoshokushi*, 94.

¹⁰¹ Jun Aizawa, “Senshi kenkyuu hoo,” *Research on the History of War* 4/20 December 2014 (accessed July 14, 2017, <http://www.nids.mod.go.jp/publication/senshi/pdf/200103/06.pdf>).

¹⁰² Meat especially was considered the symbol of *bunmeikaika* (civilization and enlightenment) and Westernization, which was welcomed by the Meiji intellectuals. See Collingham, *Taste of War*, 33.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 82–83.

Especially after the devastating epidemic of beriberi, believed to have been caused by the exclusive consumption of polished white rice, which lacks vitamin B, the military adopted a more nutritious Western diet and bread. With the advocacy of bread by a former admiral, the Japan Bread Manufacturers Association was established in 1941.¹⁰⁴ Concurrently, the value of the production of bread almost doubled, from 24,000,000 yen in 1939 to 48,440,000 yen in 1940.¹⁰⁵

Many of the Western-style cafeterias in department stores and small cafes emerged in cities after the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923. They advertised *yoshoku*, an expression that refers to “American style, casual dining,” affordable a la carte Western cuisine for the populace.¹⁰⁶ This cuisine became increasingly popular, as is evident in the dishes sold daily at the Hankyu Department Store cafeteria in 1936: 15,000 Western-style combo dishes (fried shrimp, meatballs, rice, and coffee), 13,000 portions of rice and curry with coffee, and 9,000 pork cutlet meals.¹⁰⁷ In 1935, a newly published woman’s magazine published the comment of a young girl stating her preference for Western food over Japanese food, this inclination being fashionable, like the preference for Western-style clothing and American films.¹⁰⁸ In view of the general understanding of the Americanization of Japanese urban society after the war, it is worth noting recent findings about the influence of pre-war Americanization on the image of *yoshoku* as a fashion trend. Other popular women’s magazines, such as *Fujin kurabu* (Lady’s Club), and its inclusion in home economics courses, added to the popularity of *yoshoku* cooking in the urban home.¹⁰⁹ Katarzyna Cwiertka

¹⁰⁴ Eiichi Kimura, et al. *Pan no meiji hyakunenshi* [A Hundred years of history of the bread since Meiji period] (Tokyo: Pan no hyakunenshi kanko kai, 1970), 420.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 418.

¹⁰⁶ Ikuhiro Fukuda. “Gaishoku Taishuuka to inshoku kuukan no gender ka” (Popularization of Eating Out Across Gender), *Waseda University Gakujyutsu Kenkyu* 62 (2014): 289–306.

¹⁰⁷ Keiko Kosuga, *Curry Rice no Tanjyo* [The Birth of Curry and Rice], (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2013), 182.

¹⁰⁸ Ichinose, *Kogun Heishi no Nichijyo Seikatu*, 147–149.

¹⁰⁹ Tetsu Okada, *Meiji Yoshoku Kotohajime* [Initial influence of Western Food during Meiji Period] (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2012), 215; Sato, *Nihon rikugun to nihon kaigun no nazo*, 19–20.

postulates that some of the popularity of Anglo-Saxon dishes may be attributable to the ease of preparation and the availability of inexpensive ingredients such as milk, butter and corn beef, and condiments such as ketchup and mayonnaise, particularly for city dwellers during the prewar periods.¹¹⁰

Shigeko, who in *Black Rain* claims lower middle-class origins in Hiroshima, recalls, “We toasted [bread] and ate it with bean paste on it, or spread it with bean paste before toasting. Whenever we had bread, we missed the taste of butter and corned beef dreadfully.”¹¹¹ Conversely, however, Western food such as butter, chocolates, and canned beef, were still available to families with fathers who were high-ranking officers until the very end of the war. In *Grave of the Fireflies*, when a woman discovers that her orphaned niece and nephew, whose father was a navy lieutenant, have special military food privileges, she remarks sarcastically, “I envy the military family who could afford such a luxury.”¹¹²

Another important factor to consider is “the food stores and boxes of rations [that] the Allies left behind them,” which were known as Churchill rations¹¹³ or Roosevelt rations in the case of the American counterpart.¹¹⁴ An example of the attitude towards eating Roosevelt rations can be observed in the drama *Soldiers in the Tree*, based on factual accounts of the final battle of Okinawa in 1945. It tells the story of an older, high-ranking officer from mainland Japan and a young soldier from Okinawa who hide themselves in a tree above the American camp, even after the war, being unaware that the war has ended. They survive by scavenging food scraps from a dumpster in the American camp underneath their tree. The older officer at first refuses to eat this scavenged food, saying, “If you are Japanese, you should feel like dying just by imagining that their food is in your stomach.”¹¹⁵ The young soldier justifies his devouring the enemy’s food as merely a practical matter of survival, saying, “I think they and their food are separate issues.”¹¹⁶

¹¹⁰ Collingham, *Taste of War*, 48–49.

¹¹¹ Ibuse, *Black Rain*, 66.

¹¹² Nosaka, *Hotaru no haka*, 24.

¹¹³ Collingham, *Taste of War*, 283.

¹¹⁴ Ichinose, *Kogun Heishi no Nichijyo Seikatu*, 194.

¹¹⁵ Horai, 103.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

In other situations, the imperial army's troops suffered from desperate hunger throughout the Pacific and Southeast. In Ooka's *Fires on the Plain*, a starving soldier expresses a wish that he could surrender to the Americans, knowing that surrender to any enemy would violate the Japanese military code of honor. Inspiring immediate contempt from one of his comrades, he says, "They'll give us so much corned beef to eat, we won't know what to do with it!"¹¹⁷ In *Taken Captive*, another autobiographical novel about his experience as a POW in Mindoro, the Philippines, Ooka describes the food at the American camp: "We were first-class POWs who enjoyed clean quarters and clothing, a ration of 2,700 calories a day... the men still refer to the camp as 'paradise.'"¹¹⁸

During the Imphal campaign, Hino tells of starving Japanese soldiers hearing alluring radio announcements in foreign-accented Japanese:

Dear soldiers... You all are fools to be fighting in such an awful war to die of starvation. I know that you have nothing left to eat and are eating even snakes, lizards, and insects. Why don't you come over here? We have hot coffee, milk, bread, and canned food – anything you want. If you wish, we can even feed you beefsteak and sashimi. Leave your guns, and come over here right away!¹¹⁹

This is the sort of temptation to which Ooka's starving soldier, previously quoted, seems to be vulnerable. In "American *Hijiki*," the protagonist surprisingly finds himself feeling close to the Americans as he entertains Mr. Higgins, a former American soldier, after the war. Although he suspects the Americans may simply have been dumping a surfeit of agricultural supplies, he nonetheless realizes how much he appreciated their aid during the occupation, and now he feels grateful to them "for their kindly helping us when we were starving, by providing relief products by parachute and rationing soybean meals to us."¹²⁰

Discussing illustrations by Japanese cartoonist Etsuro Kato, including one depicting relief supplies on parachutes falling like manna from

¹¹⁷ Ooka, *Fires on the Plain*, 39.

¹¹⁸ Shohei Ooka, *Taken Captive*, trans. Wayne P. Lammers (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1996), 149.

¹¹⁹ Hino, *Mitsurin to Heitai*, 54.

¹²⁰ Nosaka, "American *Hijiki*," 93.

heaven, John Dower writes of “godlike hands extended from on high [providing] food for the near-starving people,” noting also the theocratic iconography of “a democratic revolution from above,” as also dominant in American cartoons dealing with occupied Japan.¹²¹ The desperate need for, and consumption of such supplies is vividly described when relief goods are dropped in “American *Hijiki*”:

[P]eople gathered like ants around an oil drum and desperately tried to open it with hammers and trowels... Contents: cheese, cans of beans... chewing gum, chocolates... jam, marmalade... They filled boxes, such as a kid’s lunch boxes. We all received two boxes per household. When I opened the round can, it was filled with cheese, bacon and ham, in addition to beans and sugar.¹²²

Although English loan words were eliminated from the labels of cans or menus of restaurants during the war,¹²³ the continued consumption of Western foods by the military and civilians, and its growing familiarity, including that of bread as a supplement to rice, appear to have had a significant impact on the culinary tastes of the starving Japanese nation during the war and the early post-war period. The enormous popularity of *yoshoku* as American casual dining and its subsequent association with American fashion during the prewar days cannot be underestimated.

This study has discussed how the military government’s food policies, supplemented by police surveillance and the mutual surveillance among citizens themselves, served to control the Japanese population during the war. When the currency lost its value towards the end of the war to purchase food, the military officers were able to enhance their power, and farmers acquired an advantage that was for them unprecedented, while the urbanites and the soldiers deployed overseas suffered from the food shortage all the more. It has argued that the military government can be criticized for manipulating the citizenry according the paradigm of “the carrot and the stick.”

¹²¹ John Dower, *Embracing Defeat* (New York: Norton, 1999), 69.

¹²² Nosaka, *Hotaru no haka*, 74.

¹²³ Ooishi, *Eigo o Kinshi seyo*, 122.

Large quantities of food and sweets were used as “carrots” to attract volunteers to the military, especially from poor families. Conversely, extremely austere *bushido* notions were imposed on the nation as “sticks.” These included legal pressure that encouraged people to endure severe food shortages without surrender, which precipitated additional deaths by starvation. Writers such as Morimura, Ibuse and Sakai directly criticized the militaristic government, while others, in documenting citizen complaints about the food shortage, can be read as indirect criticism of the government. It should be noted, however, that any complaints about the food shortage and the suffering it entailed were subject to censorship. On the verge of death by starvation near the end of the war, some overseas soldiers confronted the grim option of cannibalism. Depictions in fiction of cannibalism can also be considered indirect criticism of the military, the government, and the war.

Social commentary illustrates how the disequilibrium of the food supply created by Japan’s militaristic government caused social discord and conflict. Conversely, however, it also fostered solidarity among the less privileged groups at the interpersonal level. Solidarity was formed when people shared limited food resources—both on the battlefield and among neighbors in the homeland. Housewives in the neighborhood association worked together to exchange information and collaborated to maximize limited food resources, though their solidarity would occasionally be tainted by their mutual surveillance of each other.

Owing to the farmers now having, with their privileged access to food, higher status than the urbanites and possibly owing to the farmers’ political and cultural orientations, the urbanites were critical of the farmers, although they could have welcomed the unprecedented improvement of the farmers’ nutrition and health.

This study also has shown that the Westernization of military food and direct contact with Western food during the war and in its immediate aftermath, as well as the popularity of *yoshoku* advertised as American casual dining during the pre-war period, may have affected the minds of the starving people. Akira Irie comments that the “Japanese were willing to accept American influence after World War II, not just because Japan lost the war but because American influence had already taken place before the war.”¹²⁴ Similarly, Junichi Inoue also contends that the “pro-American” sentiment

¹²⁴ Akira Irie, “Taiheiyo senso to wa nandattano ka.” [What Did the Pacific War Mean to Us?] *Senshi Kenkyu Nenpo* 2 (1999), 5–7.

formed during the pre-war period may have continued as an undercurrent in Japanese society during the war. The popularization of *yoshoku*, associated with American consumerism and culture in the urban Japan, seems especially to have impeded the government's attempts to form a nationalistic Japanese identity.

The Potsdam Declaration of American, British and Chinese leaders on July 26, 1945 stated the conditions of Japanese surrender, declaring that "a new order of peace, security and justice will be impossible until irresponsible militarism is driven from the world."¹²⁵ The neighborhood associations were abolished as part of a centralized militaristic government in 1947 by the Potsdam ordinance.¹²⁶ The new Japanese Constitution was drafted with the objective of abolishing militarism to ensure a peaceful country. In this regard, it is not surprising that the militaristic wartime government became the object of both overt and covert criticism and commentary in post-war literature. This criticism and commentary was imbedded in portions of the text involving discourse on food. It seems that never so much in Japanese history as during World War II has the complex sociopolitical and cultural meaning of food been so thoroughly entwined with the abiding fact of its biological necessity.

¹²⁵ National Diet Library, "Birth of Constitution of Japan," March 2, 2016 (accessed July 17, 2017, <http://www.ndl.go.jp/constitution>).

¹²⁶ Watanabe, *Senjika no nihonjin to tonarigumi kaiho*, 20.

**“PUT IT BACK IN THE OCEAN. DON’T YOU REALIZE IT’LL
CAUSE A TSUNAMI?”: THE POWER OF WATA NO HARA (THE
OCEAN PLAIN) IN *GAKE NO UE NO PONYO***

Cassandra Atherton
Deakin University

“I feel that I was searching in my subconscious with a fishing net, and I happened to catch a goldfish in my net, and that was the inspiration for starting [Ponyo].”¹

While Hayao Miyazaki’s animated film *Gake no Ue no Ponyo*² opens with a brief establishing shot of five ships on the horizon, it is the moon and its reflection on the water that dominate the frame. In this expansive scene, the ships are specks, dwarfed and put into “perspective” by the moon and the ocean, two traditionally feminine personifications of nature. From this point, the film becomes, as Susan Bye identifies, “a visual paean to the beauty and fecundity of the sea – the deep sea, which is beyond the reach of destructive humans.”³ In this remarkable twenty-minute overture, a kind of oceanic fantasia unfolds. There is no dialogue, humans are not introduced: it is a celebration of nature in its purest, almost primordial form.

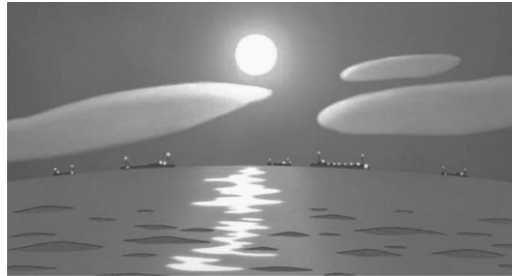


Figure 1. Opening scene from *Ponyo*

¹ Todd Brown, “Hayao Miyazaki Talks PONYO!” ScreenAnarchy, July 31, 2009 (accessed May 29, 2017, <http://screenanarchy.com/2009/07/hayao-miyazaki-talks-ponyo.html>).

² Hereby referred to as “*Ponyo*.”

³ Susan Bye, “Two Worlds Colliding: Restoring Balance in Hayao Miyazaki’s ‘Ponyo’” *Screen Education* 71 (2013), 103.

The depths and levels of the ocean are carefully delineated as the viewer's gaze is submerged and a visual journey from the moonlit surface of the water to the seabed is orchestrated. This emphasis on the moon and water introduces not only the beauty of nature, but also its power. It is significant that the light from the moon is far stronger than the tiny electric lights on the ships. In addition to this, the ocean clearly controls the ships' movements with the intensity of its waves in combination with the moon's pull of the tide. This is demonstrated in its most extreme form when the ships become useless wrecks during the tsunami. As Mark Schilling identifies, "Nature for Miyazaki is also about power."⁴ Indeed, the two are inextricably linked in *Ponyo*. Therefore, it is important that humans are only seen on the water's surface: they are superficial surface dwellers.

This prominence of the levels of the ocean introduces the narrative structure of *Ponyo* and evokes the *Watatsumi Sanjin* or Three *Watatsumi* gods ruling the upper (*uwa watatsumi*), middle (*naka watatsumi*) and lower (*soko watatsumi*) seas. Motohisa Yamakage states, "The presence of such names suggests a continuing awareness of the ocean's existence at different levels, or hidden depths"⁵ The upper sea is filled with balletic jellyfish and darting minnows. Large, transparent diamonds represent the underside of the waves and the moon's golden light is reflected at the top of the frame, through these rhombus tessellations. In essence, the graceful downward movement is reminiscent of a diver's slow descent. While this could be read in psychoanalytic terms as a journey into the unconscious, this study will argue that in *Ponyo*, the descent to the ocean bed is a reminder of the Shinto religion and the ways in which, as Eugene F. Gorski argues, "[t]he beliefs and ways of thinking of Shinto are deep in the subconscious fabric of Japanese society."⁶ Miyazaki's appeal to Shintoism in the film endorses the purity and primacy of the ocean and the transience of a disrespectful, polluting human

⁴ Mark Schilling, "Gake no Ue no Ponyo: It's Kids' Play for Anime King," *The Japan Times*, July 11, 2008 (accessed May 29, 2017, <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/culture/2008/07/11/films/film-reviews/gake-no-ue-no-ponyo/#VKzmMlvB5UR>).

⁵ Motohisa Yamakage, trans., *The Essence of Shinto: Japan's Spiritual Heart*, eds. Mineko S. Gillespie, Yoshitsugu Komuro, Gerald L. Gillespie, Paul de Leeuw and Aidan Rankin (Tokyo, New York and London: Kodansha International, 2006), 93.

⁶ Eugene F. Gorski, *Theology of Religions: A Sourcebook for Interreligious Study* (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 2008), 166.

race. In *Ponyo*, many of the mortals abuse nature and Miyazaki specifically identifies this abuse as, “marine pollution, overfishing and prowling submarines.”⁷

Accordingly, the opening scene is devoid of humans and pollution. At the midpoint of the ocean’s depths, eels, a black and yellow water snake, hermit crabs, anemones, and plant life complete the picture of marine life. It is an idyllic and harmonious picture and yet a lively and purposeful one. The energy is clearest in this midpoint as the complexity of movement “observ[es] rhythm, and energy.”⁸ A groper and red squid are highlighted as they traverse this level of the ocean and they draw the viewer deeper, to focus attention on the magic that is occurring on the ocean bed. Miyazaki emphasizes in his introduction to the film story of *Ponyo* that it is “a world where magic and alchemy are accepted as part of the ordinary”⁹ in an appeal to magical realism. As Linda Edwards states, “A kami evokes feelings of awe or reverence. People owe gratitude to the kami and to their ancestors for life itself and for their ever-present love.”¹⁰ Miyazaki pays tribute to *watatsumi* in his representation of the “ocean as a living presence.”¹¹ The sea kami requires respect, reverence, and even deference from the humans in *Ponyo*.

In the lower sea, a submersible vessel (named *Ubazame-go*, or Basking Shark) forms a kind of *tori*; a welcoming picture for the viewer. An arc of white jellyfish curve around the ship in a crescent moon shape and a huge rainbow water sphere emanates from the ship’s prow. In many ways, this is a deep-sea replica of the establishing shot. The ship, crescent moon, and the yellow light, mirror the moonlight and fishing ships on the ocean’s

⁷ Hayao Miyazaki, *Turning Point 1997–2008* (San Francisco: VIZ Media, 2014), 426. Miyazaki has said, “I do not believe in Shinto but I do respect it, and I feel that the animism origin of Shinto is rooted deep within me,” Robert Epstein, “Spirits, gods and pastel paints: The weird world of master animator Hayao Miyazaki,” *The Independent*, January 31, 2010 (accessed July 31, 2017, <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/features/spirit-s-gods-and-pastel-paints-the-weird-world-of-master-animator-hayao-miyazaki-1880974.html>).

⁸ David A. Ross, “Musings on Miyazaki: Early and Late,” *Southeast Review of Asian Studies* 32 (2010), 172.

⁹ Miyazaki, *Turning Point 1997–2008*, 11.

¹⁰ Linda Edwards, *A Brief Guide to Beliefs: Ideas, Theologies, Mysteries, and Movements* (Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 232.

¹¹ Miyazaki, *Turning Point 1997–2008*, 11.

surface. The camera zooms in on the vessel before cutting away to a shot of White Sea organisms against a yellow and green background. The color suggests that these organisms are inside the iridescent bubble the human sea wizard Fujimoto has created with his spells.

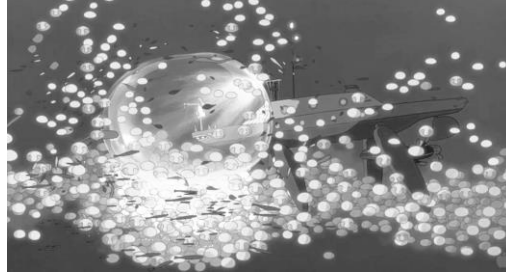


Figure 2. Fujimoto and the *Ubazame-go*

However, as Fujimoto has renounced his humanity, this is still a place untouched by (and inaccessible to) humans. Everything is in flux from this point. Tiny organisms triple in size with a “pop” and move through the water; it feels “alive and organic.”¹² The use of 170,000-animation cels ensures that this opening scene is rich with color and movement. There is incredible beauty and a great sense of purpose as “schools of jellyfish undulate in the underwater turbulence.”¹³ Yet, despite this industriousness beneath the waves, Miyazaki’s 2D hand drawing (which he returned to specifically for *Ponyo*), ensures that the purity and innocence of the ocean and marine life is underlined. Manohla Dargis points out that, “Under the ocean the colors are more saturated and the lines often sharper.”¹⁴ Indeed, many scholars have argued, in line with Miyazaki himself, that the sea is a “principal character” in *Ponyo*, “not just a background in this film, but a living creature.”¹⁵ This is emphasised in his book, *Turning Point, 1997-2008*,

¹² Colin Odell and Michelle Le Blanc, *Studio Ghibli: The Films of Hayao Miyazaki and Isao Takahata* (Harpenden: Kamera Books, 2009), 135.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Manohla Dargis, “Forces of Nature, Including Children,” *The New York Times*, August 31, 2009 (accessed May 29, 2017, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/14/movies/14ponyo.html?_r=0).

¹⁵ Eija Niskanen, ed., *Imaginary Japan: Japanese Fantasy in Contemporary Popular Culture* (Turku: International Institute for Popular Culture, 2010), 19.

where Miyazaki underlines this decision for the *wata no hara* to take centre stage:

The sea below, like our subconscious mind, intersects with the wave-topped surface above. By distorting normal space and contorting normal shapes, the sea is animated not as a backdrop to the story but one of its principal characters.¹⁶

This is substantiated by his choice to hand draw the ocean just as he would the human characters, rather than using CGI enhancements. Miyazaki's emphasis on the link between the ocean's depths and its surface is most obvious when humans pollute the ocean in the film. The surface of the ocean and the ocean bed are inextricably connected; the detritus in the subconscious to which Miyazaki refers represents impurities that are retrievable by the conscious mind. By this, he suggests that humans subconsciously know that polluting the ocean is wrong and *Ponyo* illustrates that what happens below the waves has a direct effect on those who live above it.

Named after a character in Jules Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*,¹⁷ Fujimoto, the androgynous sea wizard, lives in a fortress in the ocean and witnesses the beauty of the *soko watatsumi*. Once a human, he is only able to live under the ocean after he renounces the human world. This makes Fujimoto a liminal or amphibious character because, as Bye argues, "Fujimoto is a character without an organic connection to the land or sea."¹⁸ While he can survive in both the ocean and on temporarily on land (with the help of a shower-like apparatus of seawater, ironically confused as weed killer by Lisa, Sōsuke's mother), he is between species. He despises his own race and "blames humans for polluting the world's oceans,"¹⁹ and yet he is not marine. Indeed, he often witnesses rather than participates in under water life. A reclusive character some critics have identified as "misanthropic"²⁰ or

¹⁶ Miyazaki, *Turning Point 1997–2008*, 419.

¹⁷ "A Report & Review of Miyazaki Hayao and *Ponyo* at Venice Film Festival," GhibliWorld.com (accessed July 31, 2017, <http://archive.is/Ed0Mp>).

¹⁸ Bye, "Two Worlds Colliding," 106.

¹⁹ Dana Stevens, "Ponyo," *Slate*, August 12, 2009 (accessed June 14, 2017, <http://www.slate.com/articles/arts/movies/2009/08/ponyo.html>).

²⁰ *Ibid.*

“stern and philanthropic,”²¹ Fujimoto is said to “reflect Miyazaki’s own environmental concerns,”²² as it has been theorized that he is Miyazaki’s “self-portrait”²³ based on his statement: “we need courtesy toward water, mountains and air in addition to living things. We should not ask courtesy from these things but we ourselves should give courtesy to them instead.”²⁴ Yet, whether or not Fujimoto is Miyazaki’s doppelganger, it is clear that he invests some of the most important statements about the environment in this character. Perhaps the most vitriolic statement occurs when, distressed by the pollution in the sea, Fujimoto curses humankind for “spoil[ing] the sea, treating [his] home like their empty black souls.” Despite his strong words, as Matthew Hester and James Cooper point out, “Miyazaki repudiates this ‘culture of violence’ altogether, commenting on bestial gentility by limiting his depiction of aggressive actions.”²⁵ This is supported by Dargis who argues that Fujimoto “gently curses the human world and its harmful ways.”²⁶ However, this interpretation depends on an analysis of Fujimoto’s magic in *Ponyo*.

When the viewer is first introduced to Fujimoto, he is casting spells in an iridescent water sphere. Dargis’ interpretation is that Fujimoto “releases potions that restore the health of the pollution-choked waters.”²⁷ However, this interpretation of Fujimoto’s use of elixirs to keep the ocean in balance is troublesome because it does not take into consideration Fujimoto’s ultimate plan for this magic. Bye and other scholars have pointed to something darker, which emanates from Fujimoto’s belief in his responsibility to defend the *wata no hara*:

Fujimoto is extremely conscious of his responsibility for the future of the planet – to maintain the balance of nature. “I must keep the sea in balance; it is a great responsibility”... he rejects humans and human existence,

²¹ Ross, “Musings on Miyazaki: Early and Late,” 172.

²² Kevin Lally, “Ponyo,” *Film Journal International* 112 (2009), 39.

²³ Dargis, “Forces of Nature, Including Children.”

²⁴ Stevens, “Ponyo.”

²⁵ Matthew Hester and James Cooper, “No Fighting in the Sea: *Ponyo* on Violence in American Culture,” *Stellar Research Journal* 8 (2014), 65.

²⁶ Dargis, “Forces of Nature, Including Children.”

²⁷ Ibid.

and is working towards creating a return to the Cambrian age and “an end to those abominable humans.”²⁹

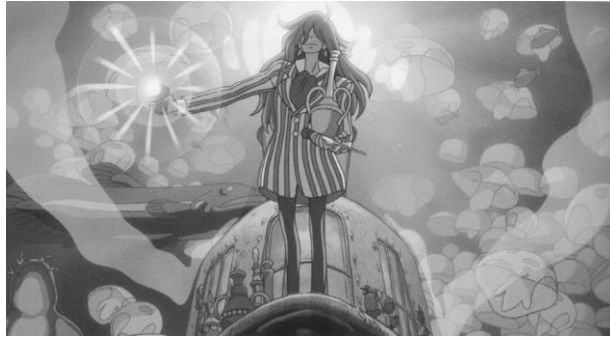


Figure 3. Fujimoto casting spells

Fujimoto is planning to annihilate the human race with his Water of Life and other potions. When Ponyo, his daughter, transgresses the vault, the precious store of magical elixirs is emptied into the ocean. The power from this swirling well of spells creates the tsunami which ultimately thrusts Ponyo above the surface of the ocean and endangers human existence.

Fujimoto is first seen using an eyedropper to drop liquid from a gold bottle into the ocean below; the blue water initially changes to gold when the potion makes contact with it. This “yellow” magic is mirrored in the full moon effect, when the light from the shipwreck’s porthole illuminates the floating organisms in the previous shot. It is a reminder of the ships floating on the surface of the water in the opening scene and the depths below, to which they are not privy. Fujimoto is at the centre of his opalescent magic bubble. His feminine red hair has been likened to “octopus tentacles,” demonstrating his “affinity with much of the life under the sea,” but they also reference the way in which Shinto has long revered the female element.³³ Fujimoto’s hair resembles his wife, Granmamare’s, in color and texture. Perhaps, given that Fujimoto has lived in the ocean for most of his life, he is feminized by this element. However, while he is surrounded by, and may have an “affinity with” a variety of marine life, the concept that he could be

²⁹ Bye, “Two Worlds Colliding,” 106.

³³ Dargis, “Forces of Nature, Including Children.”

an “environmentalist father”³⁴ is debatable, given that he tries to alter the way of the ocean. He is not an *Owatatsumi kami* in the same way that Granmamare can be read as a spirit of the ocean. Therefore, his magic is an artificial attempt to control nature. This is most evident when a grey squid moves towards Fujimoto and he uses a torch of magic light to send it a message of its unwelcomeness. The effects of the magic torch are seen when, in a slapstick moment, after he encircles himself with the rainbow light, he looks into the torch and is stunned for a moment.

Fujimoto is not only playing with the tonic of the ocean in a bid to control it, he is not allowing the survival of the fittest and the hierarchy of marine life to be given full expression. Yet, his intention to eliminate the human race in order to end their “polluting ways”³⁵ is murderous. However, it is clear that Fujimoto believes the only way to restore balance and harmony between humans and nature is to start again: to go back to the Devonian Period (the Age of Fish). This is based on his belief that when humans pollute, they do not hold nature sacred. In a Shinto interpretation, this means humans are not close to the kami and therefore, in Fujimoto’s interpretation, they are expendable. By eliminating humans’ polluting ways and reverting to the Devonian era, Fujimoto believes he is cleansing the world and reinstating purity. As Colin Odell argues, “[c]losely linked to the Shinto ethic is the way in which our environment is a living collection of interconnected beings that should be respected. Earth is often portrayed as suffering as a result of human ignorance,”³⁶ with Ponyo somehow representing the end of this uncleanness and ignorance.

First appearing through one of the lunar shaped portholes of Fujimoto’s ship with her fingerling sisters, Ponyo escapes by going behind her father’s back. Her deceit is presented as more mischievous than harmful, as the adventurous spirit of a child (or mer-child, at this point in the narrative). Her curiosity is transparent, as Miyazaki construes the water fish to be “gelatinous creatures of physical variability made of the sea, jelly and agar.”³⁷ Their shape shifting allows Ponyo a safe, graceful journey to the surface as she rides inside a small jellyfish, which then piggybacks on a larger jellyfish with enough power to journey to the water’s surface. The viewer is

³⁴ Stevens, “Ponyo.”

³⁵ Ross, “Musings on Miyazaki: Early and Late,” 172.

³⁶ Odell and Le Blanc, *Studio Ghibli: The Films of Hayao Miyazaki and Isao Takahata*, 20.

³⁷ Miyazaki, *Turning Point 1997–2008*, 438.

taken back through the *soko*, *uwa* and *naka watatsumi* to the moonlit rhombus tessellations, representing the waves. In the upper sea, Ponyo falls asleep. Like a child looking up at the stars in the night sky, she rolls onto her back to gaze at the fast approaching surface of the water and the shafts of light streaming through the upper ocean. She peeks out from underneath the jellyfish and smiles, wiggling back inside to take a nap; it is an incredibly peaceful moment and leads into the title sequence. The rawness of the naïve line drawings and childlike voices in the eponymous theme song are an extension of this innocence under the ocean; hence, this points to the suggestion that it is children who are the hope for the future of environmentalism. This simplicity is important because it makes the pollution, when it is illustrated, more pronounced. Indeed, Anya Clarissa Benson argues, “Seeing an ocean strewn with litter is remarkable not because viewers have never before seen litter in an ocean, but because oceans in Ghibli movies are pure, clear blue waters untainted by any human mark.”³⁸ In this way, the pollution depicted as choking the ocean and marine life is even more significant when, as Miyazaki has stated, the ocean is defined as a principal character in the film.

The sleeping image of Ponyo under a jellyfish is juxtaposed with a busy harbour of fishing ships on the ocean’s surface. The contrast between life above and below the sea is stark. While the establishing shot of the fishing town based on the traditional village of *Tomo no Ura* is initially picturesque,³⁹ it becomes clear that ships dominate the lifestyle in this place and that humans are overfishing the waters. The ocean’s surface is congested as ships busily move across the water; there is recklessness in their movements. Ponyo’s expedition is presented as a journey from innocence to experience. Her sleep is disturbed first by a speeding ship’s hull and its propeller, which almost decapitates her. Then her first glimpse of Sōsuke, a human boy living close to the ocean, is interrupted by another oncoming vessel, this time dredging the ocean bed. Ponyo must leave the serenity of the jellyfish to join other fishes swimming for their lives.

The underwater shot that follows is distinctive in its use of an unappealing shade of grey. The huge dredge net is filled with debris and refuse, the result of humans dumping their waste in the ocean. Already, as

³⁸ Anya Clarissa Benson, “Entering Ever-expanding Worlds: Constructions of Place and Time in Contemporary Japanese Children’s Cinema,” (Ph.D. diss., University of York, 2013), 188.

³⁹ Ibid, 57–180.

Bye argues, “For viewers, the contrast between the pristine underworld of the sea, teeming with life, colour and movement, and the filth of the world inhabited by humans is undeniable: the environmental message is clear.”⁴⁰ However, Miyazaki has created more than just an environmental allegory. Dana Stevens argues, “part environmental message movie...part ecological fable, its message goes way beyond “Don’t litter, kids.”⁴¹ Indeed, Miyazaki is making an important statement about respect, purity and the importance of the interconnectedness of all creatures. By polluting the ocean and overfishing its depths, humans demonstrate a selfish disregard for the *wata no hara* and its inhabitants. By extension, the *Watatsumi* can use floods or tsunami to affect the land as “it was anciently believed that if the sea *kami* were angered, it would bring high winds and disturb the activity of fishing, but if properly placated, it would assure fishermen safe passage for their boats, and bountiful catches of fish.”⁴² This mirrors the events in the film.

Ponyo is trapped in the net full of dirt and waste that is being dredged up from the seabed. It is here that she is caught in a discarded jam jar along with other fish buried in the debris. As Bye argues, these shots “mark the dark underside of human civilisation.”⁴³ Still, humans’ rapid consumption and accompanying waste is presented as disgusting: a variety of useless objects including empty bottles, buckets, cans, tyres, a toothpaste tube, a box, star oil, a bowl, crates, a golf ball and even a pressure cooker are caught in the dredge net. As Benson argues, “litter in the ocean present[s] danger to Ponyo and other fish”⁴⁴ and Miyazaki illustrates this danger in the speed of the dredge net and by initially maiming Ponyo with the jar. These human objects do not belong in the sea and their destructive quality threatens the *wata no hara*. In this way, Miyazaki demonstrates his belief that “[h]umans...maltreat fish or creatures of the sea”⁴⁵ with their carelessness and selfishness in these early scenes. The only exception is Sōsuke, who saves Ponyo from a terrible fate. The other fish caught in the dredge net are presumably not so lucky.

⁴⁰ Bye, “Two Worlds Colliding,” 103.

⁴¹ Stevens, “Ponyo.”

⁴² “Uminokami,” Encyclopedia of Shinto, March 13, 2005 (accessed May 29, 2017, <http://eos.kokugakuin.ac.jp/modules/xwords/entry.php?entryID=232>).

⁴³ Bye, “Two Worlds Colliding,” 103.

⁴⁴ Benson, “Entering Ever-expanding Worlds,” 187.

⁴⁵ Jack Zipes, *The Enchanted Screen: The Unknown History of Fairy-Tale Films* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 108.



Figure 4. Sōsuke rescuing Ponyo

A product of his fishing village and the son of the captain of a domestic cargo ship, Sōsuke initially worships the replica ship he carries. Indeed, later in the film it is the ship that grows with Ponyo's magic and takes them to the Sunflower Senior Daycare Centre, after the tsunami. However, in these early scenes he is quick to set it aside in order to save Ponyo and liberate her from her glass prison. This demonstrates the way in which Miyazaki uses Sōsuke to represent hope for the future of the human race. When Sōsuke takes her from the ocean, the viewer is introduced to the first of a series of anthropomorphic waves with "thresher shark eyes."⁴⁶ Initially menacing, they retreat as the waves recede with natural undulation. Furthermore, as Sōsuke's house is far above the ocean on the crest of a hill, it is out of the reach of these waves. Even after the tsunami, the house is spared from flooding because of its position on the horizon and becomes an island. Fujimoto is described as exploiting these waves; they are summoned to do his bidding and then "washed away in the water when their use is done."⁴⁷ This narrative of exploitation in Miyazaki's animation is marked by what Helen McCarthy identifies as the way "the small continuously fight against the oppression of the large."⁴⁸ In *Gake no Ue no Ponyo*, the *wata no hara* is being destroyed by "human selfishness,"⁴⁹ and it is only Sōsuke who

⁴⁶ Miyazaki, *Turning Point 1997–2008*.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Helen McCarthy, *Hayao Miyazaki: Master of Japanese Animation: Films, Themes, Artistry* (California: Stone Bridge Press, 1999), 41.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 41.

can offer hope for the future of humankind through his deep reverence for nature. In addition to this, Ponyo and Sōsuke reinscribe the importance of the Shinto animist tradition with their mutual purity and respect for one another. However, it is only after the two children are united that *Unimokami*'s anger is assuaged.

The tsunami is the single most effective way to purge the ocean of pollution and cleanse the land and humankind while simultaneously bringing Ponyo and Sōsuke together. After Ponyo successfully escapes Fujimoto's aquarium-like water globe prison for a second time with the assistance of her sisters, a storm erupts. It is almost an organic reversal of the scene where she journeys to the *uwa watatsumi*. Ponyo allows a deluge of carp through a gelatinous porthole, a material that appears to be similar to the transparent jellyfish. The carp flood the fortress and propel Ponyo through the water toward Fujimoto's vault. The deep rich blue of the fish is prioritized and overwrites earlier images of the grey dirt and pollution, while Fujimoto's bright urns, elixirs, and books stand in place of the discarded bottles and cans. Ponyo is caught in the torrent but, in this scene, it is exhilarating. Giant carp hurtle towards the viewer like a tidal wave. As water and fish flood the rooms in the fortress, the colors in the frame change to a more grey-blue, while horizontal lines appear across the screen to suggest an underwater perspective. Ponyo's newly formed stick-like feet seem to land on the viewer from above, as the current draws her deeper into the frame. All of this, including the emphasis on forceful downward movement with the carp and Ponyo traveling down a flight of stairs, suggests the importance of reverting to an earlier time; a philosophy that Fujimoto expounds throughout the animation when he refers to the Devonian era.

When Ponyo transgresses the vault, the ocean mixes with the Water of Life in the well and a magical tempest begins, turning the vault into a cauldron of brilliant gold. A shiny bubble of molten gold erupts from the well and like the myth of Midas, everything it touches turns to gold. Ponyo explodes from the fortress riding on the back of golden carp and her sisters anthropomorphise into giant fish and act as waves in the tsunami. The ships on the surface of the water are tossed around like toys, reminiscent of Sōsuke's toy ship. In a nod to the origins of her Wagnerian namesake, Ponyo, as Brünnhilde, flies toward Sōsuke on the "crest of a tsunami, amid towering walls of Hokusai waves."⁵⁰ Comparing this to a pseudo-Götterdämmerung score composed by Hisaishi Jo, Bye argues that "[t]he rhythmical sound of

⁵⁰ Ross, "Musings on Miyazaki: Early and Late," 172.

[Ponyo's] feet tapping on the waves – *Splat! Splat! Splat!* – operates in counterpoint to the thundering orchestral score accompanying the movement of the waves.”⁵¹ In this way, the portentous score is undercut by the innocent laughter (and foot slapping) of a child. In fact, Ponyo's escape from Fujimoto is read by critics as “a giddy, touchingly resonant image of freedom – the animated girl is as liberated from shoes as from the laws of nature,”⁵² and as the personification of “nature unbound.”⁵³

However, while Ponyo may be laughing and celebrating her newfound freedom, this moment is ultimately a moment of destruction. Houses are being demolished, ships are in danger of capsizing and humans must prepare for an end to life as they know it. It is significant that for these kinds of key scenes Miyazaki “brings together a large number of cels depicting the movement”⁵⁴ as it emphasises the grand scale of this natural disaster. The “Medusa of *Gake no Ue no Ponyo*'s social message”⁵⁵ is not, as David A. Ross argues, a host of unanswered questions. Rather, it is the sobering reminder of humankind's mortality. This is most evident when Miyazaki's “Greek chorus of crones,”⁵⁶ the seniors in the Sunflower Daycare Centre, are first introduced to Ponyo. When Ponyo squirts water in one of their faces, the elderly woman cries: “Hurry up, put it back in the ocean. Don't you realize it'll cause a tsunami? Fish with faces who come out of the sea cause tsunamis—that's what they always say.” Indeed, she is correct and as Ponyo refuses to return to the ocean, the ocean must go to her. As the streets are flooded, houses are submerged under water, and fish swim down roads once traversed by cars. Miyazaki suggests that the storm, tsunami, and flood function as a “cleansing regeneration that is connected with and reinforces the power of nature.”⁵⁷ The pollution, both literal and metaphorical, is washed away. The ocean dominates the frame and people are compelled to co-habit with prehistoric fish. In this way, the humans appear transient and dwarfed by the magnitude of water in the frame; they are at the mercy of the ocean.

⁵¹ Bye, “Two Worlds Colliding,” 103.

⁵² Dargis, “Forces of Nature, Including Children.”

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Niskanen, *Imaginary Japan*, 18.

⁵⁵ Ross, “Musings on Miyazaki,” 173.

⁵⁶ Stevens, “Ponyo.”

⁵⁷ Bye, “Two Worlds Colliding,” 107.

As Benson argues, these scenes “seek... to re-create a ‘purified’ ancient time... a time that has literally washed away all the corruptions of the present.”⁵⁸ The emphasis on looking back to ancient times with references to the Devonian Period, prehistoric fish, and Fujimoto’s need to “revert,” reveals dissatisfaction with humankind and preference for a time before they polluted the earth. This is not a vengeful or vindictive desire for genocide, it is a reflection of the Shintoist belief that, “[n]ature does not consider humans to be the most important thing; the kami (the spirits) are the most important. In Shintoism, people are here by the grace of gods, but are not their main concern. Natural disasters occur because this is just how nature is.”⁵⁹

The foreshadowing of the tsunami in *Ponyo* is sobering in light of the 3/11 Japanese tsunami. Indeed, this was Miyazaki’s last animation before this event and suggests a sensitivity and perhaps prophetic sensibility towards Japan and natural disasters. In line with Shintoism, Miyazaki discusses the way in which natural disasters in Japan are not considered diabolical:

There are many typhoons and earthquakes in Japan. There is no point in portraying these natural disasters as evil events. They are one of the givens in the world in which we live. I am always moved when I visit Venice to see that in this city which is sinking into the sea, people carry on living regardless. It is one of the givens of their life. In the same way people in Japan have a different perception of natural disasters.⁶¹

Miyazaki emphasizes that natural disasters are a reminder that nature is more powerful than humankind. Benson takes this a step further by arguing that “in some ways [*Gake no Ue no Ponyo*] almost seems to celebrate the disaster; it is not solely a negative thing, or even a negative thing that holds a strange

⁵⁸ Benson, “Entering Ever-expanding Worlds,” 191.

⁵⁹ David Harris, “The Impact of Cultural and Religious Influences During Natural Disasters,” Earthquake-Report.com, September 27, 2012 (accessed May 29, 2017, <http://earthquake-report.com/2012/09/27/the-impact-of-cultural-and-religious-influences-during-natural-disasters-volcano-eruptions/>).

⁶¹ Thomas Sotinel, “Japan’s Fantasy Films Act as a Buffer against the Reality of the Natural World,” The Guardian, March 29, 2011 (accessed May 29, 2017, <http://www.theguardian.com/film/2011/mar/29/japan-animation-natural-disaster-sotinel>).

fascination. It is not clearly ‘negative’ at all.”⁶² It is important to note that no one is hurt in the tsunami or flood. In fact, the elderly people in the nursing home are cured of their ailments and leave their wheelchairs to run unencumbered in a return to childhood of sorts. In this way, the power of nature is asserted not just in the intensity of the tsunami, but also in its restorative ability.

Miyazaki points out that this view of natural disaster is not just a quirk of the Japanese, or, specifically, Shinto. His reference to Venice is particularly interesting, given that after the tsunami in *Ponyo*, the coastal fishing village looks Venetian with people traveling in boats from one place to another. The *wata no hara* dominates what was once land but no one looks particularly distressed or upset, perhaps as the destruction of houses and property is implied rather than shown. Benson points out, “the benevolent destruction of Japan, [is] rendered as more of a pastel wonderland than a terrifying apocalypse.”⁶³ This pure sense of wonder is most evident after the flood when, from a toy ship, Ponyo and Sōsuke point out the fish that are cohabiting with them: “Oh, prehistoric fish! That one is from the Devonian era. Oh wow, it’s a *Bothriolepis*!” The scene is reminiscent of the opening scene, except that this time the tessellations on the water’s surface are the waves created by Sōsuke’s toy boat, and the *soko watatsumi* is composed of a highway of primordial fish who seem to obey road rules in the way they stay on the appropriate side of the road as they swim from one place to another. There is a sense of adventure, rather than fear, that what was once the land is now part of the *wata no hara*.

After the 3/11 tsunami, critic Susan Napier was “draw[n] back to *Ponyo* to explore its unsettlingly tranquil prediction of overwhelming disaster.”⁶⁴ Many critics keen to emphasise the “gentle” aspects of the flood discuss the orderly and peaceful way in which the victims make their way, in boats, to a local hotel. This calmness and serenity is evident in the way the people are full of goodwill and positivity as they float down highways, now inhabited by prehistoric fish and jellyfish. What’s more, Bye refers to it as a “magical tsunami that cleanses the town and the people who live there.”⁶⁵

⁶² Benson, “Entering Ever-expanding Worlds,” 189.

⁶³ Ibid, 189.

⁶⁴ Bye, “Two Worlds Colliding,” 105.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 107.

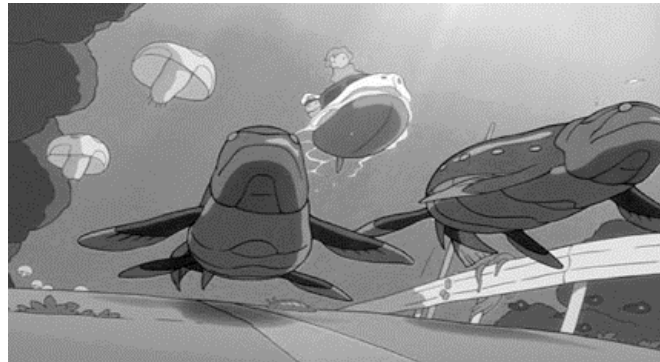


Figure 5. Ponyo and Sôsuke observing prehistoric fish

The unease Napier detects intersects with Miyazaki's statement that *Ponyo* is his "response to the afflictions and uncertainty of our times."⁶⁸ The storm, tsunami, and flood in this animation are lifesaving rather than lethal. This natural disaster encourages community outreach and Miyazaki's concern is for the future of humankind. The tsunami in the film washes away pollution, reinstates the power of the *wata no hara*, and encourages a selfless response to the natural disaster. The 3/11 tsunami in many ways mirrored Miyazaki's vision of community outreach. While there was nothing "gentle" or "magical" about this real tsunami, the compassion and benevolence reported in the media is reminiscent of the villagers in *Ponyo* offering victims transportation to the hotels, helping to locate lost family members, and checking on people's health:

The Japanese people have retained their composure, trying to help each other out whenever possible. Shopkeepers have cut prices on staple goods and shoppers line up patiently to pay, without bickering or trying to queue jump. They know they are all in the same boat, and no one wants to lose either self-respect or that of the community. Those lucky few whose houses were left unscathed by the disaster offer refuge to their homeless neighbours, and fundraising campaigns have been launched across the country to support stranded pets. People in Japan realize only too well

⁶⁸ Miyazaki, *Turning Point 1997–2008*, 420.

that the only way of getting through these hard times is by sticking together.⁶⁹

In the film, there is a sense of order and efficiency post-tsunami. Boats of adults row in time to reach safety points, the father of a baby gives Sôsuke a candle, and everybody asks if they can help Ponyo and Sôsuke in their journey to find Lisa, Sôsuke's mother. The significance of community outreach is emphasised in a very literal way with the motif of hands reaching out to others. The best example is when Ponyo gives a mother the thermos of soup from her backpack and a pile of sandwiches, all to ensure she is healthy for her baby. The baby, who initially appears listless, reaches out to receive Ponyo's cup as she offers it, and then extends her arms as her mother receives the soup in the cup. When the baby becomes distressed after Ponyo departs, she runs across the top of the water to calm the baby with her magic. It appears that she makes the baby happy as her face becomes flushed and jovial. Interestingly, the baby is dressed in a blue jumpsuit with fish on her bib. This reiterates that it is the innocence of children who are the hope for the future because they respect marine life. This connects with Miyazaki's comment that, "[t]he film ends with instability and concern for the future. But that is the fate of the human race beyond the twenty-first century, a topic that can't be settled in one film."⁷⁰

Gake no Ue no Ponyo reveals humankind's steady destruction of the *wata no hara* through their careless polluting of the waters and selfish over-fishing. While Fujimoto wants to eliminate humans and their "black souls," Miyazaki's message is more closely aligned with the Shinto belief system. There is no revenge nor punishment in the film, just the "kind of cleansing regeneration that is connected with and reinforces the power of nature."⁷¹

⁶⁹ Monisha, "Post-quake Japan: Compassion Triumphs Amid Disaster," March 26, 2011 (accessed May 29, 2017, <http://cestopis.exblog.jp/16102473/>).

⁷⁰ Miyazaki, *Turning Point 1997–2008*, 424.

⁷¹ Bye, "Two Worlds Colliding," 107.

Book Reviews

Janice P. Nimura, *Daughters of the Samurai: A Journey from East to West and Back*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2016. 336 pages. ISBN: 978-0393352788, \$26.95.

Reviewed by Daniel A. Métraux

Deep in the western suburbs of Tokyo in the city of Kodaira lies Tsuda College, a private school of about 2,500 students where since its establishment in the year 1900, female students have received broad educations in the liberal arts and languages. It is a beautiful leafy campus with an abundance of impressive trees and flowers. It is a rare treat to visit in late March or early April when the cherry trees are in full bloom. My own school, Mary Baldwin University, has a long tradition of receiving exchange students from Japan. Some of my best Japanese students have been young women from Tsuda, who either came as juniors to pursue a degree from an American college or as graduates of Tsuda seeking an additional B.A. in the United States. Tsuda College is today a living, flourishing memorial of a bold experiment by the fledgling Meiji government in 1871 to send five young Japanese girls to live and study in the United States for a period of at least ten years. Their stated mission was to immerse themselves in Western culture and education so that they could later return to Japan to share what they had learned.

The girls, who ranged in age from six to fourteen, were all daughters of samurai and were picked at random for the mission. Two of the oldest girls found life very difficult in the U.S. and returned within a year. The remaining three younger girls, Sutematsu Yamakawa Ōyama (1860–1919), Ume (ko) Tsuda (1864–1929) and Shige Nagai Uriu (1861–1928) managed to stay. They traveled by ship and then train with the famed Iwakura Mission, a diplomatic foray by key leaders of the Japanese government to see the West for themselves. After leaving Iwakura, they lived with prominent foster families in such places as New Haven and Washington. They studied in local schools, with Sutematsu graduating from Vassar College in 1881, becoming the first Japanese woman to receive a degree from an American University, while Shige also attended Vassar as a special student of music. The Japanese government covered most of their educational expenses.

By the time all three girls had returned to Japan in 1881, they had assimilated so much to American culture that they began to feel like true aliens in their own land. Ume, the youngest, was too young to go to college upon her return to Japan, but she graduated from high school and some years

later she returned to the U.S. to study biology at Bryn Mawr College near Philadelphia. Their stories, set both in the United States and later in Japan, are lavishly chronicled by historian Janice P. Nimura. Her book, *Daughters of the Samurai*, was selected by the New York Times as one of the 100 best books of 2015, the year it was originally published. I agree with this appraisal. The book is beautifully written and based on solid, historical research; Nimura truly knows and admires her subjects and is able to bring them to life for readers.

When the three girls returned to Japan, people wondered what to do with them. Sutematsu and Shige married prominent Japanese military and political figures and settled into lives among the nobility of Japan. They produced their share of children, but also had time to foster women's education in Japan. Sutematsu, who was a close friend of Japan's first prime minister, Itō Hirobumi, was instrumental in founding and teaching at the Peeresses' School in Tokyo for several years. Shige, who was mainly preoccupied with her children, worked as a music teacher at the Peeresses' School. Meanwhile, Tsuda Ume, who never married, was the most influential of the three returnees. She began her teaching career as a tutor for the children of Itō Hirobumi. She later taught for some time at the Peeresses' School and elsewhere, but around 1900 she resigned from her various jobs and founded her own school for women in Tokyo. After a slow start, the school gained a reputation as one of the finest institutions for young women. She offered a wide curriculum that included not only language, but also a broad introduction to the liberal arts. The school was renamed Tsuda College after Tsuda's death. While Tsuda is not the oldest college for women in Japan – as other institutions such as Doshisha Women's College, founded in 1876, are older – it has always had a noteworthy repute for the high quality of its students.

Overall, these three women led long and productive lives. They were among the very first professional women in modern Japan and were true champions of women's education. Their impact as founders of and teachers at women's schools was immense. Their success as students and later as frequent visitors to the United States, who often contributed articles to American magazines and journals, gave many Americans their first view of young Japanese educators. Sutematsu's close American friend, Alice Mabel Bacon, also taught women for brief periods in Japan and wrote a series of popular books and articles about Japanese women for a broader American audience.

Indeed, I sincerely appreciated reading Nimura's *Daughters of the Samurai* after my several stints teaching at Doshisha Women's College. Japanese women today are among the best educated in the world and are playing an increasingly important professional role in Japanese society. The bold pioneering work of these three Meiji women helped to pave the way for the current educational boom for women in Japan.

Richard Reeves, *Infamy: The Shocking Story of Japanese Internment in World War II*. New York: Henry Holt, 2016. 384 pp. ISBN: 978-1250081681, \$32.00.

Reviewed by Daniel A. Metraux

It is indeed an unfortunate fact that Americans have always had very negative views of new waves of immigrants and that, at times of crisis, they can turn on perceived enemies en masse with a vengeance. There was considerable hostility towards the millions of Irish who immigrated to the United States in the 1840s and 1850s as well as considerable wrath against Mexicans and other Latinos who cross our borders today. My uncle, the late Paul Bubendey, a prominent New York banker born in early 1911, came from a German-speaking household. When the anti-German hysteria hit New York as the United States declared war on Germany, my uncle, then in first grade, remembers being beaten up, bullied and harassed by other students who condemned his German heritage. Although he later fought with distinction as a naval officer in World War II, he never got over that hysterical aspect of American culture. Americans have never been friendly to minority groups, but no group suffered as much privation and humiliation as Japanese-Americans during World War II.

Novelist Sinclair Lewis wrote a rather unpleasant novel in 1935 titled, *It Can't Happen Here*, about an America run by racist fascists and dominated by widespread concentration camps. Seven years later, starting in early 1942, Lewis' vision became reality following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Respected journalist Richard Reeves brings us a brilliant study of the racist backlash and internment of 120,000 Japanese-Americans, two-thirds of them American citizens, in a series of brutal and inhospitable internment camps between 1942 and 1945.

Since the late nineteenth century, there had always been a large number of ethnic Japanese in California, Oregon and Washington. Immigrants

born in Japan were ineligible for American citizenship, but their children and grandchildren born in the United States were considered citizens. The majority of those ethnic Japanese were American-born and had never visited Japan. Most of them, proud of their Japanese heritage, took great pride in their new land and demonstrated great loyalty to the United States.

Many Americans in the days after Pearl Harbor voiced fears of sabotage, spies, and actual attacks on the West coast by Japanese, but these fears proved to be unfounded. There were no acts of sabotage or assistance to Japanese attackers in Hawaii even though over a third of the population were ethnic Japanese. The same was true for the West coast of the United States. Japanese military submarines did sink a few American cargo ships off the coast and oil tanks in Santa Barbara were briefly shelled by Japanese subs, but there were absolutely no acts of violence by Japanese or any other ethnic groups.

Nevertheless, shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor, President Franklin Roosevelt, acting on the advice of Lt. General John DeWitt of the Western Defense Command and California Attorney General Earl Warren, authorized the War Department to designate certain sections of the United States as special military areas and to remove from them "any or all persons" in order to protect the nation from sabotage and spies. Acting on these orders, General De Witt ordered the evacuation of men, women and children of Japanese ancestry to ten "relocation centers" (also nicknamed "concentration camps") located mainly in the intermountain West. Seventy percent of the internees were American citizens.

DeWitt, as well as many prominent Western politicians, claimed that the ethnic Japanese in the West would side with the Japanese military. DeWitt and his followers used the phrase, "a Jap is a Jap" to justify their evacuation and internment. Roosevelt and Secretary of War Henry Stimson had access to internal government reports that indicated that American-born women and men of Japanese ancestry, the so-called Nisei and Sansei, were loyal to the United States and posed no threat. Since they could intercept Japanese cables, they also knew that the Japanese government felt that the Nisei and Sansei would be of little use to them. Despite these reports, influential columnist Walter Lippmann and other leading journalists and politicians demanded that Roosevelt take action in order to stop a "fifth column" within the United States. The anti-Japanese hysteria grew in much the same way as the witchcraft hysteria had overwhelmed Salem, Massachusetts in the 1640s. Roosevelt caved in to this madness. There were a few prominent Americans including FBI Director Hoover and Attorney

General Biddle who questioned the morality and legality of rounding up American citizens, but their voices were drowned out by the hysteria.

Reeves is at his best describing the roundup of ethnic Japanese. With little or no notice, they were told to immediately report to assembly points from which they were taken to detention centers. They were only allowed to bring what they could carry, generally two suitcases. They had to abandon all their property – cars, houses and businesses, which were either seized or bought by white neighbors at ridiculously low prices. I once met an elderly Nisei woman in California who told me that her family's house and orchard had been saved by their white neighbors. The neighbors had paid the mortgage on the land and maintained the family's house and car while they were gone, but such cases were very rare indeed. Interestingly, that family owns the property even today.

Reeves gleefully points out the ridiculous nature of the fears prevalent in the West against the Japanese. One family was arrested because the mother had a notebook filled with knitting instructions – the authorities claimed it was a secret code to reach the Japanese. The owner of a fishing boat suffered arrest because he had oil drums filled with fish parts on his boat – he was accused of supplying oil to Japanese submarines. Such absurdities fill the pages of Reeves's book.

Reeves presents a very detailed analysis of the conditions in the internment camps, which often held more than 10,000 internees in a relatively small area. Housing was rough, the food awful, and sanitary conditions unbearable. Reeves quotes a report from the California Site Survey of the National Park Service on the conditions of one of the camps in the state:

The camp interiors were arranged like prisoner of war camps or overseas military camps and were completely unsuited for family living. Barracks were divided into blocks and each block had a central mess hall, latrine, showers, wash basins and laundry tubs. Toilets, showers, and bedrooms were unpartitioned; there was no water or plumbing in the living quarters; and anyone going to the lavatory at night, often through mud or snow, was followed by a searchlight. Eight person families were placed in 20-x-20 foot rooms. Smaller families and single persons had to share units with strangers. Each detainee received a straw mattress, an army blanket, and not much else. Privacy was non-existent. Everything had to be

done communally. Endless queues formed for eating, washing, and personal needs. (92)

Despite their personal humiliations, the Japanese internees rapidly adapted to their new surroundings and proved to be very law-abiding. There were few vocal protests as they tried to make the best of the situation. They organized schools, baseball leagues, churches, hospitals and much more to restore a degree of order to their new lives. About 2,300 young ethnic Japanese found release from their detention by agreeing to join the U.S. military. Many gained great distinction serving the country that had detained their families. Reeves raises an interesting point in that for many young internees, their new environment released them from the strict control of their parents. They now had more opportunities to find boyfriends and girlfriends, to attend dances, and much more.

Reeves reports that the Roosevelt administration surmised that after the American victory in the Battle of Midway in June 1942, even as the danger of a major Japanese attack on the West coast had passed, and that the internments had been a terrible idea. By early 1944, Roosevelt and his advisors had concluded that the camps were no longer necessary, but anti-Japanese sentiment in California and elsewhere was so strong that releasing the ethnic Japanese from the camps was not a viable political option. The dismantling of the camps only began after the November 1944 presidential election.

Moreover, Reeves asks whether such a mass evacuation and internment of American citizens could happen again. The Supreme Court in 1944 affirmed the constitutionality of the whole program, noting there is nothing in the constitution that prohibits it. Several justices objected to the proposition that the government could detain citizens based on their race, but all nine justices agreed that the government could have carried out a total evacuation of the entire population of the region.

The key theme of the book is that the whole internment program was absurd, the unwise result of mass hysteria. Reeves is especially critical of General DeWitt, who he portrays as a racist imbecile. Overall, Reeves writes in an incredibly clear, direct manner – demonstrated by the meticulous research he has conducted – hereafter leaving the reader with a vivid warning that such a deep tragedy could certainly occur again.

Peter Cave, *Schooling Selves: Autonomy, Interdependence, and Reform in Japanese Junior High Education*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2016. 296 pp. ISBN 978-0226367866 (paperback), \$35.00.

Reviewed by Yuichi Tamura

Since the mid-1980s when the Ad Hoc Council on Education issued the recommendations for Japanese education toward the 21st Century, the central principle of educational reform has been anchored into the idea of enhancing individuality and autonomy. In *Schooling Selves*, Peter Cave provides an insightful portrait of local school dynamics and explains why the series of educational reforms since the 1980s has failed in Japan. Delving deeper beyond the dichotomous conceptual framework centered on individualism and groupism, Cave analyzes how national discourse on educational reform was reinterpreted, reassessed, reshaped and modified by school administrators and teachers as they implemented changes in local school settings.

Cave conducted ethnographic fieldwork between 1996 and 2007 at two junior high schools (Tachibana and Yoneda Junior High Schools, as Cave calls them under pseudonyms) in the Kinki region of Western Japan. He used participant observations and semi-structured interviews to detect and dissect the nuanced views among teachers and administrators on the educational reform discourse of promoting individuality and autonomy among students. The data from ethnographic strategies are then cross-referenced with survey data, school documents, national policy documents, and secondary sources including media reports, to show the representativeness of the local dynamics at Tachibana and Yoneda. Cumulatively, the information assembled is empirically extensive, and highly valuable for anyone interested in Japanese education.

His central concern is to understand how teachers at local schools accommodated the promotion of student individuality and autonomy as directed by the national ministry, while maintaining the collective cooperation and discipline. In special events such as field trips (Chapter 2) and sports day, choral concert, and cultural festival (Chapter 4), as well as in the contexts of routinized activities such as classroom teaching (Chapter 5) and homeroom and extracurricular clubs (Chapter 3), Cave identifies teachers' attempts to promote student initiatives. Yet, their attempts fell short of achieving the central aim of educational reform, due to the fact that "schools' fundamental approach to the maintenance of control remained

unchanged” (89). Framing this into neo-institutionalist perspectives, Cave points out the “weak” pressure and monitoring by the Ministry of Education over local implementation and the lack of clear criteria for success or failure, which “provided legitimacy for junior high schools’ reshaping of reform to fit their existing priorities” (229).

The introduction of the integrated studies and the expansion of elective courses in 1998 (with a nationwide implementation in 2002) presented a different type of opportunity for schools to promote student individuality and autonomy. Unlike preexisting routinized activities or special events, into which teachers attempted (or were required to attempt) to infuse the opportunity for students to show and develop their individuality and autonomous thinking, the integrated studies as a new curricular course was specifically intended for the attainment of the central goal of educational reform. Cave devotes by far the longest chapter in his book (Chapter 6) to examine how an integrated studies course was used at Tachibana and Yoneda and whether or not it achieved its intended purpose. Both schools utilized the class time for experiential learning outside the schools, such as workplace experiences at local libraries, stores and factories, and raising awareness through the exploration of local natural environments. They also used the time allotted for integrative studies to prepare for school field trips. Cave observes that more emphasis was placed on social and moral development than developing autonomous thinking and learning. Thus, Cave concludes that “far less was achieved than was hoped” (187) and specifies the following as reasons for failure: lack of enthusiasm in teachers about integrated studies; lack of proper training for teachers to formulate an integrated studies course; and lastly, the teachers’ general belief that the central mission of junior high school is to support students’ social development – in other words, to help students learn how they are situated in a web of human relationships in order to follow the pattern of socially acceptable behavior. Even as the new course was specifically established to achieve the promotion of individuality, it was implemented in a way to prioritize social development and behavioral guidance.

In any ethnographic study, access to fieldwork sites is inevitably beyond the total control of researchers. Cave had an onsite access to Tachibana Junior High continuously since 1994, but fieldwork at Yoneda Junior High was done during the four-month period in 2007. As a result, the quantity and density of data from fieldwork at Tachibana and Yoneda, as presented in each chapter, is significantly unbalanced. In each chapter, more dense and longitudinal information was provided about Tachibana, later

supplemented by the information from Yoneda to show the similarities between both schools.

Possibly due to this imbalance, Cave may have found it difficult to delve deeply into differences between Tachibana and Yoneda, thus focusing his discussion on the similarities between these two schools. While he does document some observable differences such as the level of disciplinary problems, the specific content of integrative studies, and in some occasions, differences in teacher's opinions on the idea of enhancing individuality, he does not analyze in depth how such differences emerged. Such local variations in educational practices and discourses would have added further analytical dimensions to his research and articulated discussions on local responses and resistance to a nationally constructed educational reform.

Particularly, I find it curious, and at the same time, a bit problematic how he addresses less-than-significant coverage of the school dress codes. In Chapters 2 and 3, Cave briefly brings up school uniforms and other rules as a symbol of regulatory education, a stark contrast to the idea of promoting individuality and autonomy. While schools continuously prescribe uniforms and set other rules, school rules on appearance, deportment, and off-campus lifestyles have been significantly changed toward deregulation in the 1990s and the 2000s. More extensive description and analysis of school dress codes at Tachibana and Yoneda would have added another important educational practice that conflicts with the national discourse of individuality.

Overall, Peter Cave's *Schooling Selves* is an excellent analysis of how local agents (teachers and school administrators) respond to a national-level educational reform discourse. Most importantly, I cannot overpraise the density and richness of empirical information from his fieldwork, especially the information on Tachibana Junior High School that covers more than a decade. Throughout the book, Cave also deftly illustrates local contingencies of educational reform engineered by the national education ministry. Empirically rich and accessibly written, this book is well suited for advanced undergraduate and graduate students in education, Japanese studies and social sciences. Likewise, scholars and educators in Japanese studies specializing in educational reforms, as well as social scientists with interest in institutional dynamics and changes, will find this book to be an essential contribution in their field.

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