

# ***JAPAN STUDIES REVIEW***

Volume Seventeen  
2013

## **Interdisciplinary Studies of Modern Japan**

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**JAPAN STUDIES REVIEW**  
**VOLUME SEVENTEEN**  
**2013**

A publication of Florida International University  
and the Southern Japan Seminar

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## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

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

This year's journal features five articles. Stanley Dubinsky and William Davies examine language issues within ethnic minority communities – the Ainu, Ryūkyūans, and Koreans – in Japan. Masaki Mori examines the short story by Murakami Haruki, titled “Pan’ya Saishūgeki” and weaves its meaning into a narrative of postindustrial generalities and generational transformation. Satomi Fukutomi describes the significance of the Shin Yokohama Rāmen Museum to the nostalgic representation of the “rāmen” dish as a national symbol of Japan. Shuma Iwai tells the story of Ozaki Yutaka’s music career in the 1980s with detailed analyses of his song lyrics. Nobuaki Takahashi presents the results of a study on corrective feedback in Japanese-as-a-foreign-language writing.

This issue also features two essays. Jennifer Ann Garcia examines the causes of the ‘Cool Japan’ phenomenon and the admiration of Japanese culture among American youth. Shohaku Okumura presents his paper from a conference held in November 2011 on Zen Master Dōgen’s teachings on Bodhi-mind.

Included in this issue are four book reviews. Don R. McCreery reviews *Doing Business with the New Japan: Succeeding in America's Richest International Market* by James D. Hodgson, Yoshihiro Sano and John L. Graham. Daniel A. Métraux has two book reviews, one on *Demystifying Pearl Harbor: A New Japanese Perspective* by Takeo Iguchi and another one on *The Art of the Gut: Manhood, Power, and Ethics in Japanese Politics* by Robin M. LeBlanc. Bernice J. deGannes Scott reviews *The Proletarian Gamble: Korean Workers in Interwar Japan* by Ken C. Kawashima.

**Steven Heine**

**Re: Submissions, Subscriptions, and Comments**

Submissions for publication, whether articles, essays, 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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Visit our website at <http://asian.fiu.edu/jsr>. PDF versions of past volumes are available online.

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

ISSN: 1550-0713

# Articles





# **LANGUAGE CONFLICT AND LANGUAGE RIGHTS: THE AINU, RYŪKYŪANS, AND KOREANS IN JAPAN**

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*University of Iowa*

## **Introduction**

Despite (and perhaps because of) a long-maintained myth of the ethnic purity of Japanese citizenry, ethnic minorities in Japan have been forced to confront issues of language conflict and language rights. The Ainu, Ryūkyūan and Korean minorities each exemplify a distinct linguistic circumstance in this regard. The Ainu are an aboriginal people of northern Japan, who have had a language and culture imposed upon them through Japanese territorial expansion. By contrast, Koreans immigrants find themselves a linguistic minority in an adopted land. The Ryūkyūan situation, distinct from both, represents an intra-lingual (as opposed to inter-lingual) conflict, as Ryūkyūan is considered (by some) to be a variety of Japanese.

In what follows, a brief survey of the ethnic and political history of each group and the nature of the Ainu, Ryūkyūan, and Korean languages provide some historical background to the conflicts and a context for distinguishing the linguistic and paralinguistic properties of them. We then examine some of the linguistic and language-related human rights issues that have affected the three groups. Comparisons with the circumstances of Amerindians, Puerto Rican immigrants, and African-American English speakers in the United States afford some further insight into the Japanese situation. In making these comparisons, we find some very salient parallels, which suggest that particularism of the Japanese and American cases might be better understood as instances of more general patterns of inter- and intra-linguistic conflict.

## **The Origin of Japanese**

Before taking up the matter of linguistic minorities in Japan, it is instructive to situate Japanese linguistically in its region and to understand the nature of, and motivations for the promotion of, Standard Japanese over regional dialects.

There is a range of theories regarding the origin of Japanese, some of which are more plausible than others. However, there is no firm consensus regarding any single one of the more plausible theories. Theories connecting Japanese with North Asian languages include those placing Japanese with the Altaic or Ural-Altaic languages, those connecting Japanese with Korean (which many scholars place in the Altaic family), and theories connecting Japanese with Ryūkyūan. Other hypotheses relate Japanese with Southeast Asian languages—the Malayo-Polynesian, Austro-Asiatic, and Tibeto-Burman theories. And there are yet other, more recent hypotheses.

Several things are clear from discussions in Miller (1974), Shibatani (1990), and Holmberg (2010) that help explain the lack of consensus. First, the split of Japanese from its nearest linguistic relatives (such as perhaps Korean) took place much longer ago than did that of the Romance language descendants of Latin, which was only 1000–1500 years ago. This makes historical reconstruction of the Japanese language more difficult. Second, Japanese scholars have tended not to use scientific methods of linguistic reconstruction with particular rigor, thus making the results of many comparisons somewhat suspect. This may be in part due to a belief about the special nature of Japanese, in comparison with other languages. Miller (1974: 94–95) states that, for Japanese scholars, “foreign languages, Western languages, perhaps even Chinese, have genetic relationships (*shin'en kankei*) that can be and often are established by the scholarship of the comparative method, but that Japanese is, in this respect as in so many others, ‘unique,’ in that it has only a *keitō* [(family) lineage], which must, by terminological definition, remain forever obscure.” Finally, although some linguistic relationships (such as the overarching Altaic origins) are unsettled, some parts of this picture, such as the Japanese-Korean and Japanese-Ryūkyūan connections, are fairly secure.

However, proposals differ with respect to these relationships as well. For example, Robbeets (2005) considers Japanese and Korean to have developed from different subfamilies of the Macro-Tungusic branch of the Altaic family, while Japanese and Ryūkyūan are more closely related, being the sole members of the Japonic language group. On the other hand, Miller (1971, as reported in Shibatani 1990) takes Japanese, Korean, and Ryūkyūan to have developed from a common ancestral Proto-Korean-Japanese language, exclusive of other Tungusic languages. Shibatani (1990:101), for his part, does not accept Miller’s suggestion that “Middle Korean, Old Japanese, and Ryūkyūan [are] sisters on a par.” For him, “the

Japanese–Ryūkyūan connection is far more transparent than that between Japanese and Korean” (Shibatani 1990: 101). As such, Shibatani would likely agree with Robbeets on this matter over Miller, but would go further in claiming that Ryūkyūan is merely a “dialect (group) of Japanese.” This claim will be assessed further in the section on Ryūkyūan, but for now we take the position that Ryūkyūan and Japanese are closely related; Korean and Japanese are somewhat less closely related; and Ainu and Japanese are for the most part unrelated.

Turning to the issue of Standard Japanese and Japanese dialects, it is important to note, as Shibatani (1990: 185–186) does, that the geography of Japan (i.e., its numerous islands and mountainous interior) lends itself to a high degree of linguistic diversification, leading to a situation in which the various dialects of Japanese are mutually unintelligible. For example, as Shibatani says, “speakers [from] the southern island of Kyūshū would not be understood by the majority of the people on the main island of Honshu ...[and] northern dialect speakers from...Aomori and Akita would not be understood by the people in the metropolitan Tokyo area” (Shibatani 1990: 185).

This linguistic reality led to an effort by the Meiji government in Tokyo in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to attempt to impose a national standard variety (called *hyōjun-go*, or “Standard Language”) that would unify the nation linguistically. The enforcement of a national standard was historically imposed through the educational system (as described later on). Teaching the Tokyo dialect as the standard throughout Japan had the effect, Shibatani notes, of fostering feelings of inferiority among speakers of non-standard dialects. The enforcement could be, at times rather cruel, as when a *hōgen huda* (dialect tag) was hung around the neck of any student who used their home dialect in school. This policy and practice continued through the end of World War II, when the concept of *kyōtū-go* (common language) was introduced. This variety of Japanese (used by speakers of different dialects to communicate with each other) is much more malleable than “Standard/Tokyo Japanese,” possessing many of the features of the standard, but also “retains dialect traits, such as accentual features” (Shibatani 1990: 186). With this in mind, we take up the cases of Ainu, Ryūkyūan, and Korean separately.

## **The Ainu**

### ***Historical Background***

The origin of the Ainu is a somewhat obscure, though it has been claimed on the basis of DNA-type evidence that both the Ainu and the Ryūkyūans are descended from a group (the Jōmon) believed to have arrived in northern Japan/Hokkaido some 14,000 years ago, originating in southeast Asia (Hanihara 1991). The Ainu are indigenous to Japan's northern territories, including northern Honshu (possibly), Hokkaido, the Kuril Islands, and Sakhalin Island (the latter two areas having been lost to the Soviets following World War II).

Traditionally hunter-gatherers who lived in *kotan* (small villages) of people directly related by blood, the Ainu were animists who believed in spirits associated with natural phenomena (wind, fire, water), parts of nature (animals, plants, mountains), and material culture (boats, pots), and whose rituals included bear hunting, animal sacrifice, and tattooing the lips, hands, and arms of girls when they reached puberty.

Although there had been earlier contact, regular trade with the Japanese only began during the 1400s, with the establishment of small Japanese trading settlements in southern Hokkaido. The Japanese themselves considered the Ainu to be barbarians, and this led to an uneasy relationship from the start and to repeated efforts on the part of the Ainu to expel the Japanese from their lands. After a few centuries of sporadic conflict, including the last "pan-Ainu" uprising against the Japanese in 1669 (Shakushain's War), the territory essentially came under the control of the Japanese. Competition between the Japanese and Russians for control of Ainu lands officially ended in 1855 with the signing of the Treaty of Shimoda (*nichiro tsūkō jōyaku*), under which the Japanese gained sovereignty over Hokkaido. After this point, Japanese control of the island grew progressively tighter.

### ***Linguistic Background***

Despite various proposals attempting to establish a genetic relationship between Ainu and Japanese or Ainu and other languages (Batchelor 1905; Hattori 1964), it is widely accepted among linguists (Kindaichi 1937; Shibatani 1990) that Ainu belongs to no established language family. Although some superficial similarities between Ainu and Japanese exist, these are generally grammatical traits common to most languages having Subject-Object-Verb word order. Thus, the same traits are shared not only by Ainu and Japanese, but also other completely unrelated

languages such as Hindi, Tamil, Choctaw, and so on. Much more striking are their dissimilarities.

First, the sound systems of the two languages are distinct. Perhaps the most noticeable difference is the fact that, whereas Japanese has voiceless and voiced pairs of (certain) consonants, Ainu only has the voiceless member of each pair, so there is no /b, d, g, z/, as shown in the following chart:

**Table 1. Oral Obstruent Consonants in Japanese and Ainu Languages**

		<b>Bilabial</b>	<b>Alveolar</b>	<b>Velar</b>	<b>Glottal</b>
<b>Japanese</b>	Stop	p b	t d	k g	
	Fricative		s z		h
<b>Ainu</b>	Stop	p	t	k	ʔ
	Fricative		s		h

Second, Ainu grammatical inflections and case marking is quite distinct from Japanese. Unlike Japanese, Ainu verbs have no inflection for tense and aspect, and thus temporality is interpreted solely on the basis of context. Nouns are not marked to indicate the grammatical relations such as subject, object, or indirect object, whereas Japanese include postpositions for this purpose (i.e., *ga*, *o*, *ni*). Thus word order can be a crucial indicator of who is doing what to whom in a clause, as seen in (1). Japanese would have much freer word order, with subjects and objects signaled by *ga* and *o*, respectively.

- (1) a. Kamuy aynu rayke.                      b. Aynu kamuy rayke.  
       bear        person kill                      person bear kill  
       “The bear killed the man.”              “The man killed the bear.”

Additionally, Ainu first- and second-person subjects and objects are cross-referenced on the verb with prefixes. In contrast, Japanese has no such agreement system.

- (2) a. ku-i-kore                                      b. e-en-kore  
       1SING(ULAR)-2HON(ORIFIC)-give        2SING-1SING-give  
       “I give you (HON)”                        “You give me”

### *Language Rights Issues*

Language rights issues for the Ainu “officially” began in 1869 when the island of Ezochi was renamed Hokkaido by the newly formed Meiji government. Local administrative development systems were set up, and the Meiji government embarked on a policy of (forced) assimilation—a policy whose ultimate aim was to eradicate Ainu culture. Under this regime, the Ainu were systematically stripped of any Ainu identity and were “made” Japanese.

The official “registration” of the Ainu occurred in 1871, at which time the Ainu were designated “commoners,” and were forced to assume Japanese names (Irish 2009). Laws passed in and around this time were designed to prevent or curtail many Ainu traditions, including salmon fishing and deer hunting, the practice of burning a family’s house and moving elsewhere after the death of a family member, the tattooing of girls at puberty, and men wearing earrings. Also imposed at this time were many restrictions concerning the use of the Ainu language:

- **Naming:** The Ainu were forced to take Japanese names, and names in the public domain had to be Japanese.
- **Restrictions on public use:** The use of Ainu in public, including the government and the legal system, was prohibited.
- **Education:** Aside from naming, education in one’s native language is widely considered to be a fundamental language right. From the time of registration, Ainu children were forced to attend schools that were conducted solely in Japanese as use of Ainu in education was banned by law.

Thus, began the decline of the Ainu language. This was also a period of dramatic decline in the Ainu population. A government survey in 1807 estimated that there were more than 26,000 Ainu living in Hokkaido. By 1873, it was estimated that the population was roughly 16,000, and the Ainu made up only 14.6% of the population of the island (Siddle 1996). Thus, the Ainu had minority status after only a short period of time. Among the causes for the dramatic decline were the spread of diseases (e.g. smallpox, measles, and syphilis) brought by the colonists and the breakup of families due to forced labor (Walker 2001).

In the late 1870s, as part of the promulgation of the myth of Japanese ethnic unity, the Ainu were officially designated “former aborigines” and their land was expropriated by the government. An influx of ethnic Japanese continued apace, propelled in part by government offers of land to the Japanese colonists. Naturally, as the population of Japanese settlers from Honshu increased, the Ainu became increasingly marginalized. Linguistically, Ainu continued to decline through (1) the coercion of the government, (2) the belief among the Ainu that the use of Japanese language would make life better for their children, and (3) inter-marriage with Japanese settlers.

The next major event in the cultural and linguistic decline of the Ainu came in 1899 with the signing of the Hokkaido Former Aborigines Protection Act (*hokkaido kyūdojin hogohō*). At this time (possibly due to insecurity about its control over the northern territories), the Japanese government redoubled its efforts at assimilating the Ainu into Japanese society and eradicating Ainu culture. As part of the act, Ainu families were granted small plots of land, in order to transform them from hunters into (more easily managed) farmers. Much of the best farmland had already been claimed by Japanese settlers. In the end, most of the Ainu farmland reverted back to the government, as they themselves lacked the desire or the skills to be successful farmers.

The Regulations for the Education of Former Aboriginal Children, which reinforced the education repression of the Ainu, were established in 1901. Under this regime, Ainu children were compelled to attend (mostly) segregated schools, where the focus was on learning Japanese language skills, rather than science, math, or other subjects. They were thereby denied both the right to be educated in their native language as well as a decent education. So, despite the fact that over 90% of Ainu children attended school by 1910 (Ogawa 1997 cited in Ishikida 2005), most received a greatly inferior education, and were cut off from their heritage. As the Ainu continued their descent into poverty and disadvantage, the Ainu language itself continued its path toward near extinction.

The first organization devoted to Ainu issues was established immediately after the end of World War II. Beginning in 1946, the Ainu Association of Hokkaido focused its attention on pressing economic issues and attempted to increase wealth in Ainu communities.<sup>1</sup> There were more

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<sup>1</sup> The association was officially renamed the “Hokkaido Utari Association”

public works initiatives in the 1960s, but the Ainu themselves remained less well-educated and on the cultural and economic margins of Japanese society. For example, in 1972, barely over 40% of Ainu youth attended high school (Siddle 1996). Other statistics are equally bleak, although the economic status of the Ainu has reportedly improved in recent years.

During the 1960s and 1970s, a general awakening of indigenous human rights efforts worldwide spurred the Ainu and their supporters to increased activism, which led to a reawakening of the culture. Shigeru Kayano championed the effort to open the first Ainu nursery school in Nibutani (80% Ainu) in the early 1980s, where the Ainu language was taught to preschoolers. Under his leadership, a number of additional community-based Ainu language schools opened (Sjöberg 1993). Despite these efforts, the Ainu language has not been successfully revived, and may be beyond rescue. Various reports place the current number of speakers of the only remaining Ainu language (the Hokkaidō variety) at anywhere from 15 to about 100.

The Japanese government has only recently acknowledged the official existence of the Ainu as an ethnic minority. Only following the ratification of the U.N.-sponsored International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1979, and after international pressure and some domestic activism, did the government renounce its official claims of ethnic homogeneity for the region. But even then, official recognition of the Ainu as an ethnic minority did not occur until 1991. Starting in the mid-1980s, the Hokkaido Utari Association (with Kayano as its inspiration) started to agitate for the repeal of the 1899 act and the establishment of a new one.

Finally passed in 1997 was the Act on the Encouragement of Ainu Culture and the Diffusion and Enlightenment of Knowledge on Ainu Tradition (also referred to as the Ainu Culture Promotion Act). The Act included provisions for nondiscrimination, political activity, economic development (i.e., fishing, agriculture), and the formation of an advisory committee. But at the heart of the Act was the promotion and preservation of Ainu culture through teaching, research and other efforts (focusing on language as well as traditional arts, such as music, drama, oral tradition). At one point, there was an annual Ainu Oratorical Contest (1998-2004) in which students from the various language schools came together for Oral Literature and Oratory competitions, but this has been discontinued.

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in 1961 (<http://www.ainu-assn.or.jp/english/eabout04.html>).



So, in fact, few Ainu speak the Ainu language or follow the traditional way of life. Given this, the Ainu identity is likely to become a “symbolic ethnicity,” with Ainu culture and heritage being transmitted to future generations of the Ainu through schools, museums, and annual festivals (Ishikida 2005:24).

### **Comparisons**

The similarities between the histories of the Ainu and the American Indians in the United States are unmistakable. Both groups were subject to internal colonization: for the Ainu, the Wajin from the south, and for the Plains and Western Indians, American settlers from the east. Both were subject to forced assimilation policies. Just as the Dawes Act (1887) provided land to American Indians to encourage an agrarian livelihood, so the Hokkaido Former Aborigines Protection Act (*hokkaido kyūdojin hogohō*, 1899) gave land to every Ainu man for purposes of homesteading. Education played an important role in the assimilation policies. For the Ainu, the Regulations for the Education of Former Aboriginal Children (1901) ensured that Ainu children went to government-sanctioned schools where one of the primary foci was learning Japanese. In the United States, the Indian Boarding School movement of the late 1880s and early 1900s took children from their families to be educated, including “a thorough knowledge of the use of the English language” (Lamar 1886:4). Finally, just as the Ainu were registered under Japanese names (1871), so were the American Indian children given Western names when they entered school. In both cases, children who spoke in their native language were punished. The strategies of both the Japanese and U.S. governments, while not actually ensuring assimilation, did ensure the loss of native culture and the precipitous decline of the languages of the indigenous populations.

### **Ryūkyūan Languages/Dialects**

#### ***Historical Background***

We turn now from the extreme northern parts of Japan to the far flung reaches of its Ryūkyū Islands to the south. With a population of some 1.5 million and an area amounting to somewhat less than 2,000 square miles, the 100 islands of the Ryūkyū Island chain extend about 650 miles, from the southern main island of Kyūshū to within 75 miles of Taiwan. This is nearly half the north to south distance of Japan’s four main islands (i.e., from the northernmost tip of Hokkaido to the island of Kagoshima in Kyūshū). The physical location and range of these islands are as important

as their history to an understanding of their current status. If, as Shibatani maintains, the numerous islands and mountainous interior of Japan lends itself to a high degree of linguistic diversification such that Japanese speakers from Hokkaido would not understand their compatriots from Kyūshū, then one might expect much more linguistic diversification in an island chain strung out over 650 miles and isolated from the major Japanese islands.

The history of the island chain provides important insights into our understanding of the linguistic situation here. Ishikida (2005) suggests that the Ryūkyūans are (like the Ainu and the original inhabitants of the island of Kyūshū) descended from Jōmon hunters, gatherers, and fishermen, who had settled in the Japanese archipelago many centuries before the arrival of the agrarian Yayoi peoples, who immigrated from North Asia through Korea some 2,400 years ago.

Regardless of origins, it is clear that the Ryūkyūans were an autonomous nation from the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century right up until their incorporation into the Japanese nation-state at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The first recorded Ryūkyūan dynasty (the Shunten Dynasty) was founded in 1187, right about the same time as the Kamakura shogunate (which marks the end of the Heian classical period and the beginning of feudal Japan). The Ryūkyūan kingdom started attracting the (perhaps less than welcome) attention of its more powerful Chinese and Japanese neighbors beginning in 1372, when the Ryūkyūan King Satto began paying tribute to the first emperor of the Chinese Ming Dynasty.

At the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Japanese feudal rulers got into the act. Upset that the Ryūkyūans refused to provide conscripts for a Japanese invasion of Korea, and taking advantage of a succession struggle in the Ryūkyū kingdom, the Satsuma rulers in Kyūshū invaded and defeated the Ryūkyūans in 1609. Deciding that a life well taxed was preferable to a life cut short, the Ryūkyūans wound up paying double tribute (to China and to the Satsuma) for another century. Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as China was slipping irretrievably into the losers' column of the colonialist-colonized equation, Japan stepped up to claim the Ryūkyūs as a province, making them the Okinawa Prefecture of the Meiji state in 1879. China, having come out on the losing side of the Sino-Japanese War, finally renounced its claim to the islands in 1895.

Thus, from 1879 until its defeat in 1945, the Ryūkyūs were ruled directly by Japan. Following World War II, the islands were under a U.S. military government until 1950, and then ruled by an indigenous

government (though still subject to U.S. oversight) until 1972. In 1972, the Ryūkyū Islands were returned to Japan. Adding up the years, then, the Ryūkyū Islands have been an actual part of Japan for about one of the past eight centuries. This is a significant point in understanding the current context.

### *Linguistic Background*

In order to understand the linguistic situation in the Ryūkyū Islands, some discussion of the language(s) spoken there is in order. As noted earlier, there is a wide divergence of opinion on whether they are languages separate from Japanese, or “merely” dialects of Japanese. Miller (1971) claims that “Middle Korean, Old Japanese, and Ryūkyūan [are] sisters on a par,” which would surely make them distinct languages. Robbeets, while placing Korean at a further distance from Japanese than Ryūkyūan, clearly gauges Japanese and Ryūkyūan to be distinct languages. On the other side of the debate, Shibatani, along with many other Japanese scholars, would classify Ryūkyūan as a “dialect” of Japanese.

Shibatani (1990) contrasts the view held by Chamberlain in 1895 (and many Western linguists since then) that Ryūkyūan and Japanese are sister languages, with that proposed by Hattori (1976) – and other Japanese linguists – that they are dialects of a single language. Shibatani (1990:191) notes Chamberlain’s observation that “the relationship between Ryūkyūan and Japanese is something like that between Spanish and Italian or between French and Italian,” and then goes on to say that “unlike these Romance languages, the Ryūkyūan dialects are often mutually completely unintelligible among themselves, let alone to the speakers of any mainland dialect.” In support of Hattori’s position, though, Shibatani suggests that it is clear from linguistic similarities that Ryūkyūan is substantially more closely related to Japanese than is Korean.

At this juncture, it is worth pointing out that Shibatani’s assertion about the relative relationship of Korean and Ryūkyūan to Japanese quite misses the point on which Chamberlain and Hattori would disagree. The issue here is whether to consider Ryūkyūan languages to be dialects of Japanese or whether to see them as a family of related but distinct languages. For his part, Shibatani (1990:191) dismisses the issue: “Once a genetic relationship is established between two languages, it is a moot point whether to regard them as two languages or as two dialects of one language.” But it is not a moot point at all. Whether the Ryūkyūans have their own language and linguistic tradition, or whether they all speak some

rustic (and by popular implication, inferior) dialect of Japanese, has enormous implications for them and for their linguistic culture.

In most (at least Western) contexts, considering two varieties of a language to be dialects entails that they be mutually intelligible to some extent. This is apparent in the salient case of British and American English, whose speakers can converse each in their respective dialects with little difficulty, other than the peculiarities of lexical choice (e.g. British “lift” for American “elevator,” etc.). In Asia, the term “dialect” is often used to refer to pairs of mutually unintelligible languages—e.g. Shanghai and Beijing “dialects” of Chinese, which are in fact distinct Chinese languages—and at other times to refer to what Western linguistics would acknowledge as true varieties (i.e., dialects) of a single language.

With respect to the Ryūkyūan–Japanese situation, it is clear that Ryūkyūan and Japanese are mutually unintelligible, as are the various dialects of Ryūkyūan and the various dialects of Japanese proper. In assessing Ryūkyūan as a Japanese dialect, Chew (1976) asserts that “the Hirara dialect (of Ryūkyūan) is sufficiently close to Standard Japanese for its speakers to be able to create a good proportion of the standard vocabulary by applying sound changes to dialect words.” But what is this evidence of? One could make the same claim regarding Italian and Spanish, or about Russian and Bulgarian. Clearly such a metric is not really informative.

However “transparent” the relationship between Ryūkyūan and Japanese, it is nonetheless the case that “the Ryūkyūan stock split from the mainstream Japanese language at the latest around 6 A.D.” (Shibatani 1990:193). From an historical perspective, this would suggest a split at, or shortly after, the arrival of the agrarian Yayoi people to the Japan archipelago (i.e., around the time of the formation of a separate ethnic Japanese people). From a linguistic perspective, calling Ryūkyūan and Japanese dialects of the same language would be no different from calling English, German, and Icelandic dialects of the same language (whatever language that might be).<sup>2</sup> Thus, while it might be advantageous to Japan to consider Ryūkyūan languages as mere varieties (i.e., dialects) of Japanese,

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<sup>2</sup> “According to results employing the lexicostatistics method (Hattori 1954), the Luchuan languages share only between 59 and 68 percent cognates with Tokyo Japanese. These figures are lower than those between German and English” (Bairon, Brenzinger, and Heinrich 2009).

such an assessment does not carry much linguistic or historical weight (Shibatani's characterization of "moot points" notwithstanding).

Beginning with its 2009 edition, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger* includes, alongside Ainu, the following Luchuan (Ryūkyūan) languages of Japan: Amami, Hachijō, Kunigami, Miyako, Okinawan, Yaeyama, and Yonaguni.<sup>3</sup> By classifying Ryūkyūan as a group of endangered languages, the UNESCO document thus affirms their status as autonomous languages, and as objects worthy of study and preservation.

Bairon, Brenzinger, and Heinrich (2009) note that the UNESCO classification serves as a challenge to "the long-standing misconception of a monolingual Japanese nation state that has its roots in the linguistic and colonizing policies of the Meiji period." It is also notable that Japanese society laid claim to the Ryūkyūan people and language as a part of Japan and the Japanese language, and simultaneously categorized them and their language as inferior and contemptible. According to Barclay (2006:120), the Ryūkyūan people are deemed by main island Japanese to be "backward, lazy, inefficient, prone to insanity, irrational and unhygienic...Japanese, in contrast, [are] modern, hardworking, efficient, sane, rational, and clean."

### ***Language Rights Issues***

One of the central issues of concern, as noted, is the preservation of the Ryūkyūan languages. While there was some acknowledgement of local Ryūkyūan culture and language at the outset of Japanese de facto control over the territory in 1872, this did not last long. From the time of its administrative incorporation into Japan in 1879, there was a deliberate and focused effort on making the Ryūkyūans Japanese. This effort primarily took the form of disseminating the (standard) Japanese language through the public educational system.

The motivations for this are, to some degree, understandable. The Ryūkyū Islands stand at the southwestern extremity of the Japan Archipelago and extend out into the vulnerable space between Japan and its larger Asian neighbor, China, and the pressure to incorporate this space into

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<sup>3</sup> The interactive atlas is found here: Moseley, Christopher (ed.). 2010. *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger*, 3rd ed. Paris, UNESCO Publishing. Online version: (<http://www.unesco.org/culture/en/endangeredlanguages/atlas>).

the Japanese nation took on greater urgency after the 1895 Sino-Japanese War. It was in this same year that Japan occupied both Taiwan and Korea, making the Ryūkyūans the most closely related peoples in Japan's recently acquired territories. In this context, and given the mutual unintelligibility of Japanese dialects to begin with, it is not a surprise that the Ryūkyū Islands became an extension of the Ministry of Education efforts to standardize Japanese throughout the empire. As far as the policy makers were concerned, Ryūkyūan languages appeared to be nothing more than dialects of Japanese, and were consequently treated as such.

What this meant for the Ryūkyū islanders, at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, was that "efforts to spread Japanese increasingly employed coercive measures" (Heinrich 2005). In 1907, with the passage of the Ordinance to Regulate Dialects (*hōgen torishimari-rei*), children were now prohibited from speaking their native Ryūkyūan languages in school. As Japan's imperial ambitions increased, so did the pressure on Ryūkyū islanders to conform to the national(istic) model of Japanese language and culture. In 1931, Japan invaded and occupied Manchuria (China's northeasternmost territory), and on the island of Okinawa established the Movement for Enforcement of the Normal Language (*fūtsūgo reikō undō*). Under this movement, debate societies were established to promote the use of Japanese. At these gatherings, "speaking a Ryūkyūan language...was considered an unpatriotic act, and children taking part in debate circles risked being penalized if they failed to speak Japanese" (Heinrich 2004).

While Japan lurched toward the expansion of military conflict throughout East Asia and the Pacific in the mid-1930s, there was an effort throughout the nation to promote loyalty, patriotism, and national unity. In this milieu, "active measures to suppress Ryūkyūan increased...[and] speaking Ryūkyūan in the private domain came to be seen as an obstacle to the spread of Standard Japanese" (Heinrich 2004:158). This period saw a marked increase in the use of the infamous *hōgen huda* (dialect tag) which was hung around the neck of any student who used their home dialect in school. As Heinrich reports, "other punishments included assignment of unpopular duties such as cleaning up after school lessons" (Heinrich 2004:159). Nishimura (2001:176) reports that, at one school, children had to sing "using dialect is the enemy of the country" (*hōgen tsukau wa kuni no kateki*) during morning assemblies. Tanaka (2001:12) reports that when he was at school, "there was a clothes-line in the classroom on which colored paper in the shape of laundry was hung. If a student spoke

Ryūkyūan, the expression used was written on a paper and symbolically cleansed.”

By 1939, the suppression of Ryūkyūan had been extended well beyond the classroom. A law was passed requiring the use of Standard Japanese in all government offices and institutions. Customers who used Ryūkyūan in these places would be denied service and any employees who spoke Ryūkyūan were fined. As the war progressed towards its inevitable catastrophe, the situation only got worse for the Ryūkyūans. Heinrich characterizes the attitude toward Ryūkyūan as “hysterical.” By the time of the Battle of Okinawa in 1945, “the army gave a command that anyone found using Ryūkyūan was to be considered a spy; cases were reported in which this order was carried out and people speaking Ryūkyūan were shot or stabbed to death” (Nakamatsu 1996: 58; Oyafuso 1986: 38).

As pointed out by Heinrich (2004:162), “language ideology is always also ideology about something other than language.” Under the ideological sway of a Standard Japanese (national language) movement, Ryūkyūan languages have been measured (along with true Japanese language dialects) against the “correct” national standard. Under the mistaken assumption that Ryūkyūan is a variety of Japanese, it has “stood out as the region in which (perceived) embarrassing language behaviour was most pronounced” (Heinrich 2005).

After the end of the World War II, there were attempts on the part of the American occupiers (in concert with local Ryūkyūan activists and scholars) to promote the distinct culture and language of the Ryūkyūan Islands. However, resentment of U.S. occupation served to enhance Ryūkyūan islanders’ affinity with Japan, and to cause them to agitate for reunification. Since 1972, the incursion of Standard Japanese into all forms of communication (public and private) and the diminution of Ryūkyūan languages has proceeded unrelentingly, to the point that the entire group of the Ryūkyūan languages is about to disappear.

While the UNESCO recognition is long overdue and welcome, it is unclear whether it has perhaps come about too late to effect any meaningful preservation of Ryūkyūan languages and culture. There is some reason to be mildly optimistic though. As Heinrich 2005 reports, the establishment of a Society for Spreading Okinawan (*uchinaguchi fukyū kyōgikai*) has begun to exert a positive influence, through the establishment of dialect classes in public schools and the introduction of a standard orthography for the language. A recent “dialect boom” throughout Japan may also have the effect of making Ryūkyūan languages more fashionable as well.

### *Comparisons*

While Ryūkyūan languages are indeed distinct from Japanese and do not fall into the category of dialects, similarities of Japanese attitudes towards them and American attitudes towards non-standard varieties of American English, more notably African-American English (AAE) are striking. Pullum (1997:321) assesses the “Ebonics” controversy of 15 years ago. In this controversy, the nation was scandalized by a proposal by the “Oakland Unified School District in California [on December 18, 1996]...to recognize the native tongue of most of its (African-American) pupils as a language.” While all linguists agree that AAE is a dialect of American English, the controversy was more about what this variety represented than its linguistic status. AAE, Pullum says, is “described as if it were English with mistakes and omissions.... commentators clarified little except the deep hostility and contempt whites feel for the way blacks speak (‘the patois of America’s meanest streets,’ columnist George Will called it, as if AAE could only be spoken in slums), and the deep shame felt by Americans of African descent for speaking that way (a *Los Angeles Times* column by Eldridge Cleaver, a former Black Panther party official, compared the official acknowledgement of AAE with condoning cannibalism)” (Pullum 1997:321).

However, as Pullum suggests, most Americans do not realize that AAE is not merely “bad English.” But as has been shown by numerous linguists, AAE is the same as any other human language, having a unique grammar and pronunciation rules (Bailey et al. 1998). “There is no more reason for calling it bad standard English,” Pullum says, “than there is for dismissing western dialects of English as bad eastern speech, or the reverse” (Pullum 1997:321). The fallacies evident from the Ebonics controversy are reflected in attitudes accompanying some of the local resistance to a revival of Ryūkyūan languages. Heinrich (2005) reports the following comment in a letter to the editor of the *Okinawa Times* from December 3, 2004. The letter writer, a government official opposed to a Ryūkyūan language revival or having these languages taught in the schools, wrote:

I have come across the misunderstanding that the Okinawa dialects are believed to constitute language systems of their own because terms such as Okinawan or island language and the like exist. As a matter of fact, they are merely instances of corrupt accents and Old



Japanese words which have not vanished but continue to be used in Okinawa....Although there have recently been voices calling for teaching the dialects as languages to children, such a practice would be dreadful. What is the idea of teaching corrupt accents? If pupils are not taught to speak proper Japanese, they will face humiliation when grown up because of the language barrier.

The author of this letter has many like-minded allies in the United States, whose attitudes toward Standard American English are equally unenlightened and linguistically flawed. Educating individuals such as this is no easy task, and one that must be undertaken across linguistic borders.

### **Korean Minority Language Speakers**

#### ***Historical Background***

Contact between the Korean peninsula and the Japan archipelago most likely dates back several thousand years. The earliest verifiable contact would have been some 2,400 years ago when agrarian Yayoi people crossed from Korea, bringing with them rice cultivation. Several hundred years later, in the 6th century C.E., the Korean peninsula served as the conduit for the introduction of Buddhism into Japan. From a linguistic perspective, this contact brought Chinese Buddhist texts and the introduction of the Chinese orthographic system to Japan.

A thousand or so years later, Japan (under Hideyoshi) attempted to invade and subjugate Korea. While the invasions ultimately failed, and Japan and Korea returned to a normal regime of trade for the next two centuries, Hideyoshi's invasions—with the explicit aim of extending Japanese military supremacy far out beyond the archipelago—presaged developments three centuries later. In the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Japan (taking its cues from European imperial powers) began to assert itself beyond the main islands, as we noted vis-à-vis the Ryūkyūs. Around this same time (1876), Japan, taking advantage of some Korean internal instability, forced an unequal trading treaty (Japan-Korea Treaty of Amity/*nitchō-shūkōjōki*) upon the Korean Empire. Following this, successive Japanese victories in the Sino-Japanese War of 1895 and the Russo-Japanese War of 1905 left Japan in a position to exert complete control over the Korean peninsula, and annex it officially in 1910.

According to Ishikida (2005), the incorporation of Korea into the Japanese Empire at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century led, inevitably, to the

transmission of Japanese culture and language to Korea and to the movement of population between the two (with Japanese military, administrators and teachers going in one direction, and Korean laborers going in the other). On the Korean side of the Japan Sea, schools were established to teach “Japanese language and culture, and to instill loyalty to the Japanese emperor” (Ishikida 2005:50). This intensified in the 1930s in the run-up to World War II, with policies designed to instill the unity of Korea and Japan (*naissen ittai*), declarations of loyalty to the Emperor, and the adoption of Japanese names. Koreans migrated in great numbers to Japan, to work in factories, construction, and mining. By the start of World War II, there were some 700,000 Japanese living in Korea and about 1.2 million Koreans living in Japan. By the end of the war, due in part to forced conscription of Korean laborers to help the war effort, the Korean population of Japan was slightly under 2 million (Ishikida 2005) out of a total population of 72 million (about 3%). Half of this number (about 1 million) returned to Korea immediately after the end of the war, with a subsequent decline to about 600,000 by 1948. This number has remained rather stable in the years since then. Most Korean residents live in the Kansai area (Osaka, Kyoto, and Hyōgo Prefectures) and Tokyo metropolitan areas such as Tokyo and Kanagawa Prefectures.

Following World War II, the General Headquarters of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (GHQ) deemed as “Japanese nationals” any Koreans who refused to be repatriated to Korea, although for the Japanese, these individuals were considered “resident aliens.” The outbreak of the Korean War and the resulting division of Korea made the situation for these Korean residents of Japan far more complicated. For one thing, as Ishikida notes, many of them identified with the North Korean government and politics, even though they had come originally from South Korea.

### **Language Rights Issues**

One of the most difficult issues for Koreans in Japan has been, and remains, the preservation of their language and culture. Because the two largest Korean associations in Japan (the Chōren and the Minsei) were communist-dominated, they were dissolved in 1949 upon the outbreak of the Korean conflict and this led to cultural and educational deficits that would be difficult to overcome. Up until the outbreak of hostilities in Korea, the two associations had established nearly 600 elementary schools, six middle schools, ten “youth schools,” and two vocational schools, serving over 50,000 students. The dissolution of the supporting Korean

associations, coupled with an order from the GHQ that Korean language could only be taught in extracurricular classes, resulted in a sharp fall in the number of Korean children receiving ethnic education. Only 20,000 continued their ethnic and language training in private Korean schools, while some 40,000 transferred to Japanese schools or dropped out (Lee 1999:139–145, as cited in Ishikida 2005).

The 1950-1960s saw a temporary recovery in the area of Korean ethnic education, with the establishment of the Chongryun (the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan), affiliated with North Korea. By 1966, “there were more than 140 schools with 14 branch schools, 30 ethnic classes, 208 afternoon and night classes, with a total of 40,000 students” (Ishikida 2005, Lee 1999:150). Over the next 40 years though, the number of students in these schools declined (by 2003) to just over 11,000, with the decreasing enrollments putting further pressure on the schools (as they are private and self-supporting).

One of the ongoing problems with Korean heritage education concerns the official Ministry of Education policies that impede it. According to Hatori (2005), these ethnic schools do not have official status. Japanese educational policy provides free public education, but only if the medium of instruction is Japanese. This means, among other things, that “students from Korean national schools are prevented from receiving the same treatment as those of Japanese schools in terms of candidacy for university entrance examinations; and Korean schools do not benefit from Government subsidies and tax exemptions” (Hatori 2005:48). Since Korean language and culture is not taught in public schools, and since Korean heritage schools must therefore be private, there are strong economic and educational disincentives for ethnic Koreans to attend such schools. This had led, naturally, to a decline in enrollments in these schools, and to a gradual loss of ethnic identity, cultural knowledge, and linguistic aptitude among younger Korean-Japanese. It is noted (Hatori 2005, Ishikida 2005) that the overwhelming majority of ethnically Korean youth use Japanese names “rather than their given Korean ones” in order to avoid being labeled as Korean.

There is, however, some indication that things are in fact changing for the better. Beginning in 2004, the Japanese Ministry of Education began to allow colleges and universities to independently assess the academic credentials of their applicants, and in 2005, revised the examination that high school students take to enter college, such that graduates from Korean ethnic schools now have the same status vis-à-vis the exam as do graduates

of Japanese public high schools. It is also the case that Japanese youth sports associations have begun to allow Korean ethnic schools to participate in intermural sports competitions. Whether this will change the trend, or whether it is too little, too late, remains to be seen. But it is clear that these changes are in the right direction.

### *Comparisons*

Problems affecting Korean residents of Japan, including the domain of language and language rights, are effectively a subset of the problems affecting any non-native ethnic group in Japan. As a 2008 U.S. Department of State report states:

Despite legal safeguards against discrimination, the country's large populations of Korean, Chinese, Brazilian, and Filipino permanent residents—many of whom were born, raised, and educated in Japan—were subject to various forms of deeply entrenched societal discrimination, including restricted access to housing, education, and employment opportunities.<sup>4</sup>

That Korean residents of Japan have these problems, after several generations of residence, is quite remarkable, although not unthinkable. One only has to consider the status of Hispanic citizens of the United States. In the case of Puerto Rico, for example, we find a very useful comparison. Puerto Rico was conquered by the United States in a war with Spain in 1898, right around the same time that Japan was incorporating Korea. Unlike Korea, Puerto Rico remains a U.S. territory to this day, but much like the Korean residents of Japan, Puerto Rican-Americans (who are in fact U.S. citizens) are also subject to “various forms of deeply entrenched societal discrimination, including restricted access to housing, education, and employment opportunities.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> United States State Department, “2008 Country Reports on Human Rights: Japan,” Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (accessed November 2010, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/eap/119041.htm>).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

Much of this discrimination, like that against Koreans in Japan, finds its expression through resistance to culture and obstacles to the use of language. Also, while there are many areas in which Puerto Rican citizens have full access to Spanish language services, their need for such services is still marked as an immigrant problem, even though they are clearly not immigrants in any sense of the term.

### **Conclusion**

From the preceding discussion, it is apparent that language is one of the most salient markers (if not the most salient marker) of cultural identity, and in the course of inter-group conflict, language is often (and predictably) used as a tool for the domination of one group over another. The policies of the Japanese government have generally tended towards the absorption of other groups, in an apparent attempt to foster the notion of Japanese ethnic purity. Yet, the specific manner in which official Japanese policy has interacted with ethnic groups can be distinguished by the status of each group—be they aboriginal, an intra-ethnic minority, or an immigrant minority.

For the Ainu, being an aboriginal people meant that the very existence of their ethnicity and culture was antithetical to the Japanese notions of manifest destiny and their claim to being the first civilization on the islands. This was handled in two ways, both of which are reminiscent of white European-Americans' stance toward Amerindian tribes. First of all, the aboriginals were deemed to be "uncivilized" or "savages." Thus, while they might be "earlier" inhabitants of the land, they did not constitute an "earlier civilization." Secondly, they were remade into Japanese (or in the North American case, into Americans), by replacing their language (and other cultural identifiers) with that of the dominant civilization.

The Ryūkyūan case is one involving (for the Japanese, at least) an intra-ethnic minority. In this regard, the Japanese imposed the same regionally dictated chauvinist solution as was promulgated for all "dialect" speaking sub-groups. To promote national unity, one variety of Japanese would have to be officially favored, and be esteemed over all others. In this model, the Ryūkyūans were simply deemed to speak a different dialect of Japanese, but one that was "clearly" inferior to all the others. In this regard, as we have noted, the American attitude towards African-American English is worthy of comparison (in that many Americans regard African-American vernacular as the worst of the non-standard varieties).

The Korean case, involving what is clearly acknowledged to be a distinct national group, is somewhat different from these other two. Complete eradication and absorption is not an option (as with the Ainu), since the Korean nation remains a distinct national entity, irrespective of the conditions of Koreans in Japan proper. Also, while it might have once been imaginable during Japan's imperialistic heyday, the idea that Koreans would be absorbed into Japan and their language and culture replaced by Japanese, ceased to be a possibility after 1945. The Japanese treatment of Koreans and their language since then is thus very similar to American treatment of Spanish-speaking immigrants. They are acknowledged, but also deemed to be "alien" and kept from positions of power and influence through the diminution of, and constraints upon, their language and culture.

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## A BAKERY ATTACK FOILED AGAIN

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“*Pan'ya saishūgeki* パン屋再襲撃 [The Second Bakery Attack]” by Murakami Haruki 村上春樹 (1949–) first came out in 1985 and was included one year later in a book format with six of his other mid-1980's short stories. Placed at the very beginning as the book's title piece, this particular story occupies a prominent position in the collection, although a married couple's assault for food commodities in the middle of the night makes little sense at first and appears merely entertaining for a quick read. According to Fukami, “what makes this work interesting” as “a mere game” comes from “the bizarre originality to seek an absolute basis upon what is totally wild, unfounded, and incompatible with economical efficiency.”<sup>1</sup> In contrast, Kawai argues that, “beneath its apparently superficial pop style,” Murakami's fiction tends to reveal “a certain depth of general consciousness.”<sup>2</sup> Far from being nonsensical, the story in question also illustrates the author's concern for a generational transformation with a combination of postindustrial generalities and historical particularities through the representation that is at once magically realistic of the contemporary predicament and psychoanalytically illustrative of the unconscious.

### The Sociopolitical Dimension

As might be expected, a story about the supposedly identical narrator's prior “attack” exists with the title, “*Pan'ya shūgeki* パン屋襲撃 [The Bakery Attack]” (1981), which provides details as well as discrepancies about the first incident. For instance, some humorous, yet apparently unessential elements, such as a middle-aged woman of excessively careful deliberation on purchase of a few pieces of bread and a pair of impractically gigantic nail clippers on the store counter, are deleted in the later story. Given its brevity and obvious jokes, the early story does not invite much serious consideration, but the use of certain idioms, such as “lack of equivalent exchange items” that causes the two college-age attackers hunger and the “thesis” and “ideology” that the observing narrator attributes to the woman's careful, yet tardy selection process,<sup>3</sup> nevertheless suggests a textual substratum. The most revealing is the baker's identity as

a communist party member who enthuses over Wagner's opera. This contradictory identity does confuse the narrator, and the author omits the party affiliation in the second story, not only to reduce the degree of joking license and confusion but also probably to diffuse apparent political implications.

Like many other college students of his generation, Murakami participated in demonstrations against the 1970 renewal of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty as potentially driving the nation into U.S.-led military conflicts in the Cold War, with Vietnam as an ongoing, imminent example. The student movement in the late sixties ideologically veered toward the left in reaction to the conservative government, although it functioned largely independent of any direct party control, which explains the mocking, discrediting portrayal of the bald baker in his fifties as an unlikely, ineffectual communist who, content with his small business, admiringly listens to Wagner in tedium. The efforts to block the security treaty renewal induced the students' anarchist tendencies to subvert order and authorities, such as their universities, if not ambitiously ushering in an outright revolution as yet. This anarchist stance is manifested, for instance, when, declaring that "God, Marx, John Lennon are all dead," the narrator and his friend, probably roommates and destitute, decide to "take to evildoing" of an intended assault and, if necessary, even murders in the first story ("PS" 31). Reminiscing in the second story, the narrator claims that they were "attackers, not robbers," who by choice refused to work for a wage as socially prescribed and "did some pretty awful things to get [their] hands on food,"<sup>4</sup> thereby professing their antisocial, non-capitalistic activism as distinct from plain sloth.

Apart from humor and the narrator's musical preference that juxtaposes a former Beatles member with pivots of major belief systems in spiritualism and materialism, this passing reference points to an authorial intention in his remaking of the old story, for a temporal discrepancy exists between the two texts. The reference to Lennon's death in December of 1980 and the publication of "*Pan'ya shūgeki*" in October of 1981 locate the first story at the beginning of the 1980s.<sup>5</sup> In "The Second Bakery Attack," published in 1985, the narrator reflects on the original attack as having taken place some ten years earlier, which dates the incident in the middle of the 1970s or earlier.<sup>6</sup> Since the second story basically follows what happens in the first, this time difference is probably attributable to two factors. First, Murakami had no plan to make a sequel when he wrote the first story. Second, by design, he necessarily set the attack of the second story no later

than its publication date so that the reminisced original attack could coincide with the period when the effects of the student movement were at least still felt, although irreversibly waning, and Japan was yet to attain the apex of its unprecedented economic prosperity in the 1980s. This temporal manipulation also attests to the possibility of a serious reading.

In fact, critics have associated this and some of Murakami's other fictions with the sociopolitical situation of his young days.<sup>7</sup> In "The Second Bakery Attack," the wife dictates a modification of their target from a genuine bakery (which they cannot by any means find open anywhere in the city after 2:30 AM) to a McDonald's, calling the fast food restaurant "something like a bakery" in expedient justification for her self-admitted compromise.<sup>8</sup> Then, she takes all the initiatives. Using a self-adhesive tape, she promptly covers the car number plates with "a practiced efficiency to her movements" ("SBA" 45), equips herself and her inept husband with such essential items as ski masks and an automatic shotgun for the attack at hand, and tells him to act as she instructs. He does not understand at all why she possesses those objects, only feeling that "[m]arried life is weird" ("SBA" 44).

Weird as it is, Kato links this aspect of the story to the 1971–72 incidents by a small group of extreme leftists, called the United Red Army [連合赤軍], who got radicalized as remnants of the failed student movements against the security treaty.<sup>9</sup> After having attacked a gun store to obtain firearms and ammunitions, they concealed themselves in a mountainous region of central Japan for a year, lynching their own members and, when detected and besieged, confronting the advancing police with fatal shooting. Murakami has maintained strong interest in this incident, as most notably demonstrated by one of his major novels, *1Q84* (2009–10), in which a group of people seclude themselves in the same inland region for their ideological pursuit as a result of their failed student protest around 1970.<sup>10</sup>

It would be amiss, however, to interpret a text solely with a perspective that specifically focuses on particular social circumstances within certain national boundaries at a given historical moment. Such a reading would not account for the ardent popularity Murakami's translated oeuvre has enjoyed in many parts of the world. The reader outside his native land, or even in it for that matter, would likely appreciate "The Second Bakery Attack" without any prior knowledge of the leftist movements, including the United Red Army incidents that happened in Japan several decades ago. For the same reason, Strecher's argument that

Murakami's works gained popularity due to their introduction to the world market in the eighties when Japan's emergence "as a modern world superpower" was drawing international attention has proven partially valid,"<sup>11</sup> for the popularity has not only endured but considerably expanded ever since the burst of the bubble economy at the beginning of the 1990s.

Rather than delving into historical particularities, let us assume that the story's appeal lies in its general nature. For instance, it would probably not be a rare experience for a young couple married for just a few weeks to find out, while adjusting to the constant presence of another and barely establishing "a mutual understanding" of life together ("PSS" 12), a totally unexpected aspect in the spouse's way of life, which the partner has not even imagined before. It might not be deft familiarity with ski masks, a shotgun, and other necessities for attacking a business establishment, but much less agitative, more ordinary objects or matters would be sufficient to astonish an unsuspecting partner and make him/her consider "married life weird." Instead of the mundane, however, Murakami typically utilizes a technique akin to Kafkaesque representation and magical realism, thereby elucidating a certain problem inherent in people's lives that they might vaguely sense but not necessarily be conscious of. In the current case, the sudden appearance of a shotgun, etc. can be regarded as indicative of his regular writing mode rather than as referring to a particular actual incident.

If a part of the story can be understood in this way, the whole text can likewise assume general significance not tied to a specific past occurrence. In a word, "The Second Bakery Attack," along with its earlier version, is not so much a mere aftermath episode of unsuccessful student revolt as a coming-of-the age tale in which the youth is unwittingly, yet irretrievably incorporated into social machinery. In "*Pan'ya shūgeki*," after the bored baker finds his willingness to let the would-be assailants eat for free is rejected, he casually proposes to curse them, because, according to the narrator, "there must be some exchange" ("PS" 35), the idea that brings in a basis of social contract in their dealing. As the attackers hate to be cursed and the baker does not wish to be killed, the two young men immediately agree to his next suggestion that they become fond of Wagner in exchange for free bread, which means to listen to *Tristan and Isolde* while eating on-site. With both sides satisfied, the deal seems fair and innocuous, and the curse does not appear to take effect.

A fairly curious, random choice as it might appear to be, Wagner's music occupies a culturally central position in this Japanese story, as the staple food indispensable enough to be obtained by force for survival is not

rice in any forms but store-baked bread. Likely strategized for today's commercially uniformized world market, Murakami's fictions reflect his personal preferences. Especially in his early ones, his stories are characteristically devoid of references, a few place names set aside, to any forms of his native culture, replaced by an abundance of Western counterparts. As a result, cultural orientation tied to specific national/ethnic identity loses validity. In this context, Wagner's opera at the bakery symbolizes canonized music and, as such, the established social order or discourse.<sup>12</sup> The narrator aptly calls the baker's maneuvering "Wagner propaganda" ("SBA" 41).<sup>13</sup> Acquiescing to accept the composition signifies to be part of the system, unknowingly succumbing oneself to its yoke at the expense of a young aspiration to be rebellious and independent. At the same time, the German composer's grandiose romanticization of ancient mythology and medievalism devalues and trivializes life in modernity by implied contrast, thereby enhancing haunting subordination through implicit valorization.

Lulling and obscuring the hunger, which probably stands for unfulfilled, persistent, yet indefinable ambition of youth, the curse of social imposition sets in and stays potently internalized like, in the wife's words, "a toothache that will torment [him] until his death unless destroyed by [his] own hands" ("PSS" 20). Suggestively, although the two men declare no interest in Wagner's music and, only prompted by the deal, profess to like it for the moment's convenience, the narrator later remembers the precise titles of the pieces they heard on that occasion. In this context, the giant nail clippers on the bakery counter, which the narrator regards as some kind of joke in the early story, symbolize apparatuses. These include staple food distribution and culturally encoded music, for depriving people, especially youth, of their innately subversive antipathy to the state and social control in which both communism and capitalism take part hand in hand here. A glance at the seemingly impractical tool "clips" reveal the two men's initial elation for carrying out a violent attack.<sup>14</sup> It is as if, "defanged and declawed by the baker, the two men were turned into domesticated 'social animals.'"<sup>15</sup> Rather than signifying creativity, then, the "imagination" that begins "working with a clatter like rolling down a gentle slope" at the end of "*Pan'ya shūgeki*" must allude to skills at social adaptation that have come into play with unforced coercion and taken the place of the hunger's "nihility" ("PS" 36).

Thus, ten years later in "The Second Bakery Attack," recalling the forgotten memory, and occasioned by the resurgent hunger, the narrator

tells his wife that the two hunger-driven men agreed to the deal with the baker, divested here of communist affiliation, because listening to an LP record of Wagner opera preludes, including those to *Tannhäuser* and *The Flying Dutchman*, is “not labor in the pure sense of the word.” But they felt later “some grave mistake” lurking in the “business-like transaction” that cast a “dark shadow on [their] lives...undoubtedly as a kind of curse” (“PSS” 17, 19). Since then, his life, like others’ of his age, has gradually undergone many expected changes, such as graduation, regular employment, and meeting a future spouse.

In tandem with his generation’s conservative ethos change for order and stability, he has now become settled in marriage and no longer averse to working, out of all occupational possibilities, at a law firm while preparing for the bar exam. The old partner’s whereabouts has been unknown since the two men parted company after their diverted attack, although it can easily be surmised that he has taken a similar course in life. At present, the curse affects both the narrator, now self-admitted to be socially docile and complicit, and his new partner, as the wife defines herself.

In a sense, their case is relatively fortunate. In some of Murakami’s other stories, such as *A Wild Sheep Chase* (1982), “TV People” (1989), and *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* (1994–95), similarly married couples as young white-collar professionals, aged alike, living childless in an urban apartment, and busy to maintain their fledging middle-class status, barely find sufficient time to meet and talk to each other. Although married for some years, they or at least the narrating husbands lack meaningful communication and understanding, causing their wives to disappear from their lives without their knowing how that has come to pass. They fail to notice, in their moral slumber, a grave problem latent in the daily routines to which they have congenially got accustomed in the course of their marital life.

In the present case, the couple’s problem is of somewhat different nature precisely due to the early stage of their conjugality. As Ishikura points out, the scant provisions in the refrigerator, which the narrator ascribes to their busy work schedules, symbolize their incomplete status as a married couple.<sup>16</sup> Kept awake by painful hunger late at night, this fresh pair of wife and husband can set themselves to deal with a common, pressing situation in the form of hunger and a curse, which originate in a spouse’s past, rather than trying, albeit in vain, to go back to sleep for the early start of their jobs the following day as more experienced couples



would customarily do. The bakery attack translates into their first serious attempt to lay a foundation for “a mutual understanding” in their two weeks of married life during which she has constantly sensed “existence of a certain kind of curse close by” (“PSS” 20). In this sense, the question that the wife raises at the beginning, whether the hunger “has anything to do with being married” (“SBA” 39), is highly relevant.

We should note that the curse and the hunger are not one and the same.<sup>17</sup> Although the wife’s attack declaration originates in shared hunger and from her desire to get rid of the curse, she never directly identifies one with the other. After having compared the curse to a toothache for its likely future effect combined with the hunger’s pain, she refines her simile, based on how she personally feels, to a “heavy, dusty curtain that hasn’t been washed for years, hanging down from the ceiling” on her mind during their short married life (“SBA” 43). Her phrasing indicates a kind of indefinable mental gloom that sharply contrasts to the hunger’s keen, physical sensation. The hunger is linked to the core of intrinsic search for one’s *raison d’être*, while the curse that begins with eating bread offered through a compromise is associated with the expediency of accommodating oneself to extrinsic circumstances. Like the curtain, the curse has covered with a sense of material fulfillment the hunger that has remained potential in an inner part of the mind for a decade. When the new partnership of marriage divides the curse between wife and husband, its potency gets temporarily diluted, and the suppressed hunger resurfaces with relentlessly intense vengeance. Her proposal of a reenacted attack means to address the root causes of the problem at once by responding properly to youthful, unquenched ardor and regaining mental autonomy from social exploitation.

To dispel the curse, the married couple in their late twenties “plunders” a McDonald’s. To maintain their anarchist legitimacy, the narrator refrains from devouring freshly made Big Macs in the restaurant despite a pressing hunger, while his wife pays for two large cups of Coke because they only have to acquire bread by force and nothing else for the task’s completion. After the wife binds the three employees skillfully and caringly with a packing cord she has brought, they successfully drive away with thirty takeout Big Macs plus the Coke, and they can finally assuage the unbearable hunger with one third of the hamburgers at a parking lot. The story appears to have a resolution to their problem.

The question remains, however, if “the curse is cleared away,”<sup>18</sup> although starvation has dissipated. First of all, a McDonald’s is a far cry from a genuine bakery. On the most basic level, the franchised store does

not bake bread on its premises. The effect of attack at such a gross compromise is highly questionable. Second, similar to the baker, the three employees at the McDonald's offer no resistance. Instead, the manager meekly insists to give away more money than worth thirty Big Macs to purchase at another store, or even all the night's earnings that are insured, for simplifying the day's accounting in favor of what the store manual dictates. The system is thus considered even more important than life at risk. While the attackers do not yield to a tempting offer this time, the effect they desire becomes likely unattainable when the meaning of attack intended as a terrorizing, subversive act is evidently misplaced and lost. After all, the action they carry out for the removal of a curse amounts to "no more than a mere attack for attack's sake,"<sup>19</sup> a mere shell of assault that does not involve any other compelling need or ideology. The wife herself dismantles the significance of their "attack" when she pays for their soft drinks as a good citizen.

Third, the McDonald's globally promotes its presence and products with utmost efficiency and American cultural orientation. Considering the political aspect of this story in which the leftist student revolt was directed against Japan's military alliance with the United States, the couple's compromised solution poses a contradiction. But they wholeheartedly savor the smell and taste of ten Big Macs, six for him and four for her. Although frequent references to globally marketed, mainly Western, and especially American consumer products and cultural items, such as John Lennon in the early text and *The Wizard of Oz* in the later one, are a common feature in Murakami's works, the unquestioned consumption of so many Big Macs proves problematic to their intended solution.

In fact, certain signs indicate failure in their endeavor to eradicate the curse. Apart from the two attackers and the three employees, only two more people are present as customers in the mid-night restaurant. They are a student-looking couple that, fast asleep on the plastic table with two cups of strawberry milk shake, never wakes up during the attack, even when the shutter comes down with a roar at the wife's order. While the narrator wonders at their unusually deep sleep, these two minor figures that have come for a late night meal on a red, shiny, sporty car parked outside are probably representative, as Kato argues,<sup>20</sup> of the younger generation that unconditionally accepts the sociopolitical reality and enjoys the material prosperity of Japan in the 1980s and thereafter. This is one of the two original generational groups that the main readership of Murakami's literature in Japan and beyond consists of.

Born around 1960 or later, growing up during a rapid economic expansion, they tend to be ideologically apolitical and noncommittal while primarily knowing how to express self-identity through what and how much they consume, like the couple's choice of a late-night snack and a new mid-sized automobile that costs more with an alluring promotional image than the attackers' secondhand, compact, practical model.<sup>21</sup> A shared taste for fast food notwithstanding, this young couple's case makes a sharp contrast to the attackers', in the sense that one cup of McDonald's milk shake alone is apparently enough, not only to quench their physical and mental "thirst" if any, at once, but to keep them in deep, undisturbed sleep, whereas he and his wife cannot sleep due to the critically severe hunger although they have eaten the previous evening. Another short story by Murakami, titled "*Nemuri* 眠り [Sleep]" (1989), is exemplary here as synthetic of the two couples' cases.

There, the female protagonist, who conventionally regards herself as happily married with a child, never regains a wink of sleep for weeks once she has doubt upon the meaning of her married life. Like the narrator and the young customers, she was metaphorically sound "asleep" under the spell of social norms before her critical awakening. It is noteworthy, then, that one major effect of the hunger in "The Second Bakery Attack" is to keep the married couple awake from falling back to sleep or the regularity of their everyday life that obscures and blocks self-questioning.

The other is Murakami's college-educated age group a generation older. With certain sympathy, they can find the projection of their politically frustrated youth in some of his stories, and their skeptical view of the following generation is reflected through the narrator in the author's satirical gaze at the young couple undisturbedly asleep. Their case, however, is hardly dissimilar in terms of the metamorphosis that they have undergone since college graduation. They at once constituted the driving force of the eighties' economic prosperity and were greatly receptive of its material benefits albeit once critical of the status quo, and now faintly reminiscent of the resistant stance they formerly assumed. This is what the narrator means by gradual, irreversible changes that have befallen him.<sup>22</sup>

Thus, when the attackers consume ten Big Macs to their heart's content, they not only fill their physical need but also, with twenty more hamburgers to go, replace a remnant of youthful drive for change with unbridled consumerism. The void in the form of hunger is simply overridden with what the largest multinational franchise system offers. With the curse not lifted but further internalized, the couple is fully

incorporated into the established system of predominantly economic efficacy despite of their last rebellious undertaking.<sup>23</sup> Without “solid...subjectivity” to “confront reality” and distinguish themselves from others anymore, they have become “beings that can be deciphered in any way as signs” like the commodities they consume.<sup>24</sup>

From another perspective, it follows that, in spite of an apparent, generational difference, the attackers and the college-aged customers each exhibit a fantastically impossible extremity of physical nature, that is, sudden unfathomable hunger and undisturbedly deep sleep, as indicative of their fundamental affinity in terms of high involvement with socioeconomic reality. In Kobayashi’s words, the young diners are “nothing other than negative doubles” of the married pair of attackers, which “prototypically can be traced back to” the original attackers who do not resist accepting free bread in their transaction.<sup>25</sup> As if to seal off the attackers’ fate as newly converted devotees of globalized consumerism and the American lifestyle, “a giant SONY BETA ad tower” glows in front of their car at dawn while they listen to FEN (Far East Network), which is a U.S. military radio station based in western Tokyo, “playing cowboy music” at the end of the story (“SBA” 48).

“The Second Bakery Attack” contains political bearings upon specific historical circumstances, and by extension, it can apply to a certain generation that revolted against establishments at the end of the 1960s in many parts of the world. Murakami states in relation to the nuclear aftermath of March 11, 2011: “What I wanted to say is what I’ve been saying since 1968: we have to change the system.”<sup>26</sup> At the same time, the story can be considered more general and far-reaching as allegorical of the final transition of life’s stages from youth, which is long gone with an indefinite sense of incompleteness, into sedateness of the initially undesired, yet inevitably compromised middle age, anywhere but especially in rapidly capitalized societies. This is, in fact, a major theme in Murakami’s early works, to which, together with the dominance of global consumerism and the Americanized lifestyle, any reader can relate although they might not be aware of detailed historic-political subtleties on the surface and beneath.

### **The Relational Dimension**

The sociopolitical elements discussed above relate to the story’s more private aspect of a mutual relationship between two main characters, the narrator and his wife. Apart from the extraordinary hunger they cope with, they look very normal as a young, married couple at first. Living in a

metropolitan area, and owning a used Toyota Corolla, they have a middle-class lifestyle that befits young professionals in the early stage of their career and marriage. Their power dynamics are not balanced, however. Similar to Murakami's other male narrator-protagonists in his early stories, this narrator is not committed in a significant way to any relationships with other people, including the wife and the partner of his younger days about whose life's progress he shows little concern after they severed their tie. Recalling the second bakery attack incident at an unspecified time of his actual narration,<sup>27</sup> he confides his utter inability to specify in what year he got married and how old he was then, although he can tell the age difference between him and his wife, which remains constant, without any difficulty.

In contrast to his halfhearted commitment to life, which is already evident in his compromising negotiation with the baker in the early story, she is much more decisive in thought and action, and she takes the initiative. When struck by the unfathomable hunger, she not only ignores her husband's poor joke about cooking deodorant, but also immediately rejects his proposal to look for an all-night restaurant, convincingly asserting that it is wrong to eat out after midnight. When, reminded of a similar experience of starvation a decade ago, he inadvertently mentions his earlier attempt at a bakery assault, she insists on hearing every detail with a number of persistent questions, to which he reluctantly yields. It is she who firmly believes in the sheer necessity of another bakery attack and actually carries it out with expert finesse while the husband awkwardly follows her directions.

The lack of relational equilibrium between them typically manifests itself in the philosophical way he understands his response to her demand or rejection with the concept of a thesis. The term is a carryover from the earlier story in which, according to the narrator's observation, different kinds of bread compete to occupy "the position of a thesis," meaning a hypothesis or a proposition, in the middle-aged female customer's mind ("PS" 32). In "The Second Bakery Attack," as the husband easily concedes to his wife's refusal to go out for a midnight supper, he considers her attitude very old-fashioned, yet he calls her resolute opinion "a thesis (or a statement)" that has to be accepted "like a kind of revelation" ("PSS" 14, 13). He ascribes his own readiness to comply with her ideas to a tendency supposedly common among those newly married, which hints at fear to offend a new spouse. But the use of "thesis" twice in this context sets his case apart from other marriages. While ideologically tinged here

with its rampant usage by leftist student activists of his generation for their political manifesto, the term “thesis” dialectically presupposes an antithesis or his individual thought that should confront hers, but it is simply absent. Consequently, there is no synthesis, not to mention sublation, of the two individual elements. Within the present context at least, the relationship turns out to be odd in the sense that it is exclusively one-sided with no conflict or mutual compromise involved.

As the narrating voice provides both a textual perspective and inner private deliberations, however, the narrator maintains his individual presence throughout the story, which makes the wife’s unchallenged assertiveness all the more outstanding. In fact, the unnamed spouse is not quite developed as a full-fledged character with internal depth. Her characterization consists of narrow facets of externally observed traits, including some old-fashioned belief, questioning insistence, fastidiousness over going out at night and paying what she regards as due, decisiveness in words and behavior, and perhaps little capacity for humor. Other than her intuitive idea that they must attack a bakery that very night, she does not express much of her own thought. With the author’s magically realistic mode of writing aside, her thorough preparation and skills for burglary, which she has obviously acquired with experiences, remain unlikely and enigmatic. Meanwhile, her consistently feminine mode of speech in Japanese, unlike rather neutralized or “unisex” speech among today’s generations, is conventionally generic enough to indicate the gender rather than an individual. So is the description of her body as feline at the end.<sup>28</sup> Although she is one of the only two principal figures in the story, her characterization is largely flat.<sup>29</sup>

This suggests that she functions not only as an independent character to keep the story from falling into solipsism but also, on a symbolic level, as an extension of the narrator’s psyche that collaborates with the hunger for compelling the unwilling husband to finalize the unfinished business of attacking a bakery. A strong urge comes from within in the form of hunger, while the wife externally takes all the steps for him to carry out the intended action.<sup>30</sup> As demonstrative of the implicit collaboration, the imagery of a floating boat over a submarine volcano, to which he compares his hunger-stricken situation, is spontaneously introduced to his mind upon his agreeing to her “thesis” of impropriety to go out for dinner late at night (“SBA” 38). In turn, the image enhances his notion of her statement as an unchallengeable thesis, because his instant acceptance of her admittedly outdated social propriety comes from his

intuitive understanding of the induced imagery as “of a revelatory kind” (“PSS” 14). His acquiescence to follow her lead is thus closely related to his surging insecurity that stems from a cause far more deep-seated than a mere apprehension for passing offenses.

In terms of insecurity tied to the hunger, Ishikura rather finds it in the wife, arguing that the female character is motivated by her jealousy of the two attackers’ partnership in the first bakery assault and her desire to feel unity with her husband. Regardless of the unspecified gender of the *aibō* 相棒 [partner], with which the reminiscing husband refers to his former friend, if the hunger symbolizes intense jealousy and a need for strong relationship in her case,<sup>31</sup> the same argument ill applies to the hunger of the original two accomplices in the first attack as well as to that of her husband. In “*Pan’ya shūgeki*,” the narrator refers to his “partner” with masculine pronouns, and the word in its common usage is less likely to indicate a female partner, especially in a love relationship. Accordingly, the wife’s self-proclamation as such in marriage sounds rather abrupt and exceptional, if not improbable. This also renders her less like a full-fledged independent character.

The association of the wife with the underwater volcano is ascertainable through the rest of the story with four more references to the volcano. The second reference introduces the other metaphor of “a hermetically sealed cavern” (“SBA” 39) around the stomach, and both metaphors center on the strong sense of uncertainty linked to the unfathomable hunger. In fact, the two metaphors emerge immediately after she expresses her dismay at the excessive hunger that plagues her and asks the husband if the condition is somehow related to the state of being married. Although he does not know the answer and replies so, her question not only prompts the cavernous image in his mind, but also reminds him of a similar hunger that he had once ten years ago, unintentionally mentioning a long forgotten bakery attack for the first time and thereby causing her persistent inquiries. As she intensifies her questioning and insists on the necessity to undertake another bakery attack, waves caused by submarine earthquakes rock the narrator’s imaginary boat in the third and fourth references while the seawater under it threateningly becomes even clearer than before, highly enhancing his sense of uncertainty. Finally, upon the married couple’s success in attacking a McDonald’s and filling their stomach with plundered Big Macs in a parking lot at dawn, the narrator realizes that the volcano has disappeared. Only ripples lap the boat on the

calm sea in his metaphorical world while the satisfied wife gently sleeps on his shoulder in reality.

Evidently, this does not mean that all is well with the couple at the end. Earlier in the story, when she asks him about the outcome of the first bakery attack, he chooses not to tell her much of what actually happened as a result, only saying that his situation has taken many gradual turns, ultimately leading to his current ordinary, unobtrusive life of a job and marriage. Similarly, although we know from the sociopolitical analysis that their efforts to dispel the curse for good with the second attack probably have not produced the expected effect, Murakami avoids delivering the crucial information to the reader. His reticence suggests a mixed result at best. Apparently, there is need to delve into a deeper level of textual reading in order to explore the unspoken.

### **The Psychological Dimension**

The two aspects discussed so far, sociopolitical and relational, strongly point to a psychological layer that underlie them. In order to describe his abrupt starvation, the narrator uses two similes turned into extended metaphors. One is “a hermetically sealed cavern” around the stomach that gives him a “weird sense...of the existential reality of non-existence,” causing him an acrophobically “paralyzing fear.” The utter void at the center of the body is by nature psychologically problematic. It is nihilistic to the host, bringing about the impending sense of fear, anxiety, and uncertainty that “you might feel when you climb to the very top of a high steeple” (“SBA” 39). The description suggests the severe hunger’s origin not exactly from a physical, nutritional need but, more profoundly, from a mental source that might invalidate the life he has lived if not properly and urgently addressed. At the same time, a tightly closed vacuity indicates difficulty in solving the problem.

The other metaphor of an underwater volcano and a boat that appears five times through the text reinforces the acrophobic state of mind. In explaining the special nature of his hunger, the narrator imagines a volcano top threateningly visible under a small boat from which his vicarious self looks down through the seawater. As the hunger intensifies, the water becomes so transparent that he can clearly see every detail of the crater at the bottom and feels as if his boat were floating unsupported in the air, thereby rendering the marine situation into an acrophobic impasse. This volcanic metaphor leads to the cavernous one, and both images convey the sensation of tense, precarious unsteadiness. The metaphorical focus differs,



however, between sheer vacuity at the center of the body and danger waiting deep below to erupt and take over the attentive consciousness above on the surface. Although cited to elucidate the enormity of hunger, the volcanic metaphor actually points, not to the hunger's physically felt oppressiveness, but specifically to its purely psychological aspect with the submarine volcano standing for a part of the visualized unconscious, in a text that abounds in similes of "imagery of the deep sea."<sup>32</sup>

This unconsciousness is a contested one. For instance, Kobayashi considers it "a congealed scar of libido repressed in the id field," whereas Ishikura thinks that the volcano stands for the husband's fear of his wife's drive for conjugal unity.<sup>33</sup> The very first passage about the volcano makes it clear that the underlying issue is psychological, of which the narrator has little doubt when he states that, not being Sigmund Freud, he cannot interpret the image he himself has spontaneously created. He thus divulges a belief, shared by the general public, that the Austrian scholar is the authority in psychoanalysis, and that one should rely on his theory in dealing with the unconscious. The underwater volcano, however, does not qualify well as the Freudian subconscious in some crucial elements. Freud hypothesizes a stratum under the consciousness, which remains invisibly chaotic, vastly unfathomable, and resists any manipulative intervention by reason, rather affecting the mind significantly in such a covert, distorted, symbolic way as to produce symptoms of repressed desires.

At the same time, the narrator's anonymity suggests that the symbolism possibly applies beyond an individual mold. Murakami often talks about "our generation" in many of his numerous non-fictional writings, meaning the baby boomers who were born shortly after World War II, reached their adolescence in the sixties, and participated in anti-war, anti-establishment student movements toward the decade's end in Japan and elsewhere. His literature as a whole reveals a persistent, underlying interest in the various changes, including social, cultural, economic, and political, that his generation has undergone. As discussed earlier, "The Second Bakery Attack" also contains a sociopolitical implication peculiar to the generation as well as a more general significance. What the text signifies can thus extend to a generational, or even supranational sphere of unconsciousness shared by people of a certain age group regardless of ethnicity. In this respect, it alludes to the Jungian theory as well. Like the Freudian model, however, the outstanding volcano fits ill the vast substratum of the mind that the Swiss psychologist proposes as the collective unconscious. Apart from Murakami's statement not to have

subscribed to the Jungian psychoanalysis,<sup>34</sup> the theory does not suppose an archetype of a massive, immobile, psychic projection rising from the murky nether stratum toward the attentive consciousness.

The unconscious in this story is thus distinctive in a few respects. First, the volcano below remains vast and steady while it is clearly visible from the surface. Second, an immense part of it protrudes threateningly toward the watchful self that is puny and sensitively vulnerable by contrast. Third, the surface mind can by no means figure out what might lie underneath the highly visible crater or if an eruption will ever occur. The consciousness understands the existence of a vast, lower counterpart without any means to control it. In other words, the narrator is constantly aware of the volcano's massive presence under him with the bird's view-like advantage, but without freedom to flee from it.<sup>35</sup> What actually unsettles him in anticipation, however, is not exactly a sudden outburst of lava and flying rocks at the boat, that is, destruction of the conscious self by unleashed power of the subconscious, which might occur or might not. Rather, it is the increasing water transparency that makes him more and more fearfully aware of what lies below, as if the mountain understood the very nature of impact it gives upon the closely watching self. This almost willful underwater land mass that intimidates the surface consciousness with its own independent presence and subterranean system metaphorically approximates the Lacanian unconscious that "*is structured like a language*."<sup>36</sup>

As a spontaneous image that the narrator-protagonist presents to describe his unusual hunger, the volcano belongs to the Imaginary order that Lacan posits. The image does not stand by itself, however, because it involves language to build an extended metaphor. Although imaginary, the volcano solely depends on the mediation of the words he utilizes. Thus, it also belongs to the Symbolic order as a signifier. In addition, the volcano centers around what cannot be identified, only hinting in the form of a metaphoric image at what can be sensed as real but cannot be referenced through signification. Like the cavernous metaphor, it only hints at an impossibility of proving the existence of non-existence or sheer vacuity in the midst of the body. It follows that the volcanic metaphor locates itself at the intersection of Lacan's three orders: the Imaginary, the Symbolic, and the Real.

The question hinges on what the hunger is symptomatic of as a psychic condition. As demonstrated before, a central issue is rather broadly sociopolitical than sexual in this case. An eruptive volcano suggests danger,

violence, and overthrow of the status quo. As such, it can function well as a metaphor for a revolution, which students in the late sixties aspired to bring about with their protestations, or that which the narrator-protagonist and his friend tried to achieve on a small scale with their intended terrorization at a bakery. But, as the disappointed students were soon incorporated into the social fabric as its core productive members with the lure of economic fulfillment, the two characters accepted the baker's free bread in exchange for their assent to listen to Wagner's preludes. Thus, a dormant volcano deep under the sea is especially a suitable symbol for a thwarted, revolutionary aspiration.

In the light of Lacanian psychoanalysis, what diverts the rebellious youth into social inertia is the big Other that controls logic, language, and meaning in the Symbolic order. In the present socialized context, the Other stays in full, yet covert play through the baker's conciliatory offer and Wagner's canonical music that succeed in lulling the aspiration. This leaves the subject lacking in an object against which to carry out social subversion, causing him an unfulfilled desire, which has remained latent for ten years due to the internalized curse or the Symbolic intervention. Repressed and structured in the unconscious, however, the desire ultimately reasserts itself as a keenly painful hunger on the physical level and in the imagined form of cavernous and volcanic metaphors.

As a construct of the Imaginary order contained in the Symbolic, this volcano operates on its unseen, geological conditions, which themselves constitute a metaphor for the system of language that structures the Lacanian unconscious. As such, it understands the linguistic workings of the surface mind, but it rejects any conscious attempts to modify it. Thus, the almost willful volcano keeps a possibly imminent eruption beyond the narrator's comprehension. As a result, he remains suspended in high uncertainty, which leads to the imagery of acrophobic impasse. But it does not threaten him with actual volcanic activities. Instead, his growing anxiety in face of an internal demon, or a neglected desire is translated visually into an absence, or even the increasing water transparency that appears to annul the distance between consciousness and the unconscious.

The volcano is a symptom of the narrator's repressed desire for social change, not a simple "image of nihilism" based on playful, arbitrary meaninglessness as Fukami argues.<sup>37</sup> Not allowed to find a vent for a decade, the desire turns negatively inverted as lack or want in the form of intense hunger at last. In place of an involuntary dream, it is manifested in two metaphors, with a nihilistic cavern directly pointing to the negative

enormity of want and the water transparency standing for the closing gap with the unconscious that unsettles the consciousness due to the latter's incapability to understand the former.

The volcanic imagery spontaneously comes to him during conversation with his wife about the hunger that afflicts them both. More precisely, the word *eizō* 映像, which he uses to organize the image into four successive stages at the present time of his narration, actually means a reflection on the screen, more likely a cinematic one. This suggests his direct or indirect involvement in its production, whether as a creator or as a spectator. Still, he fails to acknowledge or understand his repressed desire in fear of backlash and repercussions from his current immersion in social compromise, complacency, and sedentariness, although the acknowledged desire might perhaps help to release him from an unresolved problem of his past.

Unfamiliarity with psychoanalysis is his excuse, when, in fact, he lacks the will or courage to "go down to the dark places, to the deep places" unlike the author who "endure[s]" descent into a nightmarish realm of fiction making.<sup>38</sup> Instead, a rather intuitive, yet unprofessional diagnosis quickly comes from his wife. Following her initiative, he participates in a bakery attack as a hesitant, unwilling accomplice, not convinced of its necessity to the very end. As a result, what the two metaphors combined bring about is neither an eruptive outburst of destructive mental energy nor the pent-up desire conducted toward a therapeutic effect but the selfsame energy dissipated and finally substituted with socially sanctioned desires of mature sedateness and incessant consumerism. Accordingly, the underwater volcano as a symptom disappears from the narrator's observant sight in the end.

"The Second Bakery Attack" is one of the short stories that Murakami Haruki wrote early in his writing career. Easy to read, they tend to delineate a strange, absurd, or even impossible occurrence, set in an otherwise ordinary reality, to the reader's amusement or bewilderment. As the author claims to search for a "deeper story within those easy words" of his fiction,<sup>39</sup> it is highly assumable that they contain serious aspects that defy humor-fraught nonchalance on the surface at multiple levels, such as sociopolitical, relational, and psychological. That is to say, some, if not all of those stories with their brevity can rival his much discussed, increasingly voluminous novels in terms of the complex nexus of potential meaning. This particular text stands a close examination and demonstrates that possibility well.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Fukami Haruka, *Murakami Haruki no uta* [The Songs of Murakami Haruki] (Tokyo: Seikyusha, 1990), pp. 159–160.

<sup>2</sup> Toshio Kawai, “The Experience of the Numinous Today: From the Novels of Haruki Murakami,” in Ann Casement and David Tacey, eds., *The Idea of the Numinous: Contemporary Jungian and Psychological Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 193.

<sup>3</sup> Murakami Haruki, “*Pan’ya shūgeki* [Bakery Attack; パン屋襲撃],” in *Murakami Haruki zen sakuhin 1979–1989 8: Tanpenshū III* [The Complete Works by Murakami Haruki 1979–1989 8: The Collection of Short Stories III] (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1991), pp. 31–33. All the references to this text are to this edition, and all the translations from it are mine. The piece is abbreviated as “PS” hereafter.

<sup>4</sup> Haruki Murakami, “The Second Bakery Attack,” in Jay Rubin, trans., *The Elephant Vanishes* (New York: Random House, 1993), p. 39. The piece in translation is abbreviated as “SBA.”

<sup>5</sup> Initially published in the October issue of *Waseda bungaku* that year as “*Pan’ya shūgeki*,” this short story appeared one month later with a different title, “*Pan* [Bread],” in Murakami Haruki and Itoi Shigesato, eds., *Yume de aimashō* [We Shall Meet in Dreams] (Tokyo: Tojusha, 1981).

<sup>6</sup> Matsui admits that it is more appropriate to regard the story as “a work with the eighties’ contemporaneity centering on 1985” than, if calculated from the supposed date of the first attack around 1980, as “a kind of future” piece concerning around 1990. Matsui Fumie, “Hanpuku suru monogatari: ‘*Pan’ya saishūgeki*’ ron” [The Story that Repeats Itself: On “The Second Bakery Attack”], in Chida Hiroyuki and Usami Takeshi, eds., *Murakami Haruki to 1980 nendai* [Murakami Haruki and the 1980s] (Tokyo: Ofu, 2008), p. 160.

<sup>7</sup> See, for instance, Tanaka Minoru, “*Kieteiku ‘genjitsu’: ‘Naya wo yaku’ sonogo ‘Pan’ya saishūgeki*” [The Vanishing ‘Reality’: ‘Barn Burning’ and then ‘The Second Bakery Attack’], in Komata Tomoshi, ed., *Murakami Haruki, Nihon bungaku kenkyū ronbun shūsei* 46 (Tokyo: Wakakusa shobo, 1998), p. 194; Morimoto Takako, “*Pan’ya saishūgeki: Hizai no na e mukete*” [The Second Bakery Attack: Toward the Name of Nonexistence], in *Kokubungaku* 40/4 (1995): 90–94; Kazamaru Yoshihiko, *Murakami Haruki tanpen saidoku* [Rereading Murakami Haruki’s Short Stories] (Tokyo: Misuzu shobo, 2007), pp. 61–62; Matsui, “Hanpuku suru monogatari: ‘*Pan’ya saishūgeki*’ ron,” pp. 156–171.

<sup>8</sup> Murakami Haruki, “*Pan’ya saishūgeki* [The Second Bakery Attack; パン屋再襲撃],” in *Murakami Haruki zen sakuhin 1979-1989 8: Tanpenshū III*, p. 23. All the translations from this original text are mine. The piece is abbreviated as “PSS.”

<sup>9</sup> Kato Norihiro, *Bungaku chizu: Oe to Murakami to nijūnen* [A literary Map: Oe and Murakami and Twenty Years], Asahi Sensho 850 (Tokyo: Asahi shinbun shuppan, 2008), pp. 228–230. Kato asserts that Murakami got the title, “The Second Bakery Attack,” metonymically from the expression, “the gun shop attack,” freshly used in the evening newspapers on the day of the group’s action. The news reports ten of the robbed guns as “SKB Remington 5-chambered automatic shotguns (12-caliber)” and “ski caps” left in their abandoned car that had its license number plates disguised.

<sup>10</sup> Murakami Haruki, *1Q84*, Book 1 (Tokyo: Shinchosha, 2009), pp. 220–231.

<sup>11</sup> Matthew Carl Strecher, *Dances with Sheep: The Quest for Identity in the Fiction of Murakami Haruki*, Michigan Monograph Series in Japanese Studies 37 (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, 2002), p. 6.

<sup>12</sup> It is noteworthy that the prelude to *Tristan and Isolde* accompanies the climax of the film, *Yūkoku* [Patriotism; 憂国] (1966), which Mishima Yukio scripted, produced, directed, and played the principal role of, based on his short story of the same title about double suicide of a lieutenant and his wife, set against the backdrop of the 2.26 coup d’état attempt in 1936. Apart from the Wagnerian exuberant lyricism that renders the gruesome scene “Romantic,” the apparent reason for the double suicide is dedication to the cause of national integrity, with which Wagner’s canonical authority is associated.

<sup>13</sup> Kobayashi identifies the story’s bread with “the bread that the devil showed in the Gospels” and “the bread that ‘the Great Inquisitor’ of Ivan Karamazov detailed.” He goes as far as to call the propaganda in question “promotion of fascism ideology.” Kobayashi Masaaki, *Murakami Haruki: Tō to umi no kanata ni* [Murakami Haruki: Beyond the Tower and the Sea] (Tokyo: Shinwasha, 1998), p. 122. I consider the symbolism of this bread more generally and insidiously latent in society than rife with specific religious and political connotations.

<sup>14</sup> See Kazamaru, *Murakami Haruki tanpen saidoku*, p. 60.

<sup>15</sup> Ishikura Michiko, “Fūfu no unmei I: ‘Pan’ya saishūgeki’ ron [The Fate of Married Couples I: On ‘The Second Bakery Attack],” in Kuritsubo

Yoshiki and Tsuge Mitsuhiro, eds., *Murakami Haruki Studies 2* (Tokyo: Wakakusa shobo, 1999), p. 197.

<sup>16</sup> Ishikura, “Fūfu no unmei I: ‘Pan’ya saishūgeki’ ron,” p. 191.

<sup>17</sup> Critics has not pointed out this crucial difference. For instance, although Yoshikawa, among others, correctly explains the hunger as a result of the curse, he identifies “the resurgence of what was once familiar but has disappeared” with the curse. Yoshikawa Yasuhisa, *Murakami Haruki to Haruki Murakami: seishin bunseki suru sakka* [Murakami Haruki and Haruki Murakami: An Author Who Psychoanalyzes] (Tokyo: Minerva shobo, 2010), p. 15.

<sup>18</sup> Kobayashi, *Murakami Haruki*, p. 119.

<sup>19</sup> Matsui, “Hanpuku suru monogatari,” p. 168.

<sup>20</sup> Kato, *Bungaku chizu*, pp. 227–228.

<sup>21</sup> In the original text, this car is specified as a Nissan model called Bluebird that was popular in the eighties. For more details about this model, see Matsui, p. 166.

<sup>22</sup> The change largely applies to Murakami’s private life as well in terms of accumulation of possessions, such as CDs and LP records, and a lifestyle that involves cars as well as international trips, visits, and stays. This is obvious in many of his nonfictional pieces, and we can also trace the change in protagonists’ modes of life in his fictions.

<sup>23</sup> Concerning the colonizing power of “multinational capital” on the Unconscious, Fredric Jameson argues that “local countercultural forms of cultural resistance and guerilla warfare...are all somehow secretly disarmed and reabsorbed by a system of which they themselves might well be considered a part, since they can achieve no distance from it.” Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991), p. 49.

<sup>24</sup> Tanaka, “Kieteiku ‘genjitsu,’” pp. 190–191. See also Morimoto, p. 92; and Matsui, “Hanpuku suru monogatari,” pp. 162–163, 166–168, and 169.

<sup>25</sup> Kobayashi, *Murakami Haruki*, p. 121.

<sup>26</sup> Sam Anderson, “The Underground Man,” *The New York Times Magazine*, October 23, 2011, p. 63.

<sup>27</sup> As Tanaka points out (p. 189), this text consists of “three layers of time,” including the first phase of the initial bakery attack, the second of the narrator’s two-week-long marriage leading to the reenacted bakery attack, and the third of his narration in retrospect of those past events.

<sup>28</sup> We can find another example of this simile in “*UFO ga Kushiro ni oriru* [UFO in Kushiro; UFO が釧路に降りる]” (1999).

<sup>29</sup> This might be partly because, “in Murakami’s works, women in reality tend to exist as the unintelligible others” in contrast to “women in virtual worlds as objects of adoration” as Ishikura argues (p. 194). According to Matsui (p. 165), using similes for caricature, the narrator in this story views his wife as “different from him.”

<sup>30</sup> With regard to female characters in his fiction, Murakami states in an interview: “women are mediums, in a sense: the function of the medium is to make something happen through her....The protagonist is always led somewhere by the medium, and the visions that he sees are shown to him by her.” John Wray, “Haruki Murakami: The Art of Fiction CLXXXII,” *The Paris Review* 170 (2004), p. 133. See also Sean Wilsey, “Sean Wilsey Talks with Haruki Murakami,” in Vendela Vida, ed., *The Believer Book of Writers Talking to Writers* (San Francisco: Believer Books, 2005), p. 247.

<sup>31</sup> Ishikura, “Fūfu no unmei I,” pp. 189–191.

<sup>32</sup> Ishikura, “Fūfu no unmei I,” pp. 200.

<sup>33</sup> Kobayashi, *Murakami Haruki: Tō to umi no kanata ni*, p. 120; Ishikura, “Fūfu no unmei I” pp. 201–202.

<sup>34</sup> Jonathan Ellis and Mitoko Hirabayashi, “‘In Dreams Begins Responsibility’: An Interview with Haruki Murakami,” *The Georgia Review* 59/3 (2005): 560–561. See also Laura Miller, “Author Interviews: Haruki Murakami,” Salon.com, December 16, 1997, [http://www.salon.com/1997/12/16/int\\_2/](http://www.salon.com/1997/12/16/int_2/); and Yukawa Yutaka and Koyama Testuro, “Murakami Haruki Long Interview: *Umibe no Kafuka* wo kataru,” *Bungakukai* 57/4 (2003), p. 22.

<sup>35</sup> According to Ragland-Sullivan, Lacan compares the human consciousness to “a boat cut loose from its moorings,” because, “[d]etached from any direct access to its own unconscious knowledge, the human subject is also adrift.” Ellie Ragland-Sullivan, *Jacques Lacan and the Philosophy of Psychoanalysis* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1986), p. 75.

<sup>36</sup> Jacques Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis*, trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Hogan Press, 1977), p. 20. The italics are in the original.

<sup>37</sup> Fukami, *Murakami Haruki no uta*, p. 157.

<sup>38</sup> Ellis and Hirabayashi, “‘In Dreams Begins Responsibility’” pp. 558–559.

<sup>39</sup> Ellis and Hirabayashi, “‘In Dreams Begins Responsibility’” p. 553.



## CONSUMING NOSTALGIA IN A BOWL OF NOODLE SOUP AT THE SHIN YOKOHAMA RĀMEN MUSEUM

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Welcome to the year Shōwa 33 (1958). Our museum brings you back to your childhood. In this reconstructed town from the past, you can enjoy regional variations of rāmen and recover something that was lost during the rapid postwar economic development.<sup>1</sup>

In the wake of the collapse of Japan's economic bubble in the early 1990s, nostalgia for a specific era began to suffuse Japanese consumer culture. In 1994, the Shin Yokohama Rāmen Museum (SRM) opened to aid the development of Shin Yokohama, a relatively new business center outside of Tokyo.<sup>2</sup> The SRM is a site that "sells" nostalgia for the Shōwa 30s (1955-1964) and the Japanese hometown, or *furusato*. The museum's curator, Iwaoka Yoji, creates this nostalgia via the "national dish" of rāmen. Rāmen, a noodle soup of Chinese origin, is widely available throughout Japan as fast food for the masses. While rāmen's distinctive features of commonplace and foreign origins are often excluded from nationalistic narratives, these characteristics are an integral part of how rāmen has become a nostalgic object and even a national symbol in the museum.

Nostalgia for the Shōwa 30s began in Tokyo in the 1980s, via its appearance on television as well as in comics and other popular media (Sand 2006:90). Around the same time, other eras, such as Edo (1600-1867) and Taishō (1912-1926) were also being commodified through nostalgic media, such as theme parks and museums. By the 1990s, these eras as nostalgic subjects had become strongly conceptualized and highly marketed.

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<sup>1</sup> This excerpt is taken from the Japanese language brochure (my translation) of the Shin Yokohama Ramen Museum. The phonetic spelling of the museum is actually "Shin Yokohama Raumen," but I use the spelling "Shin Yokohama Rāmen Museum."

<sup>2</sup> The station is located twenty-one miles east of Tokyo Station.

What sets the decade of 1955-1964 apart from the others is that, in contrast to Edo and Taishō, when Japan possessed military and colonial power, the Shōwa 30s was a period when Japan was recovering from its defeat in the war.

Re-imagining the Shōwa 30s during the recent period of economic downturn is an implicit critique of the Japanese “bubble economy.” Much has been written about the feeling of “homelessness,” the vague sense of anxiety and emptiness that has pervaded Japan since the 1990s (Creighton 1997; Robertson 1998). In this chaotic period following the economic recession, disturbing social phenomena, such as bankruptcy, unemployment, and the breakdown of paternalistic corporate relationships have led to a national identity crisis. The SRM uses an idealized, reconstructed slice of the past to provide an antidote for the crisis and chaos of contemporary Japan and a remedy: a steaming bowl of noodle soup served in a town that has long ceased to be, if it ever existed at all.

A previous study of the SRM by Jordan Sand (2006:105–107) which focuses on nostalgic components—a snap shot of the museum (the postwar virtual town)—describes the artificiality of the museum’s nostalgia. While *rāmen* shops are part of the old town world permeated by nostalgia, for example, they have an entirely different atmosphere from it. He highlights disconnecting *rāmen* shops and shop employees to the nostalgic milieu rather than scrutinizing the linkage between *rāmen* and Japan that allows the food to be an object of nostalgia. Moving beyond Sand’s analysis, this study examines the museum as a site of nationalism, regionalism, *and* nostalgia. This study also explores how the museum creates a social space through its artificial reproduction of *rāmen* as a nostalgic reminder of postwar Japan. Henri Lefebvre argues that absolute space is “imaginary,” however it also has a social existence (1974:251). As with the SRM’s virtual town, the reality of a space is dependent on the perceptions of those who inhabit it. This study will ethnographically illustrate how the social space allows the visitors to travel between past and present and experience collective nostalgia.

### **Making Rāmen a Japanese National Food**

Rāmen has been consumed in Japan for over a century since its introduction in the early 1900s. In the decades before the Second World War, its street stalls gradually disseminated outward from ethnic Chinese neighborhoods, entering Japanese lower- and middle-class foodways. By the end of the 1970s, *rāmen* was recognized as an unofficial “national food”

(*kokuminshoku*). In magazines, *rāmen* was presented as a food for everyone: the blue-collar working class, bar hostesses, physical laborers, middle-class families, and office workers who wanted to go out for a quick meal that was inexpensive (Anguru 1979).

During Japan's rapid economic growth in the 1980s, *rāmen* became labeled "B-grade gourmet"<sup>3</sup> (*B-kyū gurume*), a term that refers to inexpensive food transformed into an object of connoisseurship (Sand 2006:105). By the end of the 1990s, a new wave of upscale *rāmen* shops had appeared that sought to minimize *rāmen*'s image as a convenience food. By the new millennium, the relative merits of both new wave and more "traditional" types of *rāmen* shops became a subject for the *rāmen* aficionados who had appeared among the legions of office workers, consuming and creating meaning-systems along with their noodles.

The creation of the SRM represents an institutional recognition of *rāmen* as a "national food" of Japan. A national food, Katarzyna Cwiertka argues, is "an imagined national identity and cultural homogeneity" (2006:12). Rather than material aspects, such as a food's origins or ingredients, a national food is defined by collective ideology. Hence, *rāmen* can be considered "Japanese" even as the word "*rāmen*" itself is written in *katakana*, the Japanese script for words of foreign origin. The complex relationships between a food's meaning, its origin, and its nationality become even more complicated due to culinary globalization. Finally, in addition to its ideological elements, a national food must be: "everyday" acceptable, affordable, and available.<sup>4</sup>

The museum brochure discusses *rāmen* as a Japanese national dish, only mentioning its Chinese origins in passing.<sup>5</sup> The curator's greeting in the brochure (in the epigraph) aestheticizes the baby-boomers' childhood and encourages visitors to experience a feeling of loss. *Rāmen* is not aestheticized as loss, per se, but as an instrument for inducing the sense of

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<sup>3</sup> The "B" of "B-grade" derives from the term "B-movies" (Sand 2006:97).

<sup>4</sup> I draw these elements of acceptability, affordability, and availability from Foster (2008:87), who considers them to be essential characteristics of marketable global commodities.

<sup>5</sup> Explanations in foreign languages (Chinese, English, and Korean) that introduce *rāmen* as a folk dish and a Japanese national dish with only brief mention of China are inserted into the brochure.

loss necessary to create nostalgia. Narratives such as the museum brochure play an important role in constructing *rāmen* as a “national” dish.

Conversations about *rāmen* as a national food of Japan often lapse into the discourse of Japanese exceptionalism called *nihonjinron* (“theories about the Japanese”). One of the museum employees I interviewed claimed:

Japanese people like hot food high in carbohydrates and cooked in fat or oil. I think this tendency is probably programmed in Japanese DNA. For example, we also like *don-mono* (rice bowl dishes) like *tendon* (tempura on top of a bowl of rice). The difference between *rāmen* and *udon* or *soba* (other Japanese noodles) is that the latter are not cooked in fat or oil. Actually, *udon* is quite tasty with a little oil in the broth....There is nothing remaining of original Chinese food characteristics [in *rāmen*]. Today, Chinese people consume *rāmen* as an authentic Japanese dish” [my translation].

Though he does not go so far as to discuss *rāmen* as a biological need for the Japanese, in mentioning a possible DNA connection this employee makes an overt linkage between *rāmen* and national characteristics thereby creating Japanese collectiveness. The divorce of *rāmen* from its Chinese origins is made complete in his final assertion that the Chinese eat Japanese *rāmen*.

In his interview in a business magazine, Iwaoka Yoji, the curator and the founder of the SRM, explains his idea to make *rāmen* a food for nostalgia (Katsumi 2005). Iwaoka balances the construction of *rāmen* as a national food of Japan with the recognition of *rāmen* as a regional food. Its possession of regional variations gives *rāmen* the “folk” status that qualifies *rāmen* as an appropriate object for nostalgia and for the museum. To justify *rāmen* as a regional, folk food, Iwaoka organized visits to over a thousand regional *rāmen* stalls throughout Japan. It took him years to convince some chef-owners to open shops in the museum: many perceived themselves as craftsmen, hoping to perpetuate their *rāmen* in an unchanged fashion, rather than businessmen looking to expand their business outside their home grounds. Another reason for their reluctance may have been that they did not know Iwaoka at all and were skeptical of the legitimacy of his project. Not only might they have considered it a scam, but also they may not have

considered *rāmen*, the mundane food of their trade, to be an appropriate subject for the intellectual site of the museum.

The inclusion of voices from across regional and class borders distinguishes the SRM from most conventional museums. Iwaoka was openly critical of the “elitism” of other museums, which privilege upper- and middle-class cultures and audiences through their selection, display, and interpretation of exhibits that represent and appeal to the culture of those classes (Karp 1992). In contrast, the SRM selects the decidedly non-elite food of *rāmen* to target a wide range of visitors—from small children to elders and working class to elites, in multiple ways. First, the SRM offers a minimal fee and has long hours of operation (11:00 am–11:00 pm).<sup>6</sup> Even busy office workers have a chance to enjoy its nostalgic atmosphere and regional *rāmen* on the way back from their work. Second, nostalgia is presented in the frame of the combination of education (the exhibition of the history of *rāmen* in Japan) and cuisines (regional *rāmen* available at *rāmen* shops and as souvenirs at a retail shop), which I dub “educuisine.”<sup>7</sup>

The retail shop sells packages of *rāmen* of a wide-range of regions and other local specialties called *meibutsu* (“famous regional items”), and *educuisine* is prominently showcased everywhere in the museum. Each region (towns, cities, or prefectures) has its own special representative food or product that is internalized by residents as part of their collective identity. These *meibutsu* may include locally grown or processed vegetables or fruits, *manjū* (sweet dumplings) and *ekiben* (“station boxed lunch”). *Manjū* made in all regions are almost identical to one another in its appearance, ingredients, taste, and package. The only difference is a regional “logo,” which is usually the name of places stamped or marked on *manjū* and its wrapping paper.

Likewise *rāmen*, which is relatively a new inclusion to *meibutsu*, is available in a similar manner throughout Japan. *Rāmen*, however, differs from *manjū* in two ways; regional *rāmen* slightly differ from each other in terms of the presentation, the subtle taste and ingredients in terms of

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<sup>6</sup> The SRM charges ¥300 for adults and ¥100 for children. The average entrance fee for other Japanese museums is between ¥900 and ¥1,500, and their average hours of operation are from 9:30/10:00 a.m. to 4:30/5:00 p.m.

<sup>7</sup> This neologism is patterned after Millie Creighton’s (1992) “edutainment” (“education” and “entertainment”).

creativity rather than locality. Second, it is not regional “logo,” which makes *rāmen meibutsu*, but it is *rāmen*, which transfers unknown places into tourist sites. *Rāmen* is not *meibutsu* of particular places, but innumerable places have their original *rāmen* as *meibutsu*.

The virtual town, or *furusato*, also constructs *rāmen* as a symbol of Japanese nationalism. *Furusato*, literally “old village,” is commonly understood as “hometown,” but the simplicity of this translation belies its complex usage in texts such as literature and music. *Furusato* is more of an emotional space than a physical one. Jennifer Robertson explains *furusato* as a native place, “not a particular place, but rather the generalized nature of such a place and the nostalgic feelings aroused by its mention” (1998:115). Christine Yano conceptualizes *furusato* as an imaginative place to which one’s heart belongs, where one wants to be, but cannot go (2002:174).<sup>8</sup> *Furusato* is certainly “hometown,” but is afar physically or emotionally. It is not one’s literal hometown, but a place that has been left behind to which return is impossible.

These interpretations of *furusato* fit Svetlana Boym’s description of nostalgia, illustrated by her description of immigrants’ sense of home. Though they long for their original countries, they do not think of going back there permanently. She writes, “To feel at home is to know that things are in their places and so are you; it is a state of mind that doesn’t depend on an actual location. The object of longing, then, is not really a place called home but this sense of intimacy with the world” (Boym 2001:251). The inability to return home becomes an enabling force for immigrants to be successful in their “new home.”

The SRM presents *furusato* through replicas of families from the Shōwa 30s based on Iwaoka’s and his parents’ childhood memories of the town that existed before Shin Yokohama.<sup>9</sup> Although the museum claimed to recreate the year 1958, some of its images derive from Iwaoka’s childhood memories of the late 1960s (Katsumi 2005). Iwaoka (b. 1959) grew up in

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<sup>8</sup> The Japanese poet Muro Saisei’s famous poem about *furusato* also demonstrates the impossibility of return: “One feels *furusato* just because it is far from the person or his present. It is not the place to return.” (*Furusatowa toku-ni arite omōmo...kaerutoko ni arumajiya.*)

<sup>9</sup> The name “Shin Yokohama” came after the opening of the bullet train station; prior to that, it was part of Yokohama city.

the neighborhood and bore witness to the radical metamorphoses of the town: from community vegetable farms to an urban center with a bullet train station, and finally to a “new” business town. Iwaoka disappointedly notes that as the town became economically rich, it became a “stranger” to local peoples (2005:54). Opposed to the initial plan of building a parking structure in the town, Iwaoka successfully opened the SRM to convert the newly “strange” town into *furusato* based on his memories, which happily coincided with those of other middle-aged Japanese people. The SRM’s *furusato* thus represents “a site of memory” – a location where memories crystallize (Nora 1989) – for Japanese people. As history suppresses and destroys actual memories, these sites of memory play host to narratives wherein memories are “recovered” (Rubenstein 2001:6).

Memories and sites of memory may also be intimately related to nationalist sentiments. In the 1990s, nostalgic memories of the postwar period became an arena for the production of a revived Japanese nationalism. The post-bubble 1990s are often discussed in terms of “crisis,” due to “the sudden malfunction of the “Japanese system” [of politics, economy and culture]” and the moral panic arising from the “deviance” of younger Japanese (Yoda 2006:16-21). The emergence of nationalist nostalgia in the 1990s is a sort of national coping mechanism.<sup>10</sup>

### **Rāmen as Regional and Folk Food**

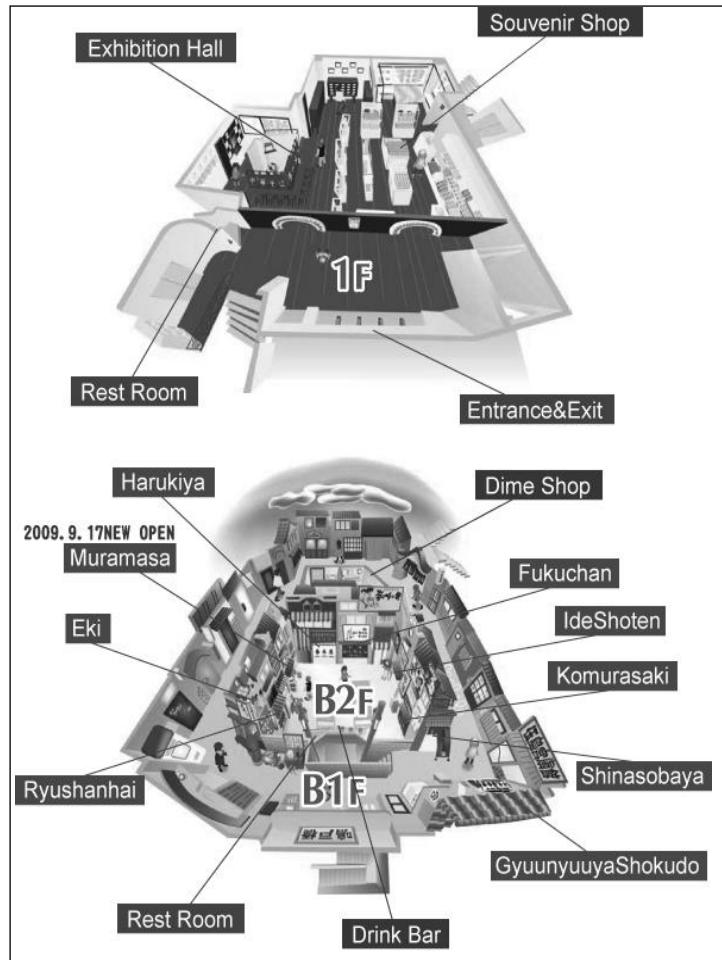
Visitors to the three-story office building in which the SRM is housed encounter a bundle of regionalism and nostalgia within its compressed time and space (Figure 1). In the first floor, the “*purorōgu zōn*” (prologue zone), a large wall map of Japan<sup>11</sup> introduces regional rāmen shops with geographical information about the size and population of cities and prefectures in which they are located as well as details of the regional characteristics of the noodles and the broth. Instead of the common word

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<sup>10</sup> The popular *anime* (“cartoon”) *Chibi Maruko-chan* (aired from 1990-1992), based on the bestselling *manga* (“comic”) of the same name by Momoko Sakura [Miki Miura], features everyday aspects of 1970s. Another nostalgic *anime*, *Heisei Tensai Bakabon* (1990) was a revival of an *anime* from the 1970s; it showed everyday details from the Shōwa 30s, although some of these were mixed with those of the following decades.

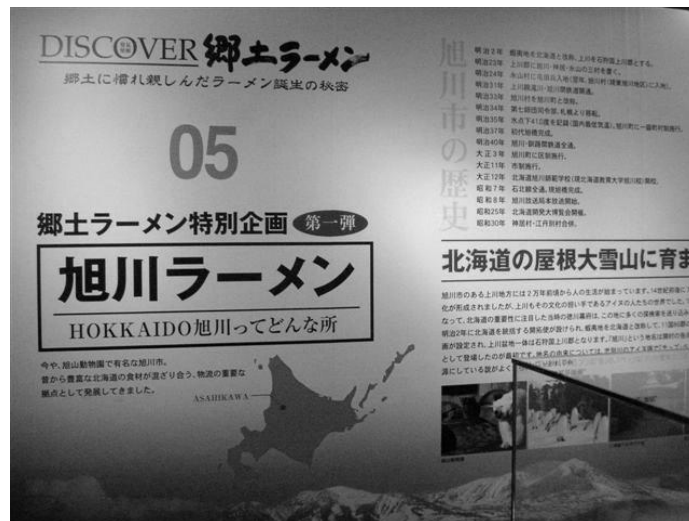
<sup>11</sup> Approximately 1.7 meters by 4 meters (5.6 feet by 13 feet).

*chihō* (“local” or “regional”), the word *kyōdo* (“folk”) is frequently used as a means of historicizing *rāmen* in a home and familiar manner (Figure 2).



**Figure 1. Floor map of the Shin Yokohama Rāmen Museum**  
**Source: Shinyokohama Raumen Museum Corporation (2009)**





**Figure 2. “Discover Kyōdo Rāmen” Sign**



**Figure 3. “Graffiti of Regional Rāmen” Sign**

The partition between the retail shop and the exhibition area features another map of Japan with the invitation, “*anata no machi no kyōdo ramen oshiete!*” (Teach us about the local ramen of your town!) (Figure 3). Visitors write the names of regionally and locally famous ramen shops on the map, giving descriptions of particular flavors. The map is covered with visitors’ “graffiti.” A large sign welcomes visitors to the exhibition area, reading “*Kyōdo Rāmen: kyōdo ni nare shitashinda ramen eno himitsu*” (Folk Rāmen: Stories of the Birth of Regional Rāmen).

In the back of the first floor, a history of regional ramen shops is presented on another panel of the same size and a television screen showing a documentary. The film features interviews with owners, employees (usually the owner’s family members are the main workforce for small family-owned shops) and regular customers of various regional ramen shops and their history. One elderly man sits at the counter table and waits for his ramen; he tells the camera that he has come to this ramen shop for forty years. He continues, “Unlike this, [pointing at the current owner-cook] the previous owner [the cook’s father] was a grumpy folk, but he cooked very good ramen, too.” The films emphasize the ways in which those ramen shops are rooted into their regions and appreciated by local residents by being integral parts of neighborhoods and their customers’ everyday lives.

The *meibutsu* ramen is available in the virtual town of the Shōwa 33, the *Taikan zōn*. The virtual town of the two basement levels is an imitation postwar town featuring actual contemporary regional ramen shops. The town interweaves past and present, the illusory and the real. The stairways from the first floor to the basement represent portals between the present and the past, a liminal space where these temporal settings are interlaced. While their walls are lined with vintage advertisements of various products, as if they were narrow alleys from the Shōwa 30s, juxtaposed with these posters are luggage lockers, reminding visitors that they have not yet stepped entirely into the past.

At the base of the stairs, the actual entrance to the past, virtual town, is a replica train station; having traveled back in time, the visitor has arrived at their destination. Yet, even in the town of 1958, there are pockets of actual, present-day Japan: the ramen shops. The town distinguishes between spaces of past and present by using the contrast of light. Imagine that the virtual town is inside a planetarium: stars appear in the ceiling and the lighting is kept to a minimum. The past lies in the early evening time while the ramen shops are situated in the present, as indicated by the bright light streaming from their interiors. By walking into its illuminated interior,

a museum visitor steps between worlds; as though flipping a light switch, visitors step out of the dusky Shōwa 30s into the well-lit present to have a bowl of soup, after which they step out again into the darkened, virtual town of yesteryear.

### **The Shōwa 30s, Rāmen, and the Hometown**

Shōwa 33 (1958) was chosen to represent the year of the visitor's "childhood." Iwaoka elucidates that the initial aim of the museum was to create nostalgia for his childhood memory of the bond of solidarity and the collectiveness in his tenement neighborhood (Katsumi 2005:56). Rāmen is a perfect lure to draw visitors into this solidarity. The majority of rāmen shops used to be in residential areas and formed integral parts of neighborhoods in which residents shared community activities (Bestor 1990). Rāmen shops offered a welcome alternative to nightly home-cooked meals and an easy option for entertaining unexpected visitors. A particular rāmen shop may have served these functions for neighborhood residents for generations.

The year of Shōwa 33 was not selected at random. First of all, 1958 was in the middle of Japan's first economic boom since before the war. The American occupation was over, and it could be seen as a time of national pride. Second, although the SRM does not openly recognize it, 1958 was the year in which Ando Momofuku, a Taiwanese immigrant, invented instant rāmen.<sup>12</sup> This is significant not only for the rāmen, but for what it represents. On a national level, the existence of an industrial rāmen product expanded the consciousness of rāmen beyond the regional food; a Japanese consumer in the Shōwa 30s began to realize that rāmen was available all over Japan.

On an international level, with the invention by a foreign-born Japanese citizen of a food product that became popular worldwide, 1958 represents Japan's entry to the age of global food. Finally, as the year before Iwaoka's birth, Shōwa 33 has a personal meaning for the museum's curator (as well as for any other visitors born in the Shōwa 30s) of a simpler

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<sup>12</sup> Ando's company, Nisshin Shokuhin, is not only the producer of the first instant rāmen product, Chikin Rāmen (chicken rāmen), but also the products that made instant rāmen a success in the United States: Cup O' Noodles and Top Ramen.

time in a Japanese town, prior to the economic booms of the 1960s and 1970s and the concomitant rise of large-scale construction projects and foreign institutions such as convenience stores.

The nostalgia of childhood is highlighted by the immediate temporal elements of the museum's virtual town. To emphasize its associations with family, home, and mother, Iwaoka chose to set the installation in the early evening. Iwaoka describes the early evening as the time when parents took their children to a public bath and the aroma of supper hangs in neighborhoods (Katsumi 2005:55); this time of the day is clearly a nostalgic hour. The early evening carries a symbolic meaning of an ideal family life, as it is possibly a peaceful time of the day when family members get together after work or school.<sup>13</sup> Through the set of the early evening in neighborhoods, Iwaoka successfully offers visitors memory and national food.

As part of "living together," visitors stroll through the town and participate in a variety of animating activities, such as buying snacks in friendly neighborhood stores (Figure 4), playing classic games (i.e. non-computerized, such as ring-toss and picture-story show), and joining town events, such like singing contests and quizzes. By becoming residents of the virtual town and interacting with others, visitors experience a sense of collective nostalgia for a time when neighborhood meant community rather than a collection of individuals united only by geographical proximity. However, at the same time, the visitors know that the town is not real.

In the town, images of "residents" demonstrate collectiveness: a policeman, a grandmotherly owner of a mom-and-pop candy shop, a neighborhood association chief and his daughter, a photo shop owner, and a stationmaster. The town offers visitors a "home" of friendly adults,

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<sup>13</sup> The early evening is also a key concept in Japanese cinema, nostalgically symbolizing the family. "San Chōme no Yūhi" ("Sunset on Third Street") (2005; 2007) illustrates ordinary families' daily lives in the Shōwa 30s. "Kazoku Gēmu" ("The Family Game") (1983) describes family issues that "typical" families faced in the 1980s during Japan's rapid economic growth. A home tutor makes the middle-school student Shigeyuki practice Japanese words that he missed in his test; he writes just one word, dusk (*yūgure*) on multiple pages. Although there is no explanation of Shigeyuki's intention, presumably dusk represents his family and his nostalgia for childhood.

especially *obachan* (aunties; middle-aged women who resemble wives of small store owners or good neighbors in their manners) who are reliable figures in the neighborhood. These residents somatically enact “postwar memory through their bodies” (Igarashi 2000:5). Together with the participation of visitors, these images collectively refigure the postwar “ideology through nostalgia” (Stewart 1993).



**Figure 4. A neighborhood store in the virtual town**

Visitors may fulfill their nostalgia not for the postwar period, but for childhood. I heard the conversation between a mother and her children; the mother in her early 30s picked up candies from a display counter and told her children that she used to eat these candies on her way back from school. Although she would not be born until decades after 1958, the virtual town made her feel nostalgic for the candies of her childhood. As Boym warns “danger of nostalgia,” in which people confuse the actual home and the imaginary one, regardless of the time period in which these candies were made, the mother felt that the virtual town of 1958 was her own (Boyman 2001:xvi).

The recreated town<sup>14</sup> is like a stage where not only employees act as 1958 residents, but also where visitors are expected to feel as though they are be part of the stage. Small children are acting residents almost naturally while adults seem to try blending into the atmosphere. Rather than acting as a resident, I focused on my research by asking the employees about foods that were served, busy times of the day or days of the week, and types of visitors. Because I was not engaged in “the stage” of the Shōwa 33, I put the employees in an ambiguous position between being residents of 1958 and museum employees in the new millennium. Perhaps as a result, the ways in which the “residents” of the town spoke to me or looked at me widened the distance between us; I felt that I was in a neighborhood without being a part of it. Thus, I was relieved as I opened the *rāmen shop noren* (shop curtains) to “return back” to the present: in this space I was neither pressured “to be [a] resident” of the past, nor made to feel guilty for not being so.

*Rāmen shop noren*, the emblematic “doors” of *rāmen* shops, mark the boundaries between the past and the present in the SRM (Figure 5). These shops function as the places where time and space connect past and present, virtual and real. A ticket machine at each *rāmen* shop allows customers to choose their bowl of *rāmen* and get ready to enter the present. Visitors are physically in the virtual town while they wait to purchase their tickets, yet their minds may be travelling to the present. The exterior of the shops represent the past and the shop facades are in tune with their retro surroundings. The interior consists entirely of familiar appurtenances of contemporary *rāmen* shops and contemporary *rāmen*. Upon entering the shop, conversations among the patrons predominantly focus on the visceral experience of the food rather than on nostalgic reflection. In this particular arrangement of past and present, Sand claims the artificial connection of *rāmen* to Japan’s postwar nostalgia (2006:106-107).

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<sup>14</sup> In some respects, the virtual town resembles Colonial Williamsburg in America by offering visitors a virtual space in which they become living instruments of history. In terms of surface area, Colonial Williamsburg (301 acres) is about 1,000 times the size of the Shin Yokohama *Rāmen* Museum (approximately 0.3 acres). Colonial Williamsburg is not only an educational facility, but also a business enterprise, integrating hotels, restaurants and advertisement.



**Figure 5. *Noren* of Hachiya rāmen**

The museum is a site of nostalgia and nationalism that is based on Iwaoka's individual longing for the neighborhood of his youth, projected onto the virtual town and transformed into collective nostalgia of postwar Japan among the museum's visitors. Although childhood memories may not be the same for visitors of different ages, memories of rāmen serve to link them and create a common ground. This popular contemporary food is nostalgically charged through its visual presentation and narrative construction. Not only does rāmen become a material facilitator of nostalgia, it connects people through implicitly nationalistic narratives. These narratives are tied to images of Japan's prosperity, such as the growing economy and the increase of leisure activities.

The SRM constructs nostalgic narratives to sell the past for public consumption. As argued by Anthony Giddens, "Memory is about organizing...the past in relation to the present," (1994:63) and Millie Creighton, "[we] re-create the past in the present to serve present need" (1997:242), the past is a construct of the present. The museum offers a

virtual experience, approximating the one sought on domestic tours to “Authentic Japan” (Ivy 1995) without leaving the city. Visitors supposedly take a nostalgic tour of Japan in the Shōwa 30s. Just as the artificial, in the proper context, can appear more authentic than the actual place itself (Yamaguchi 1991:66-67), the aesthetic experience of *rāmen* allows visitors to enjoy working within the dialectic of the fake (virtual town) and the “real” (*rāmen* shops in the town and the retail shop). By generalizing the home to an impossibly transregional hometown, offering *rāmen* of regions across Japan, the virtual town set in an idealized past may better represent Japan for the SRM’s visitors than any actual village possibly could.

### Conclusion

Owing to its foreign origins and working class associations, there was no inherent quality for *rāmen* to become an official Japanese tradition or an official traditional food. Yet, it was chosen to facilitate national nostalgia for “authentic” Japan in the SRM. Upon close inspection, however, this museum, targeting Japanese people of all regions and classes, offers *rāmen* shops as a temporary “escape” from the nostalgia of a virtual town. By slurping noodles and broth, visitors are at once returning back to the physical, present reality and imbibing nostalgia of the past. Leaving the shop, they return to the virtual town and the collective past; leaving the museum, they return to the present, nourished both physically and emotionally. *Rāmen*, as a comforting material object, complements the nostalgic comfort presented by the museum’s displays. Regardless of the intended effect, *rāmen* in the museum is both an object associated with nostalgia and a convenient food to sustain the visitors’ bodies.

Food, though a fact of everyday life, is also an important constituent of memorial events and may be an expedient for the production of nostalgia or nationalism. *Rāmen*, as opposed to more traditional Japanese cuisine, was chosen as the subject of the museum owing to its appeal across a wide range of consumers, as opposed to the more ritualistic, elitist food. Due to its non-official status *rāmen* has not been considered an important icon of Japanese history, but the SRM situates *rāmen* in an institutionalized historical frame through regionalism and the concept of home. The museum introduces *rāmen* as a culinary landmark of Japanese nationalism and nostalgia. By consuming this foreign-originated noodle soup in the mythologized Shōwa 30s setting, visitors enact a nostalgic narrative, transforming a decade in which the Japanese were connected through their suffering of the hardships of postwar construction, which appeared in



Iwaoka's reminiscences. This particular decade, via the commonplace food, was recast as an antidote to the Japanese economic "chaos" of the 1990s, which has continued into the millennium.

As Martin Parker (1998) argues, for nostalgia to become part of mass culture, it should not be associated with elitism. The SRM utilizes *rāmen* as popular culture to dissociate the elitist notions of nostalgia and nationalism in the period from 1955 to 1964. By minimizing the distance between nostalgia and the mass consumer, Iwaoka challenges Japanese social conventions; by offering *rāmen* as an unofficial national food, the museum helps fill the highly publicized emotional void that opened in Japan in the 1990s. Modern forms of globalization have inexorably changed lives around the planet by altering its values and landscapes. In response, localized and commodified forms of nostalgia have risen to fill the gaps between the unfulfilling present and an imagined past. Nostalgia creates a longing for the past out of memories believed to represent a more fulfilled society, and its ambiguity allows it to become an instrument towards capitalist ends, as described by Arjun Appadurai (1996:78). The SRM exploits the ambiguity of *rāmen* as an unofficial regional and national food to lead its visitors across the amorphous boundaries between the actual and the virtual, past and present, memory and nostalgia, in order to transform the material good of *rāmen* into a panacea for contemporary malaise.

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## A COUNTER CULTURE OF THE 1980s: OZAKI YUTAKA'S SONGS

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### Introduction

In the 1960s, Japan experienced a high rate of economic growth. Japanese students played an important role in post-war politics during this period. Student movements, including the *zenkyōtō undō* (National Joint-Struggle Student Movement; 全共闘運動), *gakusei tōsō* (university movement; 学生闘争), and *anpo tōsō* (the conflict over the Japan–U.S. Security Treaty; 安保闘争), were prosperous. Students threatened the educational system and challenged state authority and legitimacy. In the next decade, the economy stabilized and the student-led movements no longer had a marketplace for their ideas. The standard of living for the Japanese people gained traction during the years 1964 until 1973.<sup>1</sup> In 1973, Japan experienced what was called the “oil shock.”

In the mid-1980s, “contrasting with America, which experienced a confused period due to a long-lasting Vietnam War, Japan stood on the top of the world economically and was about to begin its journey towards a booming bubble economy.”<sup>2</sup> In particular, in the latter half of the 1980s, Japan reached the peak of its economic growth and people were materially well off.<sup>3</sup>

Reflecting the mood of the culture at this time was the decline of Japanese folk music. Typically, in Japanese culture, it is music that speaks of its people’s trends and thoughts. During the 1960s and early 1970s, folk music was very popular. These songs included messages for, and elements

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<sup>1</sup> Teruyuki Hirota, “*Kyōiku no rekishi shakaigaku: Sono tenkai to kadai* [Historical Sociology of Education: Developments and Issues; 教育の歴史社会学：その展開と課題],” *The Journal of Social Science* 57/3-4 (2006): p. 144.

<sup>2</sup> Azuma Hiroki, *Dōbutsuka suru posuto modan: Otaku kara mita nihon shakai* [Postmodern being Animalized: The Japanese Society from the Freaks’ Perspective] (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2001), p. 29.

<sup>3</sup> Ugaya Hiromichi, *J poppu toha nanika* [What is J Pop?; J ポップとは何か] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2005), p. 128.

of anti-establishment movements and counter culture.<sup>4</sup> However, folk music during this period went into a decline. Instead, there was a “band boom” during the 1980s. It was at this time when school violence became one of the main social issues, as there were serious problems concerning bullying and suicide in schools.<sup>5</sup> Ozaki Yutaka (尾崎豊) (1965-1992) was an influential, leading rock musician during that period. His songs reflected an anti-society system, which typified schools and communities, and many young people supported him.<sup>6</sup> For instance, there was a question about counter culture during the 1980s in the National Center Test for University Admissions for social studies in 2008. Ozaki was used as an example of a counter culture in their question.<sup>7</sup> After his death in 1992, there were still a number of people who were attracted to his songs.<sup>8</sup> More than forty thousand people attended his funeral.

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<sup>4</sup> Ochiai Shōhei, “Ozaki Yutaka no kokoro no fūkei [A Scene of Ozaki Yutaka’s Heart; 尾崎豊の心の風景],” *Asahi jōnaru* [Asahi Journal; 朝日ジャーナル] (1988), p. 90; and Ugaya, *J poppu toha nanika*.

<sup>5</sup> Yōko Shibata, “Ozaki Yutaka heno 120 tsū no tegami (尾崎豊への 120 通の手紙),” *Bungeishunjū* (文芸春秋) (1992), p. 419.

<sup>6</sup> There were young people who ran away from home and left school to be free like Ozaki. Jōji Hashiguchi, “Ozaki Yutaka no jidai no yūtsu (尾崎豊の時代の憂鬱),” *Sekai* [The World; 世界] (1992), p. 195.

<sup>7</sup> The exam had the following description: “Songs sometimes represent people’s feelings. In the 1980s, many buoyant tunes were created. Ozaki Yutaka made songs, such as ‘15 no yoru (15 の夜)’ and ‘Sotsugyō (卒業)’ in which he expressed the young who have struggled and suffered [from the society and schools] and had powerful messages. His songs make us think about the meaning of ‘a counter culture’ during the time when school violence was a social issue.” Source: The National Center Test for University Admissions for social studies in 2008.

<sup>8</sup> According to Sony Music Entertainment, more than one million seven hundred thousand copies of his 1996 album were sold. More than one hundred thousand copies have been sold each year since. “Botsugo 15 nen Ozaki ha dokohe: Kieta hankōshin [Where is Ozaki 15 Years after His Death: Disappearing Spirits of Defiance; 没後 15 年尾崎はどこへ：消えた反抗心],” *Asahi Shimbun* [Asahi Newspaper], April 24, 2007.

This paper will examine Ozaki Yutaka's lyrics, which include elements of the anti-society and anti-school system. It will particularly focus on why he was considered to be such a charismatic character who represented the anti-society movement of the 1980s. After presenting his biographical information, this paper will look at the introspective aspects of his lyrics. Next, the paper will examine the relationship between Ozaki's lyrics and anarchism. Lastly, there will be discussion of his philosophies and lyrics in his twenties, focusing on particularly Yoshimoto Taka'aki's concepts.

### **Ozaki Yutaka's Biography**

Ozaki Yutaka was born on November 29, 1965 at the Self-Defense Forces Central Hospital in Tokyo as a second child of his father, Kenichi (健一), and his mother, Kinue (絹枝). They had an elder son, Yasushi (康), who was five-years older than Yutaka. Ozaki's father was on staff at the Defense Agency (防衛庁). His mother suffered from various illnesses and was hospitalized frequently when Ozaki was a young boy. As Ozaki's mother was often ill, his father often brought him to and from school each day. As Ozaki reflected on this circumstance, he mentioned that he missed his mother and often felt lonely.

In April of 1972, Yutaka entered *Nerima Higashi Shōgakkō* (練馬東小学校). When he was a second grader, he began to learn a *shakuhachi*<sup>9</sup> (尺八). The next year, since he had expressed an interest in music, his parents bought him a keyboard harmonica, which he often played. When Yutaka was a fifth grader, his family moved from Tokyo to Saitama. The move required him to change schools and, as such, became a defining moment in his life. He was required to transfer to *Asaka shiritsu daiichi shōgakkō* (朝霞市立第一小学校), and he had to "leave his friends...and establish his position in a new classroom."<sup>10</sup> He struggled with the transition and experienced bullying at the hands of his classmates, which resulted in his refusal to attend school. In Chikushi's<sup>11</sup> interview with him, Ozaki reflected on this experience. He said, "When I was a fifth grader, I moved to Asaka. I could not make friends. I did not want to go school, so I

<sup>9</sup> *Shakuhachi* is a five-holed Japanese vertical bamboo flute.

<sup>10</sup> Ochiai, "Ozaki Yutaka no kokoro no fūkei," p. 91.

<sup>11</sup> Tetsuya Chikushi (筑紫哲也) is one of the well-known journalists.

did not attend it for about six months.”<sup>12</sup> It was during this period of time, while staying home, that he began playing his brother’s guitar. This is when he learned how to play the guitar, which later played an important role in his music life. As his friends acknowledged Yutaka’s music talent, they began to recover their friendship. In his last year of elementary school, Yutaka became a class representative. Even though he had a difficult beginning, academically, he was very successful.

In April 1978, Yutaka entered *Nerima Higashi Tyūgakko* (練馬東中学校) in Tokyo. He chose to return to his previous school district, where he had many close friends. Ochiai Shōhei states, “This problem child discarded his face of a student refusing to attend school. He was a superior student there, and with his cheerful character, he became the president of a student body.”<sup>13</sup> Even though his academic work was excellent and he worked as the student body president, Yutaka also disobeyed school rules and teachers. For instance, one of his friends was rebuked for a teacher by having long hair and was forced to shave it off, leaving a very close-cropped haircut. Yutaka became angry at this perceived offense and left home with his friends. For this violation of the rules, he was suspended from school for one week. It was during this period of time when he began to form a music band. In ninth grade, he was required to shave his head bald as punishment for smoking. However, he did not quit and was even confined to his home because of this.

Yutaka, even though he displayed many instances of rebellion, was a very smart student and who even passed the high school entrance examinations, which earned him a place at the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force Youth Technical School (*Rikuji syōnen kōka gakkō*; 陸自少年工科学校). This school only accepted 1 of every 20 applicants. However, Yutaka was aware of the school’s policy requiring students to have bald heads, so he chose to decline the offer of attending this school. Instead, he entered *Aoyama Gakuin Kōtobu* (Aoyama Senior High School; 青山学院高

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<sup>12</sup> Tetsuya Chikushi, “Shinjinrui no kishu tachi [Flag-Bearers of the New Human; 新人類の旗手たち],” *Asahi jōnaru* [Asahi Journal; 朝日ジャーナル] (1985), p. 49.

<sup>13</sup> Ochiai, “Ozaki Yutaka no kokoro no fūkei,” p. 91.



等部) in April 1981. While attending this school, he formed a band called “Noa (ノア)” and had his first live music concert in Tokyo in December. When he entered eleventh grade, he was working part-time, so he could purchase a piano.

Yutaka, in spite of his academic success and prowess, constantly rebelled against the school’s rules and quarreled with his teachers earning him suspension after suspension. Finally, in 1983, he was suspended for an indefinite period of time. It was during this period that he auditioned for a position at a music company and won. He debuted in December 1983 with the album “*Seventeen’s Map* (17歳の地図)” at the age of 18.<sup>14</sup> In March 1984, he officially dropped out of school.

After this, his music career began to be commercially successful; he was continuously recording, and his albums were sold out. At the time of his death, Yutaka recorded 6 albums, including “*Seventeen’s Map*,”<sup>15</sup> “*Tropic of Graduation* (回帰線),”<sup>16</sup> “*Through the Broken Door* (壊れた扉から),”<sup>17</sup> “*The Roadside Tree* (街路樹),”<sup>18</sup> “*The Birth* (誕生),”<sup>19</sup> and “*Confession for Exist* (放熱への証).”<sup>20</sup> He also recorded 20 singles during his nine-year career. Again, in spite of success as a musician, trouble plagued him. Nevertheless, Many youth followed and admired him. In 1986, escaping from trouble with those who managed him, he went to New York City and stayed there for one year. He became addicted to drugs, was arrested for two months. In May 1988, he married Shigemi, and his son Hiroya was born in July 1989. However, on April 25, 1992, he was found dead in a stranger’s home. It was determined that he died of a pulmonary edema.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ochiai, “Ozaki Yutaka no kokoro no fūkei,” p. 89.

<sup>15</sup> It was put on sale on December 1, 1983.

<sup>16</sup> The date of sale was on March 21, 1985.

<sup>17</sup> It appeared on the market on November 28, 1985.

<sup>18</sup> The date of sale was on September 1, 1988.

<sup>19</sup> It was put on the market on November 15, 1990.

<sup>20</sup> The date of sale was on May 10, 1992.

<sup>21</sup> The true cause of his death is still unknown. Some have argued it was a homicide. In support of this theory, fans collected more than one hundred thousand signatures to have the case of death re-examined.

### A Journey of the Search for Self

As stated earlier, Ozaki produced six albums during his career. A determination of his feelings and messages can be ascertained from lyrics he wrote. Ozaki recorded three albums while he was in his teens. It was during this period that his main themes were of loneliness and his consequent struggles with society. Ochiai analyzes that “it took five years for him [Ozaki] to sing ‘*Machi no fūkei* (A scene of the town; 街の風景)’ after he entered a junior high school...there was ‘the youth’ where he experienced going to a high school, growing like an adult, and having his change of voice at once...However, a scene of his heart showed feelings of absence and loneliness.”<sup>22</sup> In 1985, Ozaki wrote *Shelly*.

シェリー俺は転がり続けて  
こんなとこにたどりついた  
シェリー俺はあせりすぎたのか  
むやみに何もかも  
捨てちまったけれど  
シェリーあの頃は夢だった  
夢のために生きてきた 俺だけど  
シェリーおまえの言うとおりの  
金か夢かわからない暮しさ

転がり続ける俺の生きざまを  
時には無様な格好でささえてる

シェリー優しく俺をしかってくれ  
そして強く抱きしめておくれ  
おまえの愛がすべてを包むから

シェリーいつになれば  
俺は這い上がれるだろう  
シェリーどこに行けば  
俺はたどりつけるだろう  
シェリー俺は歌う  
愛すべきものすべてに

Shelly, continuing to stumble,  
I've arrived at this kind of place  
Shelly, was I too impatient?  
I recklessly threw everything  
away, but  
Shelly, that time was a dream  
I lived my life for dreams, but  
Shelly, just like you said  
This is a life in which we don't  
know if it is money or a dream

I'll continue to stumble; I'm  
supporting my way of life  
In an unsightly manner

Shelly, scold me gently  
and then hold me tightly  
Because your love embraces  
everything

Shelly, I wonder when I'll drag  
myself up?  
Shelly, I wonder where I'll arrive?  
Shelly, I sing to all of the things  
that I love

<sup>22</sup> Ochiai, “Ozaki Yutaka no kokoro no fūkei,” p. 91.

Yamashita determines that Ozaki expresses “his impetuosity, pureness, and interior of self-denial.”<sup>23</sup> This song reveals his experience of being suspended from and dropping out of high school. He continuously expresses his inability to realize his dreams of being free. There is only reality, which looks endless. He pauses and reflects, “Was I too impatient?,” “I wonder when I’ll drag myself up?” and “I wonder where I’ll arrive?”

Additionally, in *Shelly*, Ozaki uses the technique of finding answers to his own questions and asking others to agree with him. He sings:

シェリー見知らぬところで 人に出会ったら	Shelly, what should I do if I meet someone at a strange place?
どうすりゃいいかい シェリー俺ははぐれ者だから	Shelly, I’m lost, so I can’t smile well as you do
おまえみたいに うまく笑えやしない シェリー夢を求めるならば	Shelly, if I search for my dreams, I won’t be afraid of loneliness, shall I?
孤独すら恐れはしないよね シェリーひとりで生きるなら 涙なんか見せちゃいけないよね	Shelly, if I live my life alone, I shouldn’t show anyone my tears, shall I?

Since he is unsure of his own answers, he seeks the agreement of others with his opinions. By doing so, he shares his weakness with others.<sup>24</sup> In *Shelly*, Ozaki also writes “what should I do if I meet someone at a strange place?...I’m lost, so I can’t smile well as you do...if I search for my dreams,

<sup>23</sup> Etsuko Yamashita, *Ozaki Yutaka no tamashii: Kagayaki to kunō no kiseki* [The Spirit of Ozaki Yutaka: A Track of His Brightness and Distress; 尾崎豊の魂：輝きと苦悩の軌跡] (Tokyo: PHP Kenkyūsho, 1993), p. 221.

<sup>24</sup> Ikuko Ishii, “Ozaki Yutaka no sekai: Sono sarakedasu yowasa ni kyōkan suru kōkōseitachi [The World of Ozaki Yutaka: High School Students Who Empathize with His Revealed Weaknesses; 尾崎豊の世界：そのさらけ出す弱さに共感する高校生たち],” *Kyōiku* [Education; 教育] 38/6 (1988): p. 67.

I won't be afraid of loneliness, shall I?" This part of his prose reflects a social phobia people may potentially have had during that time. The main character in *Shelly* is distressed about his inability to seek his own future and also losing his confidence,<sup>25</sup> reflecting Ozaki's struggles.

Similarly, *15 no yoru* (A night at 15; 15 の夜) is another song which demonstrates Ozaki's loneliness and struggle as a teen. This was his debut song.<sup>26</sup> He wrote:

落書きの教科書と外ばかり見てる 俺 超高層ビルの上の空届かない夢を 見てる やりばのない気持の扉破りたい 校舎の裏煙草をふかして見つけれ ば逃げ場もない しゃがんでかたまり背を向けなが ら 心のひとつのも解りあえない大人 達をにらむ	I spend all my time looking at a textbook of scribbles and outside in the sky above the extremely high tall buildings, I see unreachable dreams I want to bust down the door of feelings with no outlet smoking a cigarette behind the school building, if I'm found out, I have nowhere to run crouching in a heap, with my back to them, I glare at the adults who have no idea about how I feel.
そして仲間達は今夜家出の計画を たてる とにかくもう学校や家には帰りた くない 自分の存在が何なのかさえ解らず 震えている 15 の夜	And my friends are making plans to run away from home tonight In any case, I don't want to go back to school or home I am all in a tremble, not knowing what my existence means A night at 15
盗んだバイクで走り出す 行き先 も解らぬまま 暗い夜の張りの中へ	I race off on a stolen motorcycle, not having destination in mind into the pall of the dark night,

<sup>25</sup> Yamashita, *Ozaki Yutaka no tamashii*, p. 223.

<sup>26</sup> It was on sale on December 1, 1983. He had just turned 18 years old.

誰にも縛られたくないと	逃げ込	escaping into this night, because I
んだこの夜に		don't want to be bound by anyone
自由になれた気がした	15 の夜	I felt I was free, a night at 15

Ozaki's purpose, during his teenage years, was to realize his dreams, which would, in part, determine his reality. He struggled with authority and the rules of society constantly, which inevitably influenced his view of schools and society in general.

The most striking phrase of "*A night at 15*" is "A night at 15 when I felt I was free (自由になれた気がした 15 の夜)." Ozaki's lyrics sound "defenseless and passionate in a daredevil manner. However, when we read [his words] very carefully, we can understand that he has calm eyes on the other hand."<sup>27</sup> Ozaki understood that he would never be truly free from society. He knew that he could only be free temporarily. He sings "I felt I was free, a night at 15." This does not mean he was free. He only felt he was free; however, "he knew even though he races off on a stolen motorcycle and he keeps seeking for true freedom and singing, he would be still unsure of how he would get freedom and he expresses this struggle in this song."<sup>28</sup> Tawara also supports this point: She postulates that one of the heartrending sorrows was that he did not sing "a night at 15 when he was free," but "[a night at 15 when] he felt he was free."<sup>29</sup> Ozaki critically and objectively analyzed the society and himself and struggled as a result.

As a musician, Ozaki had much influence with the youth. What attracted him to them was his ability to express, in great detail, his feelings and opinions. For the youth, he was their representative. For instance, one fan said, "[One of the attractive points are his words.] Particularly, "*A night at 15*," I thought that he sang songs by expressing feelings I cannot describe in words and that he was thinking about the same thing [I feel]."<sup>30</sup> Ozaki viewed "being an adult" as "discarding one's heart." He did not like the idea of growing up.

<sup>27</sup> Machi Tawara, "Ozaki Yutaka 17 sai no mochifu [A Motif of 17 Years Old; 17 歳のモチーフ]," *Bungeishunjū* (文芸春秋) (1992), p. 383.

<sup>28</sup> Ishii, "Ozaki Yutaka no sekai," p. 66.

<sup>29</sup> Tawara Machi (俵万智) is a well known writer and poet.

<sup>30</sup> Kodaka Yoshinori, *Gokokuji: Ozaki Yutaka heno dengon* [Temple Gokokuji: A Message to Ozaki Yutaka; 護国寺：尾崎豊への伝言], vol. 1 (Tokyo: Rimu Shuppan, 1992), p. 13.

The following words in the second stanza reflect this idea: “The adults are always telling me ‘Get rid of your heart, get rid of it.’ But I don’t want to do so (大人達は心を捨てろ捨てろと言うが俺はいやなのさ).” The lyrics of this song also reflect his limitations of being a teenager. He grieves by singing “what a tiny, meaningless, powerless night at 15 (なんてちっぽけでなんて意味のないなんて無力な 15 の夜).” He sought freedom, continuing his journey of “searching for self.”<sup>31</sup> He sings “A night at 15, I kept searching for freedom (自由を求め続けた 15 の夜).”

Ozaki also wrote “*Bokuga bokude arutame ni* (So I can be myself; 僕が僕であるために).”<sup>32</sup> This song also describes his struggles and feelings of loneliness:

心すれちがう悲しい生き様にた め息もらしていた けどこの目に映るこの街で僕 はずっと生きてゆかなければ	I let out a sigh at this sad life of misunderstandings but I have to keep living in this town before my eyes
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僕が僕であるために勝ち続けな きゃならない 正しいものは何なのかそれがこ の胸に解るまで 僕は街にのまれて少し心許しな がら この冷たい街の風に歌い続けて る	I have to keep winning so I can be myself until I know in my heart what a right thing is swallowed up by the city, I’ll forgive my heart a little and in the wind of this cold town, I’ll keep singing
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Here he uses the phrase “the town,” which implies the society. He insists that, while realizing he is swallowed up by the society, he keeps seeking for

<sup>31</sup> Yoshiki Sakurai, “Gendai shōhi shakai ni okeru seisyōnen ikusei no paradokkusu: Kyōikusha toshite no Ozaki Yutaka” [現代消費社会における「青少年育成」のパラドックス：教育者としての尾崎豊], *Bulletin of Studies in General Education at Kagawa University* 45 (1994), p. 123.

<sup>32</sup> This song was put as the last song in his first album “*Jyūnana sai no chizu* [Seventeen’s Map; 17 歳の地図],” which was on sale on December 1, 1983. Ozaki was 18 years old.

meaning and expresses his feelings, which are against the society. Ishii notes that Ozaki often uses the word “town” in his songs. For instance, this term appears in 19 out of 29 songs in his first three albums: “A town in which love disappear,” “a lonely town,” “I was wandering a town in which I have no place to go at night,” and “I ran out into a town, and I was left...” are examples of this. All phrases connote “the town, a place in which he [Ozaki] realizes his loneliness.”<sup>33</sup> He did not like school, so he ran out of town. However, in trying to be free from school and society, Ozaki ended up lonely in the “town” anyway.

As the analyses above show, Ozaki describes his loneliness and defiance about school and his struggle with society through his songs. He was often seen as a “dark, tacky, heavy, and freak” person.<sup>34</sup> However, Yamashita insists that Ozaki’s lyrics are not necessarily negative and dark. They are not all about grief and lament.

His lyrics also include a positive message for his young audience. For example, in “*15 no yoru*,” he depicts a boy who reflects on himself and thinks about his own existence in society. This boy does not want to go home or go to school and seeks freedom; in other words, he is about to “depart from the existing society, the adult society.”<sup>35</sup> In this sense, he is positive.

This concept overlaps Terayama Shūji’s (寺山修司) views on “*iede* (running away from home; 家出).” Terayama held that running away from home was not a negative, bad thing or that it was not an escape from reality; rather, it is a departure for seeking and establishing self.<sup>36</sup> Terayama states that “I think almost all youth should run away from home...for being a yakuza (gangster), singer, or athlete, everything should start with this ‘*iede*.’”<sup>37</sup> Similar to Terayama’s views on *iede*, Ozaki also held that getting out of the existing society was a positive departure for the self.

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<sup>33</sup> Ishii, “Ozaki Yutaka no sekai,” p. 66.

<sup>34</sup> Yamashita, *Ozaki Yutaka no tamashii*, p. 40.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, p. 85.

<sup>36</sup> Yamashita, *Ozaki Yutaka no tamashii*, p. 85.

<sup>37</sup> Shūji Terayama, “*Iede no susume* [A Recommendation of Running Away from Home: Jump without Planning; 家出のすすめ：行きあたりばったりで跳べ],” *The Student Times*, July 20, 1962, p. 6.

### Inclination toward Anarchism

A possible image that depicts Ozaki's early life is that of a teen that was against society, including the educational system.<sup>38</sup> This image matches well with his own difficulties in school and his ultimate rebellion against it. His lyrics are replete with anger, resistance, and contradiction. In particular, "*Sotsugyō* (Graduation; 卒業)" and "*17 sai no chizu* (Seventeen's Map; 17歳の地図)" describe his anarchistic views.

*Sotsugyō* was written and appeared on the market on January 21, 1985. He was 19 years old. This particular song was one of the most well-known, powerful songs among the 71 songs he recorded. He wrote:

校舎の影芝生の上すいこまれ  
る空  
幻とリアルな気持感じていた  
チャイムが鳴り教室のいつも  
の席に座り  
何に従い従うべきか考えてい  
た  
ざわめく心今俺にあるものは  
意味なく思えてとまどってい  
た

On the grass, in the shadow of the  
school building, I'm taken in by the  
sky  
I felt both illusionary and real feelings  
The chime sounded, and I took my  
usual seat in the classroom  
I thought about what I should be  
following  
My bustling heart, I felt as a loss as  
what I have now seems meaningless

Ozaki seems to want to point out that because everything is meaningless; he feels lost and the path is eluding him. His rebellion has put him at odds with the prevailing culture in which he lived, and because of this attitude, he could not "belong." The lyrics further describe his anarchism. He sang:

行儀よくまじめなんて出来や  
しなかった  
夜の校舎窓ガラス壊してまわ  
った  
逆らい続けあがき続けた早く  
自由になりたかった

I couldn't have good manners, or be  
really serious  
Breaking the window glass at the  
school building at night  
I kept on being defiant, I kept  
struggling, I just wanted to hurry up  
and be free

<sup>38</sup> Ochiai, "Ozaki Yutaka no kokoro no fūkei," p. 89.



Yamashita notes that Ozaki always wanted to be himself and find freedom, which is not bound by anything. This view is similar to the romantic school irony.<sup>39</sup> The rebellious spirit, which Yamashita also calls “irony,” refers to the anti-spirit on one’s thoughts and words, the system, and social rules.<sup>40</sup> By opposing society and the school system, Ozaki emphasized the idea of anarchism.

Furthermore, in the later part of *Sotsugyō*, Ozaki reveals a stronger message:

信じられぬ大人との争いの中で	In my disputes with adults who
許しあいといった何解りあえただ	can't be trusted
ろう	In forgiving one another, what can
うんざりしながらそれでも過ごした	we understand?
ひとつだけ解ってたこと	I was fed up with it, but I lived
この支配からの卒業	with it
	The one thing that I knew was
	That I was graduating from this
	control

These lyrics express the thought that adults do not understand him. In fact, in an interview, which was conducted before this song was released in 1985, Chikushi asked Ozaki, “Your songs include a lot of messages about defiance against schools and protests against the fact that things which were made by adults suppress people.”<sup>41</sup> Ozaki replied: “Yeah...to me, adults get under control without giving us a chance to explain and brainwash children.”<sup>42</sup> So, in *Sotsugyō*, he sings:

卒業していったい何解ると言うのか	What can we learn after
思い出のほかに何が残ると言うのか	graduating?
人は誰も縛られたかよわき小羊ならば	What stays with us other than
	memories?
	If all people are bound and are
	weak lambs,

<sup>39</sup> Yamashita, *Ozaki Yutaka no tamashii*, p. 78.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Chikushi, “Shinjinrui no kishu tachi,” p.50.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

先生あなたはかよわき大人の代弁者なのか	Are you the spokesman for the feeble adults, teacher?
俺達の怒りどこへ向かうべきなのか	Where should our anger be directed?
これからは何が俺を縛りつけるだろう	What will bind me from now on?
あと何度自分自身卒業すれば	How many more times will I graduate
本当の自分にたどりつけるだろう	Before I find my true self?
仕組まれた自由に誰も気づかずに	No one realizes that freedom is something that's been devised
あがいた日々も終る	The days of struggling will end
この支配からの卒業	And we'll graduate from this control
闘いからの卒業	We'll graduate from this battle

When we carefully scrutinize the words above, we can determine that he already knew that even if he graduates from a school and becomes free, he would encounter another control of society (the adults' world) and he would still struggle with this control. That's why he sings, "how many more times will I graduate before I find my true self?" Graduation from a high school was an insignificant matter and graduating is not an absolute graduation; it is a graduation "from this control" and freedom is only freedom that is already contrived and programmed by adults.<sup>43</sup>

Moreover, *17 sai no chizu* depicts a seventeen-year-old boy who was wandering in the town and reflecting on his life. In this song, Ozaki delivered a message of not giving up a dream in life:

口うるさい大人達のルーズな生活に縛られても	Even if undisciplined lives of nagging adults hold you back
素敵な夢を忘れやしないよワオ!	Never give up precious dreams, wow!

He also encouraged people to be themselves:

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<sup>43</sup> Tawara, "Ozaki Yutaka 17 sai no mochifu, pp. 385–386.

手を差しのべておまえを求めな	You reach out, but I won't need you
いさ	in this town
この街	No matter what lifestyle I fall into
どんな生き方になるにしても	I will never give up being myself,
自分を捨てやしないよワァオ!	wow!

In this song, he describes concepts of not following the society, being against the adults, keeping one's own life, and seeking for a place to be one's self. The main theme of this song seems to be one's self and not be influenced by the society.

Not only do the words express Ozaki's philosophies and messages, but his singing style also shows his passion. When he sang, he used his entire body to express himself. He lied down on the stage and shook his body. He sometimes sang with dripping-wet clothes. One of his most remarkable episodes was when he performed in Shibuya, Tokyo on August 4, 1984. He was so excited and jumped off the foothold, which was seven meters high. His enthusiasm earned him a broken leg, but he kept singing and completed his concert that day. This accident only made him more popular.<sup>44</sup> Sakurai states that Ozaki's use of his entire body during performances while delivering messages of struggle, along with yelling, only made him more of an endearing character to his fans and the public.<sup>45</sup> With his manner of expression, his popularity increased, and his messages of anarchism combined with his rebellion against society made him a powerful figure.

#### A New Journey in his Twenties

During his early career as a rock musician, his lyrics reflected those things with which he struggled. By describing the school situations and using the analogy of "the town," he expressed his defiance and opposition against authority as demonstrated by society and adults. Many of these concepts and messages were included in his first three albums, which were all created from 1983 to 1985. Later in his career, his songs began to

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<sup>44</sup> Chikushi, "Shinjinrui no kishu tachi," p. 49, and Yamashita, *Ozaki Yutaka no tamashii*, p. 103.

<sup>45</sup> Yoshiki Sakurai, "Gendai shōhi shakai ni okeru seisyōnen ikusei no paradokkusu," p. 128.

include different types of messages. In other words, the boy Ozaki transformed himself into a somewhat mature adult, now in his twenties. After he turned twenty, he took a one-year break and stayed in New York City in 1986. As stated earlier, it was during this time when he began his habit of using drugs. After his return to Japan, he resumed his music career. When he was in his early twenties and while jailed for using drugs, he married Shigemi,<sup>46</sup> and later their son, Hiroya, was born. In the interview right after being released from the detention house, he stated, “I want to describe “a map of the twentieth” (*nijyūdai no chizu*; 二十代の地図) as I feel a social responsibility.”<sup>47</sup> He began to deliver his messages as a person who stands on the side of the adults to whom he once wrote while he was a teen.<sup>48</sup>

Still writing songs about being true to oneself and in support of freedom, the songs written during his twenties included a wider perspective than those written during his teen years. For instance, some songs were geared toward the nation, world, and antiwar. In *Kaku* (The Core; 核), he wrote:

ねえねえもしかしたら俺の方が正	Hey hey maybe I may be right
しいかもしれないだろう	I become frightened in the middle
俺がこんな平和の中で怯えている	of this peace
けれど	Antiwar antinuclear what can we
反戦反核いったい何が出来るとい	do
うの	In the town in which small shouts
小さな叫びが聞こえないこの街で	cannot be heard.

Interviewed in 1988, Ozaki shared his opinions about *Kaku*. Reflecting on his experience of writing that song, he admitted “I came to a point where I

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<sup>46</sup> Yutaka proposed to her from the jail in writing and they married on May 12, 1988. Shigemi Ozaki, “Otto Ozaki Yutaka tono 6 nenkan [The Period of 6 Years with Husband Ozaki Yutaka; 夫尾崎豊との6年間].” *Bungeishunjū* (1993): pp. 289–90.

<sup>47</sup> Ishii, “Ozaki Yutaka no sekai: Sono sarakedasu yowasa ni kyōkan suru kōkōseitachi,” p. 70.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

would accept heavy stuff.”<sup>49</sup> In addition, his background of having a father who worked for the Defense Agency led him to write this kind of song. He also shared that as a child, he sometimes discussed with his elder brother the issue of whether or not Japan should have the Self-Defense Department. This illustrated the point that Ozaki held an anti-nuclear position.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, he criticized the nation in *Love Way*.<sup>51</sup>

Love Way 言葉も感じるままにやが て意味を変える	Love Way soon words will change their meanings as they feel
Love Way 真実なんてそれは共同条 理の	Love Way the truth is a lie of the principles of joint reasons
原理の嘘	Love Way all that has been given to live for
Love Way 生きる為に与えられてき たもの全ては	Love Way fights fights deprives and loves,
戦い争い奪って愛し合う Love Way	Love Way

These words remind us of Yoshimoto Taka'aki (吉本隆明). In *kyōdō gensō ron* (A theory of communal illusion; 共同幻想論), he states that by sharing the community's thoughts, ideas, and concepts, the nation (e.g., ethic and laws) is created. He wrote, “Communal illusion is a pattern of notions which were created by human behaviors in this world.”<sup>52</sup> Similar to Yoshimoto's idea, Ozaki insisted that existing matter in the nation are lies and fantasy. Thus it was apparent that he liked reading Yoshimoto's books.<sup>53</sup> It can be surmised from some of the song lyrics that Ozaki's philosophies and ideas were influenced by Yoshimoto.

全てのものが置き換えられた幻想 の中で	In the illusion that everything was replaced
犯してしまっている気付けない過 ちに	The mistakes we committed and cannot realize

<sup>49</sup> Ochiai, “Ozaki Yutaka no kokoro no fūkei,” p. 91.

<sup>50</sup> Chikushi, “Shinjinrui no kishu tachi,” p. 51.

<sup>51</sup> It was on sale on October 21, 1990. He was 24 years old.

<sup>52</sup> Taka'aki Yoshimoto, *Yoshimoto Taka'aki* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1972), p. 18.

<sup>53</sup> Yamashita, *Ozaki Yutaka no tamashii*, p. 223.

清らかに安らかに生まれて来るもの	Things which are to be born in peace and purely
全ての存在は罪を背負わされるだろう	All existing things will carry on sins
	Love Way Love Way
	Love Way Love Way

Here Ozaki viewed the world as an illusion. And in seeing the world as an illusion, he ends up with the conclusion that “love” is what is most important for people. It was, though, interesting that he intentionally avoided using the word love (*ai*; 愛) in Japanese in his song, and that he used the word “love way” instead. According to him, “I wanted to draw a picture of love by making it concrete, not by using the word love.”<sup>54</sup> This technique itself seems to be his fantastic notion. In addition, Ozaki disclosed his experience of being addicted to drugs: “I was in the midst of an illusion and an auditory hallucination [after being on a drug]. Why did I use drugs? In the first place, I wanted to analyze the reality in depth and face it up.”<sup>55</sup>

In his last concert tour, which lasted from May to October in 1991, he visited many places across Japan. The title of this tour was “the birth.” He wrote the following messages<sup>56</sup> in prose to his fans in its brochure:

永遠の胸	An Eternal Heart
資本主義が世界を滅亡させる前に。	Before the capitalism ruins the world
共産主義が世界を見捨てる前に。	Before the communism abandons the world
僕らは世界に永遠の成功を与え、	We give the world the eternal success

<sup>54</sup> This was Ozaki’s quote from a music magazine, *Guitar Book*, in December 1990.

<sup>55</sup> Ozaki Yutaka, *Futū no ai* [An Ordinary Love; 普通の愛] (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1993).

<sup>56</sup> Ozaki Yutaka, “An Eternal Heart,” *The Birth* (May), 1991.

僕らは至上の幸福を手にしよ う。	We will obtain the supreme happiness
新しい思想によって。	By a new thought
新しいパラダイムによって	By a new paradigm
同志よ・・・、僕らは今、	Friends...we now
永遠の成功を胸に抱えているん だ。	Hold the eternal success in our hearts.

At the end of this prose, he wrote “from Ozaki Yutaka to fellows (尾崎豊より同志へ).”<sup>57</sup> He viewed his fans as like-minded people, who stand in the same field and share their feelings. As seen in the words above, we can see Ozaki’s growth and maturity as an adult.

### Conclusion

Ozaki Yutaka was one of the most influential rock musicians in the 1980s. His lyrics reflected well the social factors and people’s feelings. He struggled particularly during childhood, as well as with friendships at his new school. He felt as though he did not belong. In junior high school and throughout high school, he rebelled against his teachers and did not follow the school rules. During the latter part of those years, he began his music career. Because of his background, his songs and messages were very real and powerful. His lyrics expressed his loneliness. He also expressed his defiance against the society and school as a teen. Some of his songs had an anarchistic message. Being influenced by Yoshimoto Taka’aki, Ozaki viewed the world as an illusion. Yamashita evaluates him as “a poet, writer, and artist who was obsessive about and value his words” and “a thinker who expresses his thought and philosophy with rhythms and his body and who moved people’s hearts.”<sup>58</sup> After Ozaki’s death, Yoshimoto had a dialogue with Ozaki’s father, Kenichi. Yoshimoto described that Yutaka was “a person of the words” who described things using different settings, scenes, and characters in his songs.<sup>59</sup> As Yoshimoto’s analysis demonstrates, Ozaki was a musician who inspired a number of people

<sup>57</sup> Shibata, “Ozaki Yutaka heno 120 tsū no tegami,” p. 420.

<sup>58</sup> Yamashita, *Ozaki Yutaka no tamashii: Kagayaki to kunō no kiseki*, p. 1.

<sup>59</sup> “Yoshimoto Taka’aki, Ozaki Kennchi, and Yamashita Etsuko no taidan,” *Takarajima* 30/10 (1993).

through his words. In this sense, this was one phenomenon during the 1980s. Almost two decades after his death, his songs still attract people today.



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**THE EFFECTIVENESS AND LEARNERS'  
PERCEPTION OF TEACHER FEEDBACK  
ON JAPANESE AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE WRITING**

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**Abstract**

In the field of second language writing, much research has been implemented to examine the effect of corrective feedback. The results, however, are mixed and ambiguous. Although some scholars consider written corrective feedback unnecessary,<sup>1</sup> the role of corrective feedback has been supported by cognitive and psycholinguistic theories.<sup>2</sup> The essential question, then, is whether or not the written feedback contributes to the improvement of students' writing skills. Various types of written corrective feedback have been investigated in terms of its impact on learners' grammatical accuracy, fluency, and overall quality of their compositions. Although the written feedback has been investigated in second language learning settings (e.g., ESL in the U.S. or Japanese as a second language in Japan), it has not yet been fully examined in foreign language learning settings, especially on languages that are typologically different from English, such as Asian languages.

This study investigates the differential effects of corrective feedback on the Japanese as a foreign language (JFL) writing. Four intermediate-level students were asked to write a letter to a pen pal on a certain topic. Each learner underwent a different revision process: (a) "explicit correction" only, (b) "comment on content" only, (c) "grammar coding" only, and (d) combination of "grammar coding" and "comment on content." Upon receiving the written feedback, learners were asked to revise their letter within 48 hours, followed by interview session to elicit their perception of feedback, preference of "error correction," and revision

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<sup>1</sup> John Truscott, "The Case for 'The Case for Grammar Correction in L2 Writing Classes:' A Response to Ferris," *Journal of Second Language Writing* 8 (1999): 111–122.

<sup>2</sup> Younghee Sheen, "Introduction: The Role of Oral and Written Corrective Feedback in SLA," *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 32 (2010): 169–179.

habits. Their revisions were assessed in terms of the fluency (number of T-units and characters) as well as the holistic improvement of the texts. The results show that the superior effect of the combination of “grammar coding” and “comment on content” over other types of feedback on the increase of the text length. For overall improvement, on the other hand, “comment on content” only impacted the most positively. Furthermore, the interview sessions revealed that learners generally perceived all the “error correction” as helpful. However, negative effect was suggested on “grammar coding” and “explicit correction.” This study suggests that classroom teachers utilize a variety of corrective feedback on students’ writings depending on the foci of the assignments.

### **Introduction**

In order to learn a foreign language, it is essential to focus on four skills, namely: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. In some cases, cultural skills are also considered crucial. Unlike the traditional foreign language pedagogy in which students were exposed to excessive grammar translation or sentence pattern practices, languages have been widely taught in a framework of communicative approach, which concentrates on interpersonal meaning exchange rather than focusing exclusively on the grammatical form of language. It is a trend that classroom teachers attempt to enhance the four skills of learners’ language development through communicative approach. Due to the time limitation, however, classroom instruction tends to focus on speaking, listening, and some reading skills while writing components of language are usually tackled in a form of homework assignment.

In the case of learning Japanese as a foreign language (JFL), especially for native speakers of English or English cognates, acquiring a certain level of writing skills is highly challenging for its distinctive characters (e.g., *hiragana*, *katakana*, and Chinese characters) as well as organizational difference in writing. For example, Robert Kaplan argues that the organization of ideas in writing is culturally determined. For instance, English writing can be represented by a straight line with introductions, topic sentences, supporting information, and conclusions, whereas that in Japanese is represented by spiral circles toward the center—

the discussion starts from surrounding topics and the main idea is not disclosed until the very end of the writing.<sup>3</sup>

In one's developmental stages of language learning, whether it is his/her first language (L1) or second language (L2), or whether it is in a form of oral or written production, various non-native-like productions are inevitable, especially when there is a gap between learners' native languages and the target language (e.g., Japanese). When an error is identified, it is crucial for the instructors to provide necessary and appropriate feedback to learners' writings. However, such feedback should be provided in a way that it triggers learners' noticing and cognitive processes. In other words, simply providing the correct form, albeit helpful to some extent, may not encourage learners to think of what they did wrong and what the correct forms should be. Then, how should an instructor correct or respond to them? Questions on feedback like these have been the focus of study in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) and foreign language acquisition (FLA) for the past three decades. Researchers have examined feedback—corrective or not—in L2 writing as to when it should be provided, who should provide it, how it should be done, on what features it should be provided, and learners' preferences for the types of teacher feedback, among other issues.

### **Literature Review**

#### ***Writing feedback—does it work or not?***

As the teaching methodology shifted from translation-based approach to a more communicative approach, speaking and listening skill learning has benefitted from “error correction” through meaningful communication. Learners notice what is incomprehensible by making mistakes and receiving corrective feedback from their interlocutors. The positive effects of oral corrective feedback have been reported extensively.<sup>4</sup>

Written corrective feedback, on the other hand, does not paint the same picture. More negative results have been reported by providing written “error correction.” For example, Zamel investigated types of teacher response to learner writing in an ESL setting and found that teacher

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<sup>3</sup> Robert B. Kaplan, “Cultural Thought Patterns in Inter-Cultural Education,” *Language Learning* 16 (1996): 1–20.

<sup>4</sup> Sheen, “Introduction: The Role of Oral and Written Corrective Feedback in SLA.”

feedback (e.g., coding and comments) are often confusing, arbitrary, and inaccessible. The teacher cannot always identify every single error and/or cannot always be consistent on what they correct.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, Leki claims that teachers tend to focus exclusively on the grammatical errors (e.g., individual vocabulary, short phrases, grammatical inflection) and fail to provide a holistic comment on the content of the texts.<sup>6</sup>

In Japanese education, Uchida argues that written corrective feedback does not provide children a sense of achievement and, in some cases, it may even be harmful for developing their thinking process.<sup>7</sup> Further, Komiya points out that teachers often provide feedback for the parts that learners can correct by themselves.<sup>8</sup>

Such negative reaction to written feedback stems from the trend that feedback was provided after the text was completed. That is, there is no communication or negotiation during the writing. Thus, adaptation of a “process-oriented” model has been claimed and researched. In this framework, teachers play a role of assisting learners’ writing process by providing feedback in various stages (e.g., outline, revision), rather than correcting errors after the completion of the texts. Such process-oriented written feedback resulted in more positive results.

Ferris argues that “grammar correction” is indeed effective,<sup>9</sup> claiming that feedback should be provided on all aspects of learners’ texts.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Vivian Zamel, “Responding to Student Writing,” *TESOL Quarterly* 19/1 (1985): 79–101.

<sup>6</sup> Ilona Leki, “Coaching from the Margins: Issues in Written Response,” in Barbara Kroll, ed., *Second Language Writing: Research Insights for the Classroom* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 57–68.

<sup>7</sup> Nobuko Uchida, *Kodomo no bunsyō. Kaku koto, Kangaeru koto* (Tokyo: Tokyo University Press, 1990).

<sup>8</sup> Chizuko Komiya, “Suikō ni yoru sakubun shidō no kanōsei: gakusyūsyā no nōryoku o ikashita teisei,” *Nihongo Kyōiku* 75 (1991): 124–134.

<sup>9</sup> Dana, R. Ferris, “The Case for Grammar Correction in L2 Writing Classes: A Response to Truscott (1996),” *Journal of Second Language Writing* 8/1 (1999): 1–11.

<sup>10</sup> Dana, R. Ferris, “Responding to Writing,” in Barbara Kroll, ed., *Exploring the Dynamics of Second Language Writing* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 119–140.

Ferris and Roberts compared three ESL groups: coding-, underlined-,<sup>11</sup> and no-feedback group, and found that both groups that received feedback significantly outperformed the “no feedback” group. Ishibashi investigated how learners perceive teachers' written feedback and found that the majority of learners consider provided feedback helpful and effective.<sup>12</sup>

***What is an effective corrective feedback?***

Although the justification and effectiveness of “grammar correction” are not yet resolved, the majority agrees that feedback is generally effective and beneficial in L2 writing, at least on content and organization. Then, the question is “What type of feedback is the most effective?” Many scholars have investigated different types of feedback on L2 writing: “explicit correction” (e.g., overtly indicating the erroneous part and providing the correct form), coding (e.g., indicating grammatical form with “GF,” spelling with “SP”), underlining, “comment on content,” and any combination of the above.

Kepner investigated intermediate Spanish learners' writings on the different effects of error-oriented feedback and message-oriented feedback. The results show that “error corrections” and rule reminders did not significantly improve students' written accuracy or quality of the content of their writing, whereas message-oriented comments showed a positive effect. Thus, Kepner concluded that “error correction” may not be as effective as message-oriented feedback.<sup>13</sup>

However, Chandler reports a positive effect of “explicit correction” in the ESL setting by comparing three groups: “explicit correction” group, underlining the location of error with coding, and only coding beside the

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<sup>11</sup> Dana, R. Ferris and Barrie Roberts, “Error Feedback in L2 Writing Classes: How Explicit Does It Need To Be?” *Journal of Second Language Writing* 10 (2001): 161–184.

<sup>12</sup> Reiko Ishibashi, “Sansyutsu sakubun ni taisuru kyōshi no feedback—nihongo gakusyūsha no ninshiki to taiō kara,” *Takusyoku University Nihongo Kiyō* 11 (2001): 89–98.

<sup>13</sup> Christine G. Kepner, “An Experiment in the Relationship of Types of Written Feedback to the Development of L2 Writing Skills,” *The Modern Language Journal* 75/3 (1991): 305–313.

line in which the error exists, without indicating the location.<sup>14</sup> It was shown that both the “explicit correction” group and the underlining with coding group were significantly more accurate than the group with only coding in the revision, with the best results obtained from the “explicit correction” group.

Although coding can be perceived ineffective due to its ambiguity,<sup>15</sup> positive results have also been reported by researchers such as Ferris and Roberts. In their study an ESL setting, the coding group and the underlining feedback group significantly outperformed the group that did not receive any feedback.<sup>16</sup> “Comment on content,” which focuses exclusively on the content and organization rather than the grammatical features has been reported effective not only on learner’s content, but also partially on learner’s grammar.<sup>17</sup> However, it has also been suggested that teacher comments potentially cause confusion when learners find it ambiguous.<sup>18</sup> A combination of the above feedback technique has been investigated in comparison with single feedback. For example, Fazio found

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<sup>14</sup> Jean Chandler, “The Efficacy of Various Kinds of Error Feedback for Improvement in the Accuracy and Fluency of L2 Student Writing,” *Journal of Second Language Writing* 12 (2003), pp. 267–296.

<sup>15</sup> Harriet D. Semke, “Effects of the Red Pen,” *Foreign Language Annals* 17/3 (1984), pp. 195–202; John Truscott, “The Case Against Grammar Correction in L2 Writing Classes,” *Language Learning* 46/2 (1996): 327–369; John Truscott, “The Case for ‘The Case for Grammar Correction in L2 Writing Classes:’ a Response to Ferris”; and Vivian Zamel, “Responding to Student Writing.”

<sup>16</sup> Dana R. Ferris and Barrie Roberts, “Error Feedback in L2 Writing Classes.”

<sup>17</sup> Susan M. Conrad and Lynn M. Goldstein, “ESL Student Revision after Teacher-Written Comments: Text, Contexts, and Individuals,” *Journal of Second Language Writing* 8/2 (1999): 147–179; and Lucy L. Fazio, “The Effect of Corrections and Commentaries on the Journal Writing Accuracy of Minority- and Majority-Language Students,” *Journal of Second Language Writing* 10/4 (2001), pp. 235–249.

<sup>18</sup> Semke, “Effects of the Red Pen”; Truscott, “The Case for ‘The Case Against Grammar Correction in L2 Writing Classes,’” (1999): 111–122; and Zamel, “Responding to Student Writing,” 79–101.



that a combination of “explicit correction” and “comment on content” is not significantly more effective than single mode of correction.<sup>19</sup>

Tim Ashwell, in a multiple draft setting, compared three groups: recommended pattern group (“comment on content” for the first draft, form-focused correction on the Second draft), reversed pattern group (form-focused correction followed by content-focused comment), and zero feedback group with EFL learners in a Japanese university, reporting that the recommended pattern did not produce a significant difference on the content score of the final product.<sup>20</sup>

In addition to types of correction, it is claimed that teachers should be clear in order to facilitate learners' writing improvement, without appropriating their texts.<sup>21</sup> In sum, research has shown that, in general, teacher feedback seems the most effective at the intermediate stage of learners' writing, and to be feedback, at least on content and organization, seems to have consistent positive effect on revision. In addition, although learners' preference for different types of feedback vary depending on the individual, and learners, especially in FL context, tend to consider feedback and revision as “grammar practice,” L2 and FL learners generally seem to perceive teacher feedback helpful to improve their writing skills. However, studies on the effectiveness of different types of feedback, namely, “explicit correction,” coding, underlining, “comment on content,” or any combination of the above, still have shown a number of different pictures in various research contexts. Moreover, such studies are almost exclusively on ESL or English-cognate language learning settings. Thus, it is premature to consider that previous findings are applicable to languages that are typologically different from English, such as Asian languages.

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<sup>19</sup> Lucy L. Fazio, “The Effect of Corrections and Commentaries.”

<sup>20</sup> Tim Ashwell, “Patterns of Teacher Response to Student Writing in a Multiple-Draft Composition Classroom: Is Content Feedback Followed by Form Feedback the Best Method?” *Journal of Second Language Writing* 9/3 (2000): 227–257.

<sup>21</sup> Fiona Hyland, “The Impact of Teacher Written Feedback on Individual Writers,” *Journal of Second Language Writing* 7/3 (1998): 255–286; and Fiona Hyland and Ken Hyland, “Sugaring the Pill: Praise and Criticism in Written Feedback,” *Journal of Second Language Writing* 10 (2001): 185–212.

Therefore, this small case study investigates the effectiveness and learners' perceptions of different types of feedback on writing in a JFL setting. In so doing, the following research questions are advanced:

1. What is the impact of four different types of corrective feedback, namely—explicit correction, coding, “comment on content,” or a combination of coding and “comment on content”—on a learner's subsequent production in terms of the amount of text (characters and T-units) and holistic rating of their writing?
2. How do intermediate-level JFL learners perceive various types of teacher feedback on their writing?

## **Method**

### ***Participants***

The participants consist of four college students at the third-year level Japanese, who agreed to volunteer in this study with no relation to their coursework. They were 3 males and one female, and all native speakers of English. Moreover, there is no notable difference in terms of linguistic (oral or written) or communicative skills between the four participants. It should also be noted that participant A is much older (42 years old) while other three participants are either 20 or 21 years old.

### ***Procedures***

The data collection procedures were completed within two weeks.

1. Assignment of the task:  
The participants were asked to write a letter to their pen pals about a given topic, “The Worst Trip,” in 30 minutes. Use of a dictionary or any other sources were not allowed. In addition, the participants were specifically instructed to use a neutral polite form, *desu/masu*. The reason that the neutral form was chosen for the task is because the participants are familiar with this form compared to other forms, such as casual forms. It is important to use a cognitively less difficult form to encourage the participants to produce as much text as possible, given the time constraint.
2. Feedback on texts:  
The four types of feedback, namely, “explicit correction,” “comment on content,” “grammar coding,” and a combination of

“comment and coding,” were provided by the researcher. Although there are many more feedback techniques examined in the previous studies (e.g., underlining without indicating the location of an error), these four types were chosen in this particular study for two reasons: (a) the foci of much research have been either one or more of these four, and (b) these four types of feedback are widely used in the Japanese language program at collegiate level in the United States.

The definition of each type of feedback is as follows: “explicit correction” specifically identifies the location of the error, and the correct form or vocabulary is provided. For “comment on content,” “tell-me-more” type of technique was mainly used, as well as general comments. In this respect, it can both be corrective (e.g., identifying what is missing or what should be incorporated in a text), and noncorrective (e.g., stating a general comment, such as “I like the way you describe the scary situation!”). Coding is a type of corrective feedback that specifically indicates the location of an error, with a symbol that indicates what type of error it is. In this study, 10 symbols were used: “GC” for grammar choice, “SP” for spelling, “P” for particle, “>” for missing element, “Fm” for grammar form, “Kj” for Kanji (Chinese characters), “T” for tense, “WC” for word choice, “AWK” for awkward sentence or wording, and “?” for incomprehensible item.

3. Revision:

Upon completion of the holistic rating and written feedback, the first drafts were returned to the participants. The participants were instructed to rewrite the letter and submit both the first draft and the revised text within 48 hours. There was no time requirement, and they could refer to any sources such as the dictionary, textbook, Internet, etc.

4. Interview:

Finally, the researcher interviewed each participant within 48 hours from receiving the revised text. Each interview, which was audio-taped, lasted from 15 to 20 minutes, depending on the participants. The questions asked about (a) the perception about the particular feedback that he or she received, (b) the participants' beliefs about, or preferences for, types of feedback, (c) the

participants' habits of revision, and (d) the student's specific revision for the task in this study.

### *Analyses*

In order to answer the research questions, the following analyses were implemented for both the first draft and the revised texts: counting the number of T-units and characters, and holistic rating.

1. The number of T-units:

For a T-unit, Cooper's definition is adopted in this study.<sup>22</sup> According to Cooper, a T-unit is a main clause and any subordinate or non-clausal structure either embedded or attached. It should also be noted that a compound sentence is counted as two T-units. For example, the sentence in (1), which is excerpted from the data, is considered to have two T-units:

- a) *sono toki, ani-wa nyūyōku-ni sunde ita node,*  
that time older brother-TOP New York-  
LOC was living thus

*watashi-wa eki-kara apato-ni tsureteitte morai-mashita*  
I-TOP station-from apartment-to take receive an action-  
PAST

*(Lit.) That time, my brother lived in N.Y. thus, I received  
an action of taking me from the station to his apartment  
by a car.*

“Back then, since my brother lived in N.Y., he gave me a ride from the station to his apartment.”

T-units were counted both in the first and the second draft for each participant's text, and compared to examine if there was any increase or decrease in the total number.

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<sup>22</sup> Charles R. Cooper, “Studying the Writing Abilities of a University Freshman Class,” in Richard Beach and Lillian S. Bridwell, eds., *New Directions in Composition Research* (New York: Guilford Press, 1984), pp. 19–52.

2. The number of characters:  
Characters counted were any Japanese characters; *hiragana*, *katakana*, and *kanji* (Chinese characters), and Roman alphabet abbreviations widely used in Japan, such as "P.S." for postscript.
3. Holistic rating:  
Upon the completion of each draft, the researcher collected the texts and had two native speakers of Japanese rate them separately. The two raters were teaching assistants for the first-year JFL course. The two raters had never taught any of the participants, and thus, there should have been no bias on the participants' linguistic/rhetoric ability in Japanese.

Moreover, the texts were rated based on the content (maximum of 30 points), organization (maximum of 20 points), grammar (maximum of 25 points), vocabulary (maximum of 20 points) and mechanics (maximum of 5 points), using Hedgcock and Lefkowitz's 100 point-scale criteria (see Appendix A). First, the two raters graded each text separately. Then, their scores were compared, the discrepancies in each category were discussed and, finally, one score for each category was determined for each text in 100% agreement between the two raters.

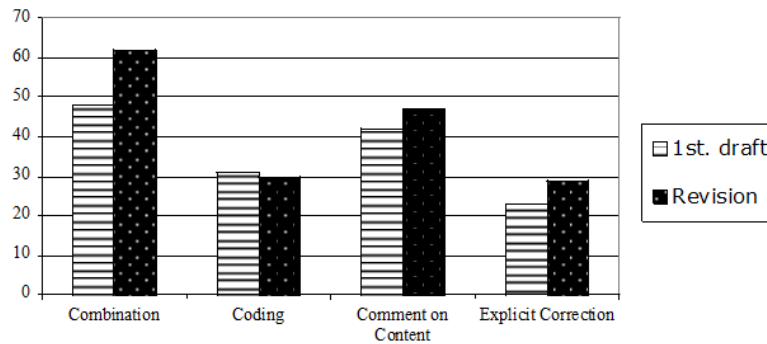
## Results

For the first research question, the results on the change between the first draft and the revision in terms of the number of T-units show that the combination of "grammar coding" and "comment on content" contributed to the largest increase of T-units in the participant's subsequent text. "Grammar coding" only, on the other hand, had a slightly negative effect on the number of T-units. These results are shown in Table 1 and Figure 1.

	Combination		Coding		Comment		Explicit	
	<i>First draft</i>	<i>Rev.</i>	<i>First draft</i>	<i>Rev.</i>	<i>First draft</i>	<i>Rev.</i>	<i>First draft</i>	<i>Rev.</i>
# of T-units	48	62 (+14)	31	30 (-1)	42	47 (+5)	23	29 (+6)

**Table 1. The number of T-units between the 1<sup>st</sup> draft and the revision for each feedback type.**

As shown in Table 1, 48 T-units were identified in the texts produced by the participants who received the combination of coding and “comment on coding;” 31 T-units for the one who received grammar coding only; 42 T-units for the one who received “comment on content” only; and 23 T-units for the one who was provided “explicit correction” only. The largest increase in the number of T-units was attributed to the combination of coding and comment, in response to which the participant produced 14 more T-units in the subsequent text. However, coding seems to have the least (or even a slight negative effect) on the number of T-units in the revision. The participant who received coding feedback produced fewer T-units, but the difference was subtle, by only one less T-unit.

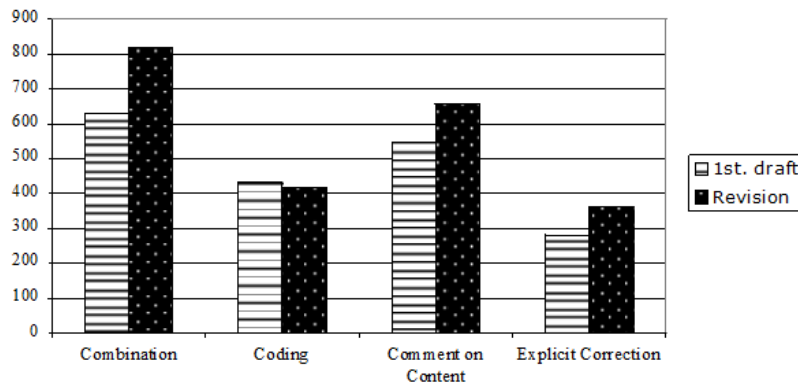


**Figure 1. The change in the number of T-units between the 1<sup>st</sup> draft and the revision.**

Furthermore, although “comment on content” and “explicit correction” contributed to a gain in the number of T-units, no notable difference was observed between these two (an increase of 5 more T-units and 6 more T-units, respectively).

	Combination		Coding		Comment		Explicit	
	<i>First draft</i>	<i>Rev.</i>	<i>First draft</i>	<i>Rev.</i>	<i>First draft</i>	<i>Rev.</i>	<i>First draft</i>	<i>Rev.</i>
# of charac.	629	817 (+188)	432	416 (-16)	547	657 (+110)	280	361 (+81)

**Table 2. The number of characters between the 1<sup>st</sup> draft and the revision for each feedback type.**



**Figure 2. The change in the number of character between the first draft and the revision**

Table 2 shows that the combination, comment, and “explicit correction” contributed to the gain of characters. The largest increase was from the combination (+188) followed by comment (+110) and “explicit correction” (+81). Coding, however, did not encourage the participant to produce more characters. It even affected negatively, albeit only slightly, the total number of characters in the subsequent revision (-16). In addition, as was the case for the number of T-units, there was no remarkable difference observed between the increase from comment and from “explicit correction” (110 and 81, respectively). These results are also shown in Figure 2 above.

Another focus of the first research question is the effect of each type of feedback on the holistic rating. Table 3 below shows the scores for the five categories and the overall scores of the first draft and the revision for each type of feedback.

	Combination		Coding		Comment		Explicit	
	<i>First draft</i>	<i>Rev.</i>	<i>First draft</i>	<i>Rev.</i>	<i>First draft</i>	<i>Rev.</i>	<i>First draft</i>	<i>Rev.</i>
<b>Content</b> (30pts.)	25	27 (+2)	26	25 (-1)	20	26 (+6)	25	25 (+0)
<b>Organization</b> (20pts.)	15	18 (+3)	17	18 (+1)	15	17 (+2)	14	18 (+4)

<b>Grammar</b> (25pts.)	16	19 (+3)	16	21 (+5)	11	17 (+6)	14	22 (+8)
<b>Vocabulary</b> (20pts.)	15	17 (+2)	17	18 (+1)	14	17 (+3)	16	18 (+2)
<b>Mechanics</b> (5pts.)	2	2 (+0)	2	2 (+0)	3	3 (+0)	3	4 (+1)
<b>Overall</b>	73	83 (+10)	77	84 (+7)	63	80 (+17)	72	87 (+15)

**Table 3. The holistic rating scores in the first draft and the revision on each type of feedback.**

In terms of the overall scores, all participants improved their writing. “Comment on content” contributed to the largest increase in the holistic rating (+17), followed by “explicit correction” (+15 points) and the combination (+10). Coding was to the least effective feedback (+7).

Taking a closer look on each category, “comment on content” was the most effective feedback for the improvement of content (+6), while other feedback had a slightly positive or negative effect (+2 from combination, -1 from coding, and no effect from “explicit correction”). “Explicit correction” led to the largest improvement on grammar (+8), while other feedback was also found effective (+3 from combination, +5 from coding, and +6 from comment). These two results were expected as these are the focus of the feedback—comment on content focuses on the content of the text, and explicit correction provides the correct forms on the erroneous forms. These types of feedback indeed enhance what they purport to enhance.

For the second research question, each participant was interviewed to obtain their beliefs about, or preferences for, types of feedback, and how they usually tackle the subsequent revision. Their opinions are given in Appendix B (both direct quotes and translations from Japanese).

In general, teacher feedback—corrective or noncorrective—is perceived as helpful by all participants. There were individual differences in terms of his or her preferences and the focus of their concern. For example, Participant A, who received the combination, thinks all feedback is beneficial except for “explicit correction.” “Explicit correction,” according to Participant A, does not encourage learners to think what is wrong with the erroneous item. Participant C, who received comment on content, pointed out that “explicit correction” is beneficial for the beginning-level



learners, while more advanced learners should be able to think and figure out what is wrong with a sentence, at least for some of the errors. Participant D, who received “explicit correction,” is fond of “explicit correction” the most, while appreciating other types of feedback, as well.

In addition, all participants usually use other sources such as the dictionary or the textbook to help their revision. Whereas one participant indicated that coding could be confusing because learners sometimes forget what they mean, others think that coding is very straightforward and clear, as long as the list of codes is provided.

### **Discussion**

In sum, the results show the positive effect of comment on content for improving the content, and of “explicit correction” for grammar. In addition, comments on content contributed to an increase in the holistic score the most. The results also show that the combination of coding and comment on content encourages learners to produce more texts. Coding, on the other hand, was found to be the least effective feedback; it even negatively affected the amount of production. These findings were similar to the previous findings.<sup>23</sup> However, there were two cases that seem unique in the present study: (a) there was no notable difference between comment on content and “explicit correction” in the increase of T-units and characters, and (b) there was an improvement on the organization from “explicit correction,” although the improvement was subtle.

### **The Effectiveness of Different Types of Feedback: Two Cases**

In the first case, it was surprising because the two types of feedback in question—“comment on content” and “explicit correction”—are often considered as opposite types of feedback, and yet, the results show a similar effect on the amount of text in the participants’ revisions. The interview with each participant revealed that comment on content did not lead to longer text because the participant felt such feedback was not relevant to anything other than the topic of the writing, while the “explicit correction” seemed to encourage the writer to fix only what had been

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<sup>23</sup> Chandler, “The Efficacy of Various Kinds of Error Feedback”; and Ferris and Roberts, “Error Feedback in L2 Writing Classes: How Explicit Does It Need To Be?”

corrected. In the interview session, Participant C, specifically stated as follows:

Some of the comments on content didn't really fit what I wanted, so I don't really add anything even if the teacher commented on that. Like some of the comment says "tell me more about your friend," but this letter is about my worst trip. My friend is not the main concern, so I just skipped the comment here. (Participant C)

Participant C, according to the follow-up interview, did not add any elaboration because she considered providing detailed information about, her friend, for example, not relevant to the topic of the letter. In other words, she thought that providing detailed information about what actually happened during her worst trip was important, while giving background information about her friend or the town in which the event took place seemed irrelevant. Thus, her subsequent revision was not notably longer than the first draft.

On the other hand, Participant D, who received "explicit correction," did not mention the reason why he did not produce a significantly longer text in his revision. However, comparing his first draft and the revision, the elaboration of new information was absent. That is, Participant D simply substituted the original errors with the correct forms without producing longer text.

Therefore, comment on content may encourage learners to produce longer text when the writer perceives it relevant enough to elaborate new information, while "explicit correction" may not have a sufficient effect to encourage learners to further elaborate. Rather, a writer may focus only on what is grammatically correct. This finding is similar to that in Fazio's 2001 study, where there was no significant difference between "explicit correction" and "comment on content." She argues that part of the reason is the nature of the task. In her study, the journal entry was highly content-oriented which might have overshadowed the focus of feedback. It may be the case in this study that Participant C paid attention exclusively to what she thought was the topic of the letter, and thus the other features were overshadowed.

The second case concerns the reason why "explicit correction" led to an improvement in organization, even though it is by no means the focus of this particular feedback. This is due to the fact that Participant D did not

finish his writing in the first draft within the time constraint, and hence, the end of the letter was incomplete. Instead, he abruptly wrapped up the letter by simply putting a farewell remark *sayōnara* “Goodbye” at the end of his writing. This is one of the reasons that participant D received the lowest score on the organization in his first draft (14 points). In his revision with no time constraint, although he finished his writing, he did not add any further elaboration. Rather, he finished the last sentence and made the final remark little longer from *sayōnara* to *sayonara; ogenkide; mata au no o tanoshimi ni shite imasu*. “Good-bye. Take care. I am looking forward to seeing you again.”

### **Learners' Perception: Three Cases**

Although all participants generally consider teacher feedback helpful, more detailed examination leads to three interesting cases: the grammar-oriented mind, what should be commented on content, and feedback-driven revision.

The first issue refers to the participants' mental orientation to grammar, rather than on content. Three participants mentioned that grammar was their main concern, and therefore, the participants tended to think that they needed feedback on grammar, such as coding and “explicit correction.”

“I usually start with the grammar correction because it is easier to fix.” (Participant A)

“I definitely think grammar feedback is more important than comment on content, because grammar is my main concern.” (Participant B)

“I mostly think about grammar first.” (Participant C)

One participant, on the other hand, specifically indicated that the content is more important than grammar at the initial stage of the writing.

“Content is the first thing I look at. Because if I can't express myself correctly, it doesn't matter what grammar I have in there (the text).” (Participant D)

Although this might be a highly individual preference, grammar tended to be the main focus, at least for the majority of the participants in this study. This is supported by Hedgcock and Lefkowitz that FL learners, compared to ESL learners, displayed distinctly form-focused attention, rather than content. Given all foreign languages in their study were English cognates (German, French, and Spanish) and still such grammar-oriented tendency was observed, it was not surprising that a similar, or perhaps even stronger, trend was observed in a Japanese language learning setting.<sup>24</sup>

Second, although comment on content may be ignored depending on what is commented on, such feedback may at least encourage learners to elaborate more information in their subsequent revisions. Looking at the Participant C's comment again:

Some of the comments on content didn't really fit what I wanted, so I don't really add anything even if the teacher commented on that. Like some of the comment says, 'tell me more about your friend,' but this letter is about my worst trip. My friend is not the main concern here, so I just skipped the comment here.

The comment "tell me more about your friend" was given due to the fact that the "friend" in the text appeared abruptly without any background information. However, Participant C decided to discard this feedback because the main focus is "the worst trip," not detailed information about a friend. It might have been the case that she thought giving detailed information about her friend was too personal for the task. Either way, comment on content was considered unnecessary.

However, teachers should comment on content, rather than not commenting on anything at all. As shown above, comment on content indeed had a positive effect on the amount of T-units and characters, and also the overall improvement, measured by the holistic rating. Interestingly,

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<sup>24</sup> John Hedgcock and Natalie Lefkowitz, "Feedback on Feedback: Assessing Learner Receptivity to Teacher Response in L2 Composing," *Journal and Second Language Writing* 3/2 (1994): 141–163; and John Hedgcock and Natalie Lefkowitz, "Input on Input: Two Analyses of Student Response to Expert Feedback in L2 Writing," *The Modern Language Journal* 80/3 (1996): 287–308.

Participants B and D, who did not receive comment on content, said that such feedback is helpful.

“Comment on content would be helpful for me to find what’s missing in my writing.” (Participant B)

“Comment on content can be helpful.” (Participant D)

Although whether or not these two participants benefit from comment on content is inconclusive in this study, all participants indicated that teacher comments are helpful to improve their writing. Despite the ambiguity of comment on content has been reported in the previous studies,<sup>25</sup> in this case, the issue on comment on content was the relevance to the topic of the task. There seemed to be a gap between what a writer intended to focus on and what a feedback provider wanted to know as an audience (or as a language instructor). As the information to be emphasized highly depends on the type of writing, further investigation with various writing tasks is needed to shed light on how comment on content impacts writers in different writing contexts.

The third point is that the learners tended to focus exclusively on the focus of the feedback, and other features tended to be either ignored or not noticed. This tendency is also supported from the interview sessions; three participants, explicitly or implicitly, indicated that they usually attended mainly to the focus of feedback while uncommented issues were not considered.

“I added more information because the feedback said I needed to. I absolutely wouldn’t add any further elaboration if there is no feedback as to the content.” (Participant A)

“I basically go through the correction and correct all the grammar errors. I usually just follow the corrections that are made.” (Participant B)

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<sup>25</sup> Dana. R. Ferris, “Student Reactions to Teacher Response in Multiple-Draft Composition Classrooms,” *TESOL Quarterly* 29/1 (1995): 33–53; and Zamel, “Responding to Student Writing.”

“I didn’t add anything because I thought nothing was missing, based on the feedback.” (Participant B)

“I generally don’t think about content too much, as long as it makes sense to me. If it doesn’t make any sense, teachers would write something anyway.” (Participant C)

Indeed, Participant D, who received explicit correction, did not add or change anything other than the focus of correction. This might be attributed to the characteristic of the target language. Even for the participants who are in the third-year level, their literacy skills were much less proficient than their L1 literacy skills. Consequently, the learner’s internal literacy mechanism is insufficient to judge the correctness and appropriateness of their texts. Additional examination of the different proficiency levels should provide a better picture, especially the consistency of this tendency in a JFL setting.

### **Conclusion**

This study is meaningful for attempting to reveal the effectiveness of and the learners’ perceptions about different types of written feedback in a JFL context, which has not yet been investigated extensively. The results show that (a) comment on content had a positive effect on the improvement on content, (b) explicit correction was effective on grammar improvement, (c) comment on content impacted on the holistic score, (d) the combination of coding and comment on content invited more text, and (e) coding was the least effective feedback overall.

In addition, some of the peculiar cases observed in this study were discussed. First, there was no significant difference between comment on content and explicit correction on the amount of text in the subsequent revision. The interview revealed that four out of six “tell-me-more” type of comments were ignored by Participant C, who considered them irrelevant to the topic of the letter. Second, slight improvement on organization was observed from explicit correction only because Participant D had not finished the first draft, given the time constraint. Third, it was found that the learners are grammar-oriented, rather than content-oriented. Fourth, relating to the second issue, what should be commented on depends on the individual, the type of task, or how the work is commented on (“tell-me-more,” pointing out what should be elaborated, etc.). Fifth, most of the changes or corrections the participants made were feedback-driven. If an

error or content issue is not commented on, it tends to be either ignored or unnoticed.

Despite the results, this study, just like any other study, is not limitation-free. The most notable limitation is the small sample size—only four participants were involved. Thus, the findings are a highly individual representation. For example, as shown above, Participant A was much older and mature than the others, showing willingness to participate in this study the most. This might affect the length and the quality of the text. In addition, each participant's class schedule varied tremendously. For example, Participant C was enrolled in five courses whereas participant A was enrolled only in two courses. Given that it was completely voluntary participation, and the task was given at the end of the semester, the time spent for the revision might have been affected by the schoolwork.

Second, in the same vein, the results cannot be considered a representation of the JFL learners. Examining more subjects with more proficiency levels and the subsequent quantitative analyses to see if the findings are statistically significant should be implemented. Last but not least, the present study only analyzed the data in terms of the number of T-units and characters, and the holistic scores of the texts. However, the quality or the improvement of the texts should also be measured by other factors, such as the complexity of the sentences or vocabulary/kanji to paint a better picture with respect to the impact of corrective feedback on the learners' writings.

As a final note, I hope that this investigation sheds light on the effectiveness of written feedback, specifically in a JFL contest, and triggers other researchers or classroom teachers to consider how feedback should be provided in order to enhance learners' writing skills.

**Appendix A. Essay Rating Scale: Foreign Language  
Composition Profile (Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1992)**

	Score	Criteria
Content	27-30	<i>Excellent to very good</i> : knowledgeable; substantive, thorough development of thesis; relevant to topic assigned.
	22-26	<i>Good to average</i> : some knowledge of subject; adequate range; limited thematic development; mostly relevant to topic, but lacks detail.
	17-21	<i>Fair to poor</i> : limited knowledge of subject; minimal substance; poor thematic development.
	13-16	<i>Very poor</i> : shows little or no knowledge of subject; inadequate quantity; not relevant, or not enough to rate.
Organization	18-20	<i>Excellent to very good</i> : fluent expression; clear statement of ideas; solid support; clear organization; logical and cohesive sequencing.
	14-17	<i>Good to average</i> : adequate fluency; main ideas clear but loosely organized; supporting material limited; sequencing logical but incomplete.
	10-13	<i>Fair to poor</i> : low fluency; ideas not well connected; logical sequencing and development lacking.
	7-9	<i>Very poor</i> : ideas not communicated; organization lacking, or not enough to rate.
Grammar	22-25	<i>Excellent to very good</i> : accurate use of relatively complex structures; few errors in agreement, number, tense, word order, articles, pronouns, prepositions.
	18-21	<i>Good to average</i> : simple constructions used effectively; some problems in use of complex constructions; errors in agreement, number, tense, word order, articles, pronouns, prepositions.
	11-17	<i>Fair to poor</i> : significant defects in use of complex constructions; frequent errors in



		agreement, number, tense, negation, word order, articles, pronouns, prepositions; fragments and deletions; lack of accuracy interferes with meaning.
	5-10	<i>Very poor</i> : no mastery of simple sentence construction; text dominated by errors; does not communicate, or not enough to rate.
Vocabulary	18-20	<i>Excellent to very good</i> : complex range; accurate word/idiom choice; mastery of word forms; appropriate register.
	14-17	<i>Good to average</i> : adequate range; errors of word/idiom choice; effective transmission of meaning.
	10-13	<i>Fair to poor</i> : limited range; frequent word/idiom errors; inappropriate choice, usage; meaning not effectively communicated.
	7-9	<i>Very poor</i> : translation-based errors; little knowledge of target language vocabulary, or not enough to rate.
Mechanics	5	<i>Excellent to very good</i> : masters conventions of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraph indentation, etc.
	4	<i>Good to average</i> : occasional errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraph indentation, etc., which do not interfere with meaning.
	3	<i>Fair to poor</i> : frequent spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing errors; meaning disrupted by formal problems.
	2	<i>Very poor</i> : no mastery of conventions due to frequency of mechanical errors, or not enough to rate.
Total		___/100

Note: This scale was adapted from *Composición, Proceso y Síntesis* by Guadalupe Valdes and Trista Dvorak, 1989, New York: McGraw-Hill. Copyright 1989 by McGraw-Hill, Inc. (Original version in Jacobs, Zinkgraf, Wormuth, and Hughey, 1981.)

## **Appendix B. Opinions obtained from the interview session**

### **Subject A: Combination**

- I usually start with the grammar correction because it is easier to fix. Then, sometimes I think about thematic issues. Easy ones to more difficult ones.
- I use a dictionary if I have to so I can look up Chinese characters, vocabulary and stuff.
- I added more information because the feedback said I needed to. I absolutely wouldn't add any further elaboration if there is no feedback as to the content.
- I think I wouldn't be able to fix many of my grammar errors if I only receive comments on content.
- Coding is absolutely helpful because it is specific. But sometimes I forget the coding system itself.
- Explicit correction wouldn't help me much. I just copy whatever it is, without thinking about it. Also, often times, explicit correction slightly changes the meaning.
- Combination is fine.

### **Subject B: Coding only**

- I basically go through the correction and correct all the grammar errors. I usually just follow the corrections that are made.
- I usually use a dictionary. Sometimes I pull out a textbook from previous courses.
- I didn't really add any information. I pretty much changed the form and words.
- Comment on content would be helpful for me to find what's missing in my writing. I didn't add anything because I thought nothing was missing, based on the feedback.
- I definitely think grammar feedback is more important than comment on content, because grammar is my main concern.
- Coding is pretty clear as long as I have the chart that explains which code means what.

**Subject C: Comment on content only**

- I generally read through everything teachers put, and start fixing small errors, like particles, spelling, something like that.
- I mostly think about grammar first.
- I generally don't think about content too much, as long as it makes sense to me. If it doesn't make any sense, teachers would write something anyway.
- I personally think coding is a little more helpful, because mostly I care about my grammar more than content.
- Explicit correction would be fine for the beginning level. But as you get more proficient, you should be able to think and figure about what's wrong, at least for some of the errors.
- Since this is a letter, content might be more important than grammar, so the kind of feedback we need depends on what we are writing.
- I mostly changed what the teacher commented on. I didn't really add much information.
- Some of the comments on content didn't really fit what I wanted, so I don't really add anything even if the teacher commented on that. Like some of the comment says "tell me more about your friend," but this letter is about my worst trip. My friend is not the main concern here, so I just skipped the comment here.
- Too much correction discourages me, so it would be nice to have some positive remark once in a while.

**Subject D: Explicit correction**

- Generally, I look at all the feedback for grammatical errors.
- I usually add more sentences, vocabulary items, and grammar features to make more sense.
- I generally use both dictionary and textbook.
- I generally find this kind of feedback (explicit correction) more helpful. Since I am not a native speaker, sometimes I don't really know what the right form is, so, often times, it is easier if you give me what it is supposed to be.
- Coding is also helpful, but sometimes it's confusing because I forget what some of the coding mean.

- Comment on content can be helpful. But if I don't know what I'm doing wrong (grammatically), there is no way I can fix that.
- Content is the first thing I look at, because if I can't express myself correctly, it doesn't matter what grammar I have in there. It doesn't make any sense.

## **Featured Essays**



# THE RISE IN POPULARITY OF JAPANESE CULTURE WITH AMERICAN YOUTH: CAUSES OF THE “COOL JAPAN” PHENOMENON

Jennifer Ann Garcia  
Florida International University

## Introduction

Anime, manga, and video games from Japan have blazed a trail in the American youth entertainment market and have undergone an evolution from exoticized orientalism to complete integration in the everyday lives of substantial segments of the global community.<sup>1</sup> This essay aims to answer the question, what have been the causes of the “cool Japan” phenomenon among the youth, specifically in the United States? Studies so far have included the history of anime and manga, the effects of Japan’s soft power, and what this cultural phenomenon has done for Japan economically.<sup>2</sup> My study contributes to an emerging area of research on this phenomenon that looks at its causes, effects, and evolution.<sup>3</sup>

The causes that propelled the three biggest mediums of Japanese pop culture – anime, manga, and video games – can be seen as related to the

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<sup>1</sup> Jim Frederick, “What’s Right about Japan,” Time Magazine Online, August 2003 (accessed December 20, 2010, [http://www.time.com/time/asia/2003/cool\\_japan/story.html](http://www.time.com/time/asia/2003/cool_japan/story.html)).

<sup>2</sup> As made apparent in the article by Michal Daliot-Bul, “Japan Brand Strategy: The Taming of ‘Cool Japan’ and the Challenges of Cultural Planning in a Postmodern Age,” *Social Science Japan Journal* 12 (2009), p. 2: “Euphoric intellectual discourses on the global success of Japanese popular culture have prompted Japanese scholars to connect popular culture with economic, political and diplomatic power.” This means Japan has already realized the potential of this cultural market and intends to continue to capitalize on this Intellectual Property.

<sup>3</sup> See Anne Allison, *Millennial Monsters: Japanese Toys and the Global Imagination* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Hiroki Azuma, *Otaku: Japan’s Database Animals*, trans. Jonathan E. Abel and Shion Kono (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009); and Susan J. Napier, *From Impressionism to Anime: Japan as Fantasy and Fan Cult in the Mind of the West* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

media, industries, and shifts in postmodern consumption practices. Along with these causes are elements that I observed as a participant in this movement that exemplify the overall explosion in popularity and worldwide attention that this phenomenon has achieved: advancements in technology, music, fashion, *otaku* culture and their relation to Japanese pop culture in the United States. These factors were selected because they exist independently from this phenomenon but altogether helped generate the adoration that keeps this movement going. I will most commonly refer to anime, but this usually encompasses the accompanying manga and video games of the same titles.

### **Methodology**

The methodology used in doing this research will draw from personal observations and experiences I have among youth influenced by Japanese pop culture in the United States. This method is thus essentially a literature review with secondary sources that are used as examples. Methodologically, my personal experiences help me understand and interpret the secondary sources. I have collected and analyzed a combination of articles from scholarly journals, newsletters, magazines and online sources as well as a variety of recently published books on the topic as well as media sources from Japan and the United States. By applying all these resources, I have a well-rounded analysis and basis upon which to explore the elements in my topic in terms of media appeal, institutional factors, and postmodern consumption practices and the effect thereof.

### **Sources**

Scholarly and academic sources on the “Cool Japan” phenomena are becoming more available as more interest and data accumulate. The works of Napier, Azuma, and Allison<sup>4</sup> were akin to re-watching scenes of my childhood through the eyes of someone else. Napier’s immersion of herself into the “fan world” at conventions was an accurate portrayal and interesting at times because of the metaphors she would use to describe what she was seeing, which I never thought of at the time when I was in the midst of “con-goers.” She says, “The atmosphere at a typical anime convention, therefore, is fundamentally different from a professional

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<sup>4</sup> Allison, *Millennial Monsters*; Azuma, *Otaku: Japan’s Database Animals*; and Napier, *From Impressionism to Anime*.



conference where participants are always to some degree or another aware that their participation is related to improving their career possibilities.”<sup>5</sup>

Azuma’s use of terms such as “database,” “simulacra,” “narratives,”<sup>6</sup> and the like, as well as his reworking of ideas gives an interesting analysis of “*otakudom*” that explains the origins, the inner-workings, and the appeal anime has over fans. I was able to use this analysis to reflect on my own life as an *otaku* and measure up the similarities, which were many, and better understand other types of *otaku* that he describes. In simplified definitions, “database” is the network of one specific anime title or genre and all of its merchandise that is ready for consumption. Database consumption of “simulacra,” as compared to the originals, is the desire of *otaku* to collect or create data that coincides within the original storyline’s settings while not minding whether they accumulate this sort of data from the author’s original source or derivative works. Thus, “database animals” are these *otaku* who live to consume as much of the database as possible, whatever their network<sup>7</sup> (from *moe* girls<sup>8</sup> to *Gundam* model kits). The “narratives,” whether grand (having worldviews behind them) or small (a specific title or work), give broader meaning to anime stories.<sup>9</sup> Therefore the database consumption as it is known today is a result of the loss of the grand narrative and even of fabrications of the grand narrative.<sup>10</sup> The breakdown of the narratives means there now lacks a broader meaning for the fans of anime, but still a database to consume. For example, Hello Kitty was created as a company mascot first and then her popularity brought about the animated series. In this example, the only important aspect is the database, which is provided to consume with a meaningless story for background information (meaningless in the grand narrative sense). In Azuma’s words:

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<sup>5</sup> Napier, *From Impressionism to Anime*, p. 153.

<sup>6</sup> Azuma, *Otaku: Japan’s Database Animals*, p. 96.

<sup>7</sup> A lengthy description of the term “animals” was given in Azuma’s text, but it in contrast to “humans,” “animal” means those who are in harmony with their environment, as opposed to “humans” who constantly force nature to conform to their own needs.

<sup>8</sup> These are stereotypically “cute” anime girls, who possess certain characteristics such as cat ears and maid costumes.

<sup>9</sup> Azuma, *Otaku*, p. 54.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

Amid this change, the Japanese *otaku* lost the grand narrative in the 1970s, learned to fabricate the lost grand narrative in the 1980s (narrative consumption), and in the 1990s, abandoned the necessity for even such fabrication and learned simply to desire the database (database consumption).<sup>11</sup>

Even at my most obsessed with Japanese culture, I never collected toys or played the *Pokémon* games. This being said, Anne Allison's *Millennial Monsters* was an informative read that gave reasons for the American youth's infatuation:

Japanese anime have three qualities that make them in particular appealing: one an attractive way for kids to deal with the rapidly changing world, where nothing is certain, and the old guarantees of the previous generations no longer exist in this globalized world; two, the shows and figures constantly change, which keeps giving new value to the product; and three, the goods have a sense of techno-animalism—in essence, the goods, the Japanese franchises become legit friends for the consumer, who is increasingly becoming more alone even as the world grows smaller.<sup>12</sup>

Also, note her views on “techno-animism,” a quality that gives emotional value to inanimate objects by imbuing them with a soul.

#### **Journalistic/Pop Culture Sources**

Less academic and more investigative, the journalistic and pop culture sources used have been both entertaining and edifying in bringing this topic into clearer focus. Other sources turned up unexpectedly in places such as fashion magazines. This seems that it would be the farthest removed from the Japanese pop culture world, but reflecting upon their presence there struck me as evidence of the inroads that have taken place which will soon be commented upon again. In *Vanity Fair* and *Marie Claire*

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Allison, *Millennial Monsters*, p. xv–xviii.

magazines, respectively, two articles expose the reader to the influence and abundance of Japanese pop culture in their daily lives. Haworth's article in *Marie Claire* introduces readers to the first foreign geisha in Japan and tells her struggles when entering this exclusive world as well as her continued struggle in possessing dual identities as one of the most traditional and the most foreign symbols in Japan. In reading this article, one learns about the fusion of traditional culture in modern day Japanese society, something that is a norm in the Japanese animation world.<sup>13</sup>

### Causes with Key Examples: Media Influence

Media influence is one of the main causes that made even the most Japanese pop culture novice aware that *Pokémon*, owned by Nintendo, came from Japan. A glaring example is that the franchise made the cover of *Time* magazine.<sup>14</sup> The introduction of *Sailor Moon* onto U.S. airways in 1995 by DiC Entertainment was the beginning of the notoriety of *shōjo* (girl-targeted) anime that eventually proved to be a huge success. Despite a rocky start, fans would petition to keep the show on the air and managed to get all but the exceedingly controversial fifth season to be licensed and broadcast in the States.<sup>15</sup> In 1997, manga distributor Tokyopop exported the series to the U.S. and in 2001 the graphic novel sold at least a million copies in North America.<sup>16</sup> Napier agrees that although *Sailor Moon* was not as popular with the majority as hoped, it certainly caught the attention of enough girls to get the *shōjo* market off the ground and paved the way for the girl-targeted anime market.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Abigail Haworth, "Meet Japan's First Western Geisha," *Marie Claire Magazine*, December 2009, pp. 104–108.

<sup>14</sup> Douglas McGray, "Japan's Gross National Cool," *Foreign Policy* 130 (2002), p. 46.

<sup>15</sup> This season was controversial due to the fact that newly introduced characters would transform from men into women when becoming their super heroine selves. Also, the finale would have been difficult to edit considering the main character fights while nude for the majority of the last episode, a subject that is more taboo in America compared with Japan, especially in children's programming.

<sup>16</sup> Kelts, *Japanamerica*, p. 165.

<sup>17</sup> Napier, *From Impressionism to Anime*, p. 139.

Cartoon Network's *Toonami* block would highly advertise anime during its run on the air. It would frequently play the most variety of anime on television at the time, peaking in 2001.<sup>18</sup> Whether marathons, movies, or late-night exclusives, *Toonami* introduced many fans to anime series such as *Dragonball Z*, *Trigun*, *Cowboy Bebop*, *Tenchi Muyo*, *FuriKuri* (also known as *FLCL*), and others. This introduction hinted at the scope of anime available, which gives anime such a wide breadth in its fan base atypical of other popular fan communities already in existence. Although *Toonami* has gone off the air, other network for kids such as *Nicktoons* have started airing some anime titles, the re-mastered *Dragonball* series called *Dragonball Kai*, for example.

A media phenomenon in its own right, the expansion of the Internet was crucial in making this grassroots movement into the full-fledged phenomenon that it is now. Napier goes as far as to say that without the growth of the Internet, anime may have remained nothing more than a niche in America's animation market.<sup>19</sup> The gradual growth of the Internet garnered an appreciation for what was available and increased the demand for more. I remember these times very vividly, from collecting JPEGs of my favorite anime's to downloading AMVs (Anime Music Video) on the painfully slow 56k dial-up internet connection, the initial scarcity fueled the phenomenon at its onset. For this reason, conventions were highly anticipated. At conventions, merchandise imported from Japan that was not sold anywhere else was bountifully found, such as limited edition action figures, cosplay accessories, and *dōjinshi*.<sup>20</sup> Developments on the Internet, such as the debut of the online marketplace eBay in 1995, cranked up the exposure that gave fans more access to the database they wished to consume. This perfect timing between the progression of technology and availability of merchandise tantalized the American *otaku*; like a truism parents tell their kids, one appreciates something the more one had to wait to acquire it. Napier states:

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<sup>18</sup> Kelts, *Japanamerica*, p. 190.

<sup>19</sup> Napier, *From Impressionism to Anime*, p. 136.

<sup>20</sup> *Dōjinshi* (同人誌) are fan-made books or novels that are usually high-quality and fully colored by independent artists without permission from the artist. Tolerance of this copyright infringement is accepted because of the interest that is generated in the original work as a result.

There is no question that anime's popularity was helped by fortuitous timing- both in terms of the VCR and then the DVD revolution, and perhaps even more so by the rise of the Internet. The improvements in telecommunications and the ability to broadcast over many channels [media outlets] also undoubtedly helped to feed the appetite for all kinds of entertainment. The stage was set for a revolution in transcultural flows around the globe.<sup>21</sup>

As time went on, anime was made available everywhere. Barnes and Noble and Borders have an entire section devoted to manga. Best Buy has an extensive collection of DVD box sets, and Toys R Us has plenty of action figures and trading cards from the most popular series. The media's influence (especially the widespread use of the Internet) helped the *otaku* community go from a fringe position in society to a movement on a global scale. Many Japanese people are confused by the attention that anime has received abroad. Some, as Takeuchi states below, realize the significance of this attention and others, like in the next section, make it their own:

Today, Japan is a dynamic force in the world of comics, and many manga are now read overseas. Japanese animated films also continue to make waves overseas. The anime sub-culture took off in Japan in the mid-1960s, drawing energy from the growing popularity of manga stories. Many of those stories were given new life as anime, with some being exported abroad. This actually led to manga gaining a wider audience outside of Japan. Therefore, manga and anime have played off each other's strengths, developing into a media phenomenon that will surely continue to evolve.<sup>22</sup>

#### **Causes with Key Examples: Industry Intervention**

Following the section on the different uses of media by fans, industries that have capitalized on the Japanese pop culture phenomenon

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<sup>21</sup> Napier, *From Impressionism to Anime*, pp. 136–137.

<sup>22</sup> Osamu Takeuchi, "Manga Evolution," *Nippon* [にっぽん] 4 (2010), p. 11.

have done so based on the demand of fans and incorporation of this trend into their own venue. Industries can tell what is in demand by monitoring the number of raw<sup>23</sup> anime episodes and scanlations<sup>24</sup> downloaded from Japan per week. In speaking of internet and *otaku* activities, Azuma says, “In such an environment, the producers, like it or not, must have been conscious of their position relative to the whole of otaku culture.”<sup>25</sup> However, at some point, Japanese pop culture’s influence seeped so deep into American conscious that it was being accepted as our own culture produced by our own population.

In the movie industry, big Hollywood films including *The Matrix* and *Kill Bill*, for example, have used the Japanese “Coolness” factor in both movies by having an animated sequence and a spin-off that are done in the purely anime style.<sup>26</sup> Figures 1 and 2 below are examples of the animation that are influenced by Japanese anime style in *The Matrix* and *Kill Bill*.



Figure 1. *The Matrix* (left)

Figure 2. *Kill Bill* (right)

In the broadcast television industry, shows such as *Teen Titans*, *Powerpuff Girls*, and *Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi* are more examples of American-made media that have Japanese pop culture influence. The animation industry in the U.S. made these shows with anime’s “coolness” in mind, driving the popularity of both industries up at the same time. *The Powerpuff Girls* often

<sup>23</sup> The word “raw” here means the unedited and untranslated version of the show.

<sup>24</sup> “Scanlation” is a term that refers to a manga page that has been scanned, translated, and made available for upload on the internet. Whole volumes and series can be found like this on various internet sites.

<sup>25</sup> Azuma, *Otaku*, pp. 46–47.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

features the girls fighting giant *Godzilla*-like monsters in humorous fashion. *Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi*, inspired by the real Japanese pop group Puffy AmiYumi, is very successful in Japan and now also enjoys success in the West since the airing of the animated series. The American-made DC comics animated series *Teen Titans*, are also drawn and emote in an anime style. William Tsutsui's book, *Japanese Popular Culture and Globalization*, explores how Japanese pop culture has become globalized. Napier and Tsutsui are consistent on the point that these shows demonstrate on the removing of "Japaneseness." He says, "The remaking of Japanese pop products may be the ultimate form of localization, a wholesale appropriation of Japanese styles, stories, and innovations that removes any apparent 'Japaneseness' from a pop culture artifact."<sup>27</sup>

In the music industry, pop music artist Gwen Stefani is followed around by "Harajuku girls" dressed in Tokyo street fashion (Figure 4) and features them in her music videos as a kind of posse she hangs out and identifies with. The rock band Linkin Park won the MTV Viewer's Choice Award for their video "Breaking the Habit," which was recorded in Japan and produced by a Japanese animator.<sup>28</sup> The band has also used the Japanese flute, the *shakuhachi*, in their music and has a song that incorporates Japanese lyrics.<sup>29</sup> In Figure 3, Linkin Park's popular anime-style video was made into manga format and distributed by Tokyopop, the same distributors as *Sailor Moon*, furthermore blurring the lines of what is actual Japanese imported pop culture and what is Japanese pop culture influence, an example of the inroads this phenomenon has had on American culture. This also reverberates with Azuma's description of database consumption amongst database animals, the *otaku*.<sup>30</sup> This manga is American made but looks similar to anime since the video was produced by Japanese animators. It is not a simulacra but it is mimicry of something else. To fans of anime, does it matter? No, it just makes Linkin Park appealing now as a "cool" band. To fans of the band does it matter? No, because

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<sup>27</sup> William M. Tsutsui, *Japanese Popular Culture and Globalization* (Michigan: Association for Asian Studies, 2010), p. 56.

<sup>28</sup> Napier, *From Impressionism to Anime*, p. 127.

<sup>29</sup> Mike Shinoda, "Jornado del Muerto," *A Thousand Suns* (Linkin Park, 2011).

<sup>30</sup> Azuma, *Otaku*, p. 53.

anything the band makes is automatically “cool” thus making anime “cool” and thus further integrating it into the American youth psyche.



**Figure 3. Linkin Park’s “Breaking the Habit” Music Video Poster (left)**  
**Figure 4. Gwen Stefani and the Harajuku Girls (right)**

In the fashion industry, artists like Gwen Stefani and hip-hop/rap music artist Kanye West not only sing about their appreciation for Japanese pop culture, but they also endorse and spread it. Kanye West is featured in the Bape Spring 2010 collection, a street wear fashion line by well-known Japanese designer, Nigo. Gwen Stefani is the designer of the Harajuku Lovers line with its slogan being, “Your look is so distinctive like DNA, like nothing I have ever seen in the USA—a ping-pong match between Eastern and Western—did you see your inspiration in my latest collection?”<sup>31</sup> Similarly, Tokidoki and Kid Robot are designer labels whose creator designs not only clothes but also baggage, toys, and other commodities that have Japanese stylistic influence and could be confused for Japanese pop culture, but is actually just based off it. The Tokidoki designer imbues such a positive image of Japan to the world and expresses it on the merchandise tags:

Tokidoki means “sometimes” in Japanese. I chose a Japanese word because I love Japan. I love everything from the ultra modern happy face to Shibuya to the serious magic silence of Kyoto. I chose “sometimes” because everyone waits for moments that change one’s

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<sup>31</sup> This slogan is featured on the accompanying tags of Harajuku Lovers products.



destiny. By simple chance or meeting a new person, Tokidoki is the hope, the hidden energy everyone has inside that gives us the strength to face a new day and dream something positive, that something magical will happen to us. Ciao, my name is Simone Legno.<sup>32</sup>



Figure 5. “Tokidoki” fashion line advertisement (left)

Figure 6. “Kid Robot” advertisement (right)

In this way, the day-to-day life of American youth, who are fans of music, movies, and fashion are consistently exposed to elements of Japanese pop culture that they grow accustomed to and affectionate for. This consistent exposure to Japanese pop culture is what I argue to be one of the rationales as to why the phenomenon has made inroads and assimilated. This exposure also helps the development of the post modern consumption practices in the next section.

#### Causes with Key Examples: Postmodern Consumption Practices

Postmodern consumption practices work highly in favor of this phenomenon and have been a major component of what keeps the momentum going forward within Japan and America (both being in the top ten of the most leisure spending economies).<sup>33</sup> Understanding Azuma’s previously discussed terms, including “grand narrative” (background worldview), “small narrative” (title or work), “database” (related materials

<sup>32</sup> This quote is featured on the accompanying tags of Tokidoki products.

<sup>33</sup> Statistic courtesy of NationMaster website (accessed March 1, 2011, [http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/hea\\_spe\\_per\\_per-health-spending-per-person](http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/hea_spe_per_per-health-spending-per-person)).

to the narratives), “database animals” (the *otaku*), and “simulacra” (materials that are created or unrelated to the narrative) are necessary to grasp in terms of the process and world these consumers live in.

Exploring the practice behind postmodern consumption, Kawamura’s article, “Japanese Teens as Producers of Street Fashion,” states that:

Fashion expressed the prevailing ideology of society, and these teens see the assertion of individual identity as more important and meaningful than that of group identity, which used to be the key concept in Japanese culture. Such attitudes are reflected in their norm-breaking and outrageous, yet commercially successful, attention-grabbing styles.<sup>34</sup>

The United States has been seen as a highly individualistic nation for a long time now. Thus, this postmodern trend in Japan of Japanese youth developing their brand of individuality is part of what makes the pop culture appealing to American youth. It is relatable and inspirational. “Tokyo fashion is about young people....It’s the young people strolling in the streets who decide what appeals to them, and this trend then spreads among their like-minded peers.”<sup>35</sup> It has been said over and over again that Japanese teenage girls are running Tokyo fashion: Kawamura thoroughly examines the different sub-cultures and sub-genres that exist and are only distinguishable to these girls.<sup>36</sup> She explains that the typical part-time job of a salesgirl becomes a highly coveted prize in Tokyo’s Shibuya district, as these girls become arbiters of fashion to their peers.<sup>37</sup>

This culture of fashion is also made apparent in anime as characters will be wearing gothic Lolita dresses, maid outfits, school

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<sup>34</sup> Yuniya Kawamura, “Japanese Teens as Producers of Street Fashion,” *Current Sociology* 54 (2006), p. 787.

<sup>35</sup> “Fashion,” Creative Japan, Embassy of Japan in the UK and the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007 (accessed February 10, 2011, <http://www.uk.emb-japan.go.jp/en/creativejapan/fashion/index.html>).

<sup>36</sup> Kawamura, “Japanese Teens as Producers of Street Fashion,” p. 788.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 790.

uniforms, and the like.<sup>38</sup> This development in consumption practices is noticeable and significant in Japan where the collapse of the group identity “performs an increasingly important role in the construction of personal identity.”<sup>39</sup> To seasoned individualistic Americans, this trend is a natural progression of the postmodern society and, combined with the data consumption tendency of the *otaku* culture, makes for the high demand of Japanese pop culture that has fueled the phenomenon.

Despite any of the causes, at the heart of this phenomenon is the fan base that supports it. In this context about the rise of Japanese pop culture in the U.S., they can be called the *otaku* community. A negative connotation of the term *otaku* is in relation to unfortunate events that tied it to anti-social and perverted behavior.<sup>40</sup> The use of the term, within my research, is in a positive light to meaning, “enthralled with their hobby.” I have intentionally associated the word *otaku* to refer to an obsessive nature I had with my own fandom consumption but do not intend any negative connotations. The purpose in pointing out those nuances is to avoid any confusion or mistakenly contribute any degradation to the term.

In Sugimoto’s book about modern Japanese culture, the section called “Manga Industry” shows how fans have come together in online communities to share scanlations, *dōjinshi*, and AMVs, which in turn promote the sales of the actual merchandise. Database animals will buy the original, and perhaps, again when a collector’s edition or an extended version is released.<sup>41</sup> In the case of *dōjinshi*, made by fans for fans, bound copies are sold for the replicators profit; the result of an unspoken, implicit agreement known as *anmoku no ryōkai* that exists between the publishers and *dōjinshi* artists because of the mutual benefits that emerge from this agreement.<sup>42</sup> This is another example of simulacra and its consumption by the *otaku* community. Although these causes all feed off of one another, the “behavioral pattern of the *otaku* precisely reflects this characteristic of post

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid, p. 785.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Azuma, *Otaku: Japan’s Database Animals*, p. 4.

<sup>41</sup> Yoshio Sugimoto, *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Japanese Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

<sup>42</sup> Sugimoto, *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Japanese Culture*, p. 254.

modernity”<sup>43</sup> and is reflected in their spending habits. Considering the database is a result of the collapse of the grand narrative and the acceptance of simulacra, Azuma states that “otaku culture beautifully reflects the social structure of post modernity on two points – the omnipresence of simulacra and the dysfunctionality of the grand narrative.”<sup>44</sup>

Anthropologist Carolyn Stevens defends the *otaku*’s postmodern consumption practices by defining them and by putting them in perspective with the consumption habits of other “class-based” examples.<sup>45</sup> She defines “fandom,” which is the activity of *otakus*, as a “mirror to conditions of popular culture [that] fulfills a double function...as communication,” in that our consumption choices articulate our complex class position, and as identity building, in that this communication is as much directed inwards as outwards, forming a sense of who we are and believe ourselves to be.<sup>46</sup>

This statement is in agreement with Kawamura’s view on how consumption is a reflection of the ongoing quest to define one’s identity. Stevens further argues that this consumption is a positive and beneficial practice that engenders personal freedom and individualism:<sup>47</sup> “While mass media in Japan has for many years engaged in mockery, trivialization, and banalization of fan activities in Japan, with the spread of Japanese pop culture this trivialization is now a global phenomenon.”<sup>48</sup>



**Figure 7. A young *otaku*’s room**

<sup>43</sup> Azuma, *Otaku: Japan’s Database Animals*, p. 28.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>45</sup> Carolyn Stevens, “You Are What You Buy,” *Japanese Studies* 30 (2010), p. 207.

<sup>46</sup> Stevens, “You Are What You Buy,” p. 204.

<sup>47</sup> Stevens, “You Are What You Buy,” p. 201.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 208.

Figure 7 is part of the *Otacool* book series.<sup>49</sup> It is found in the first book in the series that features *otaku* rooms from around the world. This young girl is from the United States, and proudly shows off her various collections of figurines, manga, posters, and UFO plushies. She is a perfect example of the pride and joy that the youth take in their consumption practices, how it relates to the sense of identity, and the borders it has crossed.<sup>50</sup>

### The “Cool Japan” Campaign

Michal Daliot-Bul’s article, “Japan Brand Strategy: The Taming of ‘Cool Japan’ and the Challenges of Cultural Planning in a Postmodern Age” looks at the Intellectual Property Strategic Programs of Japan from 2004–2008 and analyzes what Japan has done in these years to promote itself in this postmodern society.<sup>51</sup> He argues that these programs were part of the government’s efforts to maintain ownership of the Japanese image that was slowly becoming part of a global culture.

As far as administering a ‘Japan Brand’ that capitalizes on a consumer trend, the situation is even more complex since the contemporary global imagery of Japan is, to a large extent, produced by non-Japanese media, entrepreneurs and fans who engage in the reproduction of “things Japanese” and the flaming of the new global postmodern Japonism hype.<sup>52</sup>

It has worked to a degree with their “Cool Japan” campaign that fuses, albeit forcefully, the traditional with the modern. Figure 8 is dissected in Laura Miller’s article, which deals with the contrived image of Japanese females that she believes this campaign portrays. In reference to this image she says:

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<sup>49</sup> The *Otacool* book series was started by Danny Choo when he started requesting pictures of *otaku* rooms worldwide on his website. He was approached by the Japanese publishing company Kotobukiya to make it a book. This series has now spawned two more books, one on worldwide cosplayers and worldwide work spaces. A fourth book on worldwide illustrators is forthcoming.

<sup>50</sup> Tachikawa, *Otacool: Worldwide Otaku Room* (Tokyo: Kotobukiya, 2009); Kotobukiya, *Otacool 2: Worldwide Cosplayers* (Tokyo: Kotobukiya, 2010); and Kenyukai, *Otacool 3: Worldwide Workspaces* (Tokyo: Kotobukiya, 2010).

<sup>51</sup> Daliot-Bul, “Japan Brand Strategy.”

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 257.

One poster in the campaign featured a campy shot of Onuki Ami and Yoshimura Yumi from the J-Pop group Puffy [AmiYumi]. The Puffy girls are wearing tacky kimonos with black boots and trendy hairstyles. The carefully planned posing combines the “modern” and “traditional.” In the background is a woodblock style Mt. Fuji, and Ami and Yumi are holding an eggplant and a hawk. These icons refer to the folk belief that it is highly auspicious for the first dream of a new year (*hatsuyume*) to contain one of these elements.<sup>53</sup>

She highlights the blending of traditional and modern, which is what Daliot-Bul points out as being the government’s strategy for taking back the image of ‘Cool’ Japan and selling it through a Japanese perspective. On the bottom left of the image a reference to *Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi* popular series on American’s Cartoon Network reflects the platform of success on which this campaign debuted on in 2006.<sup>54</sup> The characters of the animated series were even featured in the Macy’s Day Parade<sup>55</sup> in the same company of other Japanese cultural export giants, Pikachu and Hello Kitty.



Figure 8. “Cool Japan” campaign poster

<sup>53</sup> Laura Miller, “Taking Girls Seriously in ‘Cool Japan’ Ideology,” *Japan Studies Review* 13 (2011), pp. 2–3.

<sup>54</sup> Miller, “Taking Girls Seriously in ‘Cool Japan’ Ideology,” p. 2.

<sup>55</sup> Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade Balloon Lineup (accessed February 10, 2011, [http://social.macys.com/parade2012\\_kaws/#/lineup/balloons](http://social.macys.com/parade2012_kaws/#/lineup/balloons)).

However, this effort to retain what is essentially Japanese about their “cool empire” could be detrimental to the “cool” factor in years to come. On a global scale, what is the possible adverse effect? Miller states that “there are other interesting problems associated with the Cool Japan initiative...one issue is government shaping of what is supposed to be free-wheeling creative output.”<sup>56</sup> In 2009, the Foreign Affairs Ministry selected “Ambassadors of Cute” composed of three young girls dressed in the latest and most popular fashion. To Miller, this violates “the first rule of cool—don’t let your marketing show.”<sup>57</sup>

### **Conclusion: Status of the Phenomenon Today**

Overall, the popularity is still high among the American youth, but not as readily noticeable due to the sustained visibility of Japanese pop culture in everyday situations. In the States, as alluded to in the essay, this phenomenon has maintained its popularity while making significant inroads in American pop culture. The causes that I have been arguing show how the phenomenon is still evident today. In media, the redistribution of the *Sailor Moon* manga by Kodansha was announced in March 2011. In an article featured on Tokyohive, a popular website that reports in English about new developments in Japanese pop culture, the series is being brought back by popular demand with the goal of reintroducing the series to a new generation.

Kodansha USA Publishing, a subsidiary of Kodansha, announced today the exciting return of Takeuchi Naoko’s *Sailor Moon*, one of the most significant names in comics and manga, to U.S. publishing. One of the most recognized manga and anime properties in the world, *Sailor Moon* took American pop culture by storm, with mentions in music (“One Week” by Barenaked Ladies), bestselling books (*The Princess Diaries* by Meg Cabot), and more.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Miller, “Taking Girls Seriously in ‘Cool Japan’ Ideology,” p. 4.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>58</sup> Kanki, “Kodansha USA announces the return of Sailor Moon and Codename: Sailor V,” Tokyohive, March 2011 (accessed March 19, 2011,

In 2009, the *New York Times* “introduced three separate lists of the best-selling graphic books in the country: hardcover, soft cover, and manga” further demonstrating the foray of Japanese pop culture exports (such as anime) have made in the U.S.<sup>59</sup> Post modern consumption practices also continue to be a staple of the *otaku* community: over the past fifteen years, Anime Expo, held in California, is the largest anime convention in North America and has maintained an increase in fan attendance each year.<sup>60</sup> Starting in 1992 with only 1,750 people, the convention has increased to number 15,250 people a decade later. The numbers have continued to increase at an average of 3,500 attendees per year.<sup>61</sup>

### **The Future of Japanese Pop Culture in America**

As far as the future of this phenomenon is concerned, Daliot-Bul predicts that “Ironically, the more widespread the institutional imagery of cool Japan becomes, the faster the market hype dubbed “Cool Japan” is likely to fade away.”<sup>62</sup> He insists that it is the private sector of Japan that should continue to be the driving force and producers of the images of Japanese culture, as they do not have ulterior motives for doing so except as a means to express themselves through their respective mediums.<sup>63</sup>

As important as media influence, industry intervention and postmodern consumption practices have been inundating our American society with Japanese pop culture, the future lies in the reinvention of these causes. Already, with the onset of social media such as Facebook and Twitter, industries have developed new marketing strategies that

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<http://www.tokyohive.com/2011/03/kodansha-usa-announces-the-return-of-sailor-moon-codename-sailor-v/>).

<sup>59</sup> George G. Gustines, “Introducing the New York Times Graphic Books Best Seller Lists,” *New York Times*, March 2009 (accessed April 9, 2011, <http://artsbeat.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/03/05/introducing-the-new-york-times-graphic-books-best-seller-lists/>).

<sup>60</sup> “Anime Expo 2011 Convention Information,” AnimeCons.com, (accessed April 9, 2011, [http://animecons.com/events/info.shtml/2293/Anime\\_Expo\\_2011](http://animecons.com/events/info.shtml/2293/Anime_Expo_2011)).

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Daliot-Bul, “Japan Brand Strategy,” p. 262.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.



effortlessly weave together to make postmodern consumption even easier to practice and display.

With no end in sight, the long-term effects of this rise in popularity of Japanese pop culture among American youth will continue to manifest themselves in all those who can remember the start of the phenomenon.

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**AROUSING BODHI-MIND:  
WHAT IS THE ‘EARTH’ IN DŌGEN’S TEACHINGS?\***

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\*Editor's Note: This was an oral presentation given at the November 2011 Conference on Zen Master Dōgen titled, “Bringing Dōgen Down to Earth,” held at Florida International University, which included Dr. William Bodiford, Dr. Griffith Foulk, Dr. Steven Heine, Rev. Taigen Dan Leighton and Rev. Shohaku Okumura as speakers. The co-organizers were Steven Heine and Shotai De La Rosa.

**Introduction**

I am very honored to be invited to this conference as a speaker. I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to all the people who supported me and who worked to organize this meaningful event to promote our understanding of Dōgen and his teachings and practice. Other speakers are all eminent Dōgen scholars. I am the only one who is not an academic. I am simply a zazen practitioner. I have been studying Dōgen only to understand the practice I have been engaging in as the most important thing in my life, and to share the teaching and practice with people in the West. I am happy if my talk can be interesting and even a little bit helpful to you.

When I heard the theme of this conference, “Bringing Dōgen Down to Earth,” I thought this was a strange title. It sounds like Dōgen is up in the air, and we are on the earth, and therefore we need to ask him to come down. Perhaps I had such a question because I am not a native English speaker. But I believe Dōgen has always been sitting on the “earth” and *we* are living up in the air about five to six feet above the ground, and therefore we need to bring ourselves down to the earth on which Dōgen is sitting.

When I talked about this question at my temple, Sanshinji, one person said, “Did you see the Dōgen movie? In that movie, when Dōgen had the enlightenment experience of dropping-off-body-and-mind (*shinjin-datsuraku*), he shot up into space. Probably, Dōgen is still up there.” I saw the movie once, but I did not appreciate the film so much, particularly that

part.<sup>1</sup> Today, I would like to talk about my understanding of the “Earth” on which Dōgen has been walking, staying, sitting, and lying down. He quotes an ancient saying in *Shōbōgenzō* “Inmo” (Thusness), “If we fall down because of the ground, we get up depending on the ground. If we seek to stand up apart from the ground, after all, such a thing (standing up apart from the ground) is not possible.”<sup>2</sup> What is this ground or “earth” on which we fall down and stand up? I think it is the very simple and down to earth reality of our lives, the impermanence of our body and mind and of all myriad things in the world.

### Significance of Arousing Bodhi-Mind in Dōgen’s Teachings

In 2011, I had two genzō-e retreats on “Bodhi-mind” (Skt. *bodhi-citta*, Jp. *bodaishin*). One was at Chapel Hill Zen Center in February, where I gave lectures on *Shōbōgenzō* “Hotsumujōshin” (Arousing Unsurpassable Mind). The other was in Sweden in July, where I gave lectures on *Shōbōgenzō* “Hotsubodaishin” (Arousing Bodhi-Mind). Originally both of these fascicles were entitled, “Hotsu-bodaishin” and according to the colophon, these two fascicles were written on the same day; the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the Second Lunar Month in 1244. But the latter is a part of a twelve-fascicle collection of *Shōbōgenzō*, therefore commonly considered to have been written later than Hotsumujōshin. As I prepared to teach these two fascicles of *Shōbōgenzō*, I studied Dōgen’s teachings on arousing bodhi-mind. I found that “Arousing Bodhi-mind” was one of his critical issues from the very beginning of his searching the Way as a teenager, through his middle years when he started to teach at his monastery at Kōshōji, until his final years at Eihei-ji. I think we can see what was the foundation of his practice and teaching for his entire life through examining what he taught about bodhi-mind.

### Zuimonki: Seeing Impermanence and Arousing Bodhi-Mind

Soon after he established his own monastery, Kōshōji, in Fukakusa

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<sup>1</sup> Shohaku Okumura, in *Realizing Genjokoan*, pp. 81–88. I discussed that the story of Dōgen’s dropping-off-body-and-mind in his biography is a made up story by person who lived later.

<sup>2</sup> This is from my unpublished translation. Another translation is in Nishijima & Cross, *Master Dōgen’s Shōbōgenzō* Book 2 (Windbell Publications, 1996), p. 121.

in 1233, he talked to the monks, in his assembly, about various aspects of practice. His dharma heir Koun Ejō recorded those talks. Later these talks were compiled as *Shōbōgenzō* “Zuimonki.” In one of these talks, Dōgen mentioned his experiences while he was a novice monk at the Tendai monastery, Enryakuji, on Mt. Hiei. This is one of them:

I first aroused bodhi-mind because of my realization of impermanence. I visited many places both near and far [to find a true teacher] and eventually left the monastery on Mt. Hiei to practice the Way. Finally, I settled at Kenninji. During that time, since I hadn’t met a true teacher nor any good co-practitioners, I became confused and evil thoughts arose. First of all, my teachers taught me that I should study as hard as our predecessors in order to become wise and be known at the court, and famous all over the country. So when I studied the teachings I thought of becoming equal to the ancient wise people of this country or to those who received the title of *daishi* (great teacher) etc.

When I read the *Kōsōden*, *Zoku-Kōsōden* and so on, and learned about the lifestyle of eminent monks and followers of the buddha-dharma in Great China, I found they were different from what my teachers taught. I also began to understand that such a mind as I had aroused was despised and hated in all the sutras, *shastras* and biographies....Having realized this truth, I considered those in this country with titles such as “great teacher” as so much dirt or broken tiles. I completely reformed my former frame of mind. Look at the life of the Buddha. He abandoned the throne, and entered the mountains and forests. He begged for food his whole life after he had completed the Way.<sup>3</sup>

Dōgen himself said he aroused bodhi-mind because of seeing impermanence. It is said in his biography that he first aroused bodhi-mind when he saw the smoke from incense at his mother’s funeral ceremony. He was eight years old. He then became a Tendai monk when he was 13 years

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<sup>3</sup> *Shōbōgenzō Zuimonki: Saying of Eihei Dōgen Zenji* (Sotoshu Shuicho, 1998), pp. 4–8, and 146.

old. At the Tendai monastery, his teachers encouraged him to study and practice hard to become an eminent and famous teacher. Perhaps, then, he might be able to become the emperor's teacher or the teacher of other noble people.

Later, he discovered that to study and practice for the purpose of pursuing such status and fame was not what the Buddha and ancestors had been recommending. That was one of the reasons he left the Tendai monastery and practiced Zen with his teacher Myōzen at Kenninji in Kyoto. Zen was a newly introduced school of Buddhism in his time. Myōzen and Dōgen went to China together to study Zen at Chinese monasteries. Myōzen died in China in the 5<sup>th</sup> month of 1225. Right before Myōzen's death, Dōgen met Rujing (Nyojō) and received dharma transmission in the Caodong (Sōtō) lineage of Zen from him and returned to Japan.

***Gakudō-yōjinshū: Seeing Impermanence and Bodhi-Mind***

In 1233, he founded his own monastery, Kōshōji. He wrote *Gakudō-yōjinshū* (Points to Watch in Studying the Way) for the monks who wanted to practice with him to show the essential point of his practice. *Gakudō-yōjinshū* is a collection of ten independent essays in which he discussed the key points the monks needed to keep in mind while they practiced with him. The very first section was about the necessity of arousing bodhi-mind. He said:

Though there are many names for bodhi-mind, they all refer to the one-mind. The Ancestral Master Nāgārjuna said that the mind that solely sees the impermanence of this world of constant appearance and disappearance is called bodhi-mind. Therefore, [for now I think it would be appropriate to talk about] bodhi-mind as the mind that sees impermanence. Truly, when you see impermanence, egocentric mind does not arise, neither does desire for fame and profit.

We hear of some in the past who had heard a little of the teaching and we see some in the present who have seen a little of the sutras. Most of them have fallen into the pitfall of fame and profit and have lost the life of the buddha-way forever. How sad and regrettable this is! You should thoroughly understand that even if you study the provisional or direct teachings, or receive instruction on



the traditional scriptures of the esoteric or exoteric teachings, unless you completely give up the desire for fame and profit you cannot arouse true bodhi-mind.<sup>4</sup>

Arousing bodhi-mind through seeing impermanence was the starting point of his own practice, and, when he started to teach at Kōshōji, that was the primary prerequisite for the monks to practice with him. Seeing impermanence enables us to be liberated from attachment to our body and mind, and the desire for fame and profit.

### ***Chiji-Shingi: Mind of the Way***

There are a few more aspects of bodhi-mind in his teachings besides seeing impermanence. A second aspect is the faithfulness toward the tradition of buddhas and ancestors. In the section regarding the duties and responsibilities of the Director (kannin) in Chiji-shingi (Pure Standards For The Temple Administrators), he refers to bodhi-mind as *dōshin*; “Mind of the Way.” “Dao” or “Way” is a translation of the Indian word *bodhi* (awakening).

What is called the mind of the Way is not to abandon or scatter about the great Way of the Buddha ancestors, but deeply to protect and esteem their great Way. Therefore having abandoned fame and gain and departed your homeland, consider gold as excrement and honor as spittle, and without obscuring the truth or obeying falsehoods, maintain the regulations of right and wrong and entrust everything to the guidelines for conduct.

After all, not to sell cheaply or debase the worth of the ordinary tea and rice of the Buddha ancestors’ house is exactly the mind of the Way. Furthermore, reflecting that inhalation does not wait for exhalation also is the mind of the Way and is diligence.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> This is from my translation of *Gakudō-yōjinshu* in *Heart of Zen: Practice without Gaining-mind* (Sotoshu Shumicho, 1998), p. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Taigen Leighton and Shohaku Okumura, trans., *Dōgen’s Pure Standards for the Zen Community: A Translation of Eihei Shingi* (State University of New York Press, 1996). p. 156.

Here, Dōgen says that to maintain the simple style of day-to-day practice transmitted in the lineage of ancestors without making it a commodity to be exchanged for fame and profit is the Mind of the Way. Therefore, seeing impermanence is emphasized again.

### **Arousing Unsurpassable Mind: Mind of Offering**

*Shōbōgenzō* “Hotsumujōshin” (Arousing Unsurpassable Mind) was written several days before the ground-breaking ceremony in 1244 for his new monastery Daibutsuji (later renamed Eihei-ji). Dōgen says that bodhi-mind is the mind that is one with all things within the entire world and is the mind as the true reality of all things. He also places emphasis on the concrete activities of making offerings (*kuyō*) to sustain the Dharma, not only by becoming monks, practicing meditation, and studying and expounding Dharma teachings, but also through the construction of temple buildings, Buddhist statues, making any kind of donation, even simply doing *gasshō* and reciting *namu-butsu* (“I take refuge in Buddha”) in front of a Buddha statue. He states that all such practices have the virtue of the unconditioned. Here, he does not mention the relationship between arousing bodhi-mind and seeing impermanence: “The First Ancestor of Cīnasthāna said, “Each mind is like trees and rocks.”

“Mind” here is “mind is like.” It is the mind of the whole earth. Therefore, it is the mind of self and other. Each mind of the humans of the whole earth, as well as of the buddhas and ancestors, and of the devas and dragons of all the worlds of the ten directions—these are trees and rocks—there is no mind apart from them. These trees and rocks are, by their nature, not cooped up in the realm of being and nonbeing, emptiness and form. With this mind of trees and rocks, we bring forth the mind, practice and verify; for they are trees of mind, rocks of mind. Through the power of these trees and rocks of mind, the present “thinking of not thinking” is realized. Upon hearing the “sound of the wind” in the trees of mind and rocks of mind, we first transcend the followers of the alien ways; before that, it is not the way of the buddha.”<sup>6</sup>

### **Hotsubodaishin: Mind of Saving All Beings**

Finally in *Shōbōgenzō* “Hotsubodaishin” (Arousing Bodhi-mind),

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<sup>6</sup> Carl Bielefeldt, trans., downloaded from  
<http://hcbss.stanford.edu/research/projects/sztp/translation/Shōbōgenzō/>

Dōgen wrote that we arouse bodhi-mind with thinking mind. To arouse the bodhi-mind is to take a vow that, “Before I myself cross over, I will help all living beings cross over the river between this shore of samsara and the other shore of nirvana” and strive to fulfill this vow. Here, Dōgen emphasizes the aspect of bodhi-mind working as compassion.

In this way, whether we wish in our mind or not, being pulled by our past karma, the transmigration within the cycle of life and death continues without stopping for a single *ksana*. With the body-and-mind that is transmigrating in this manner through the cycle of life and death, we should without fail arouse the bodhi-mind of ferrying others before ourselves. Even if, on the way of arousing the bodhi-mind, we hold our body-and-mind dear, it is born, grows old, becomes sick, and dies; after all, it cannot be our own personal possession.<sup>7</sup>

He goes on to say that arousing bodhi-mind depends on the instantaneous arising and perishing of all things, including the mind itself. Again Dōgen places emphasis on seeing impermanence of all things, both inside and outside of ourselves. He says:

While being within this swiftness of arising and perishing of transmigration in each *ksana*, if we arouse one single thought of ferrying others before ourselves, the eternal longevity [of the Tathagata] immediately manifests itself.<sup>8</sup>

#### **Five Aggregates are as the Mara and Avalokiteshvara**

At the end of “Hotsubodaishin,” Dōgen quotes Nāgārjuna in the *Daichidoron*<sup>9</sup> regarding the obstacles that hinder us when we try to arouse bodhi-mind. These obstacles are called demons or *Mara*. Mara is the demon that attacked Shakyamuni when he sat under the bodhi tree, to prevent him from attaining awakening. Shakyamuni conquered the Mara and attained awakening.

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<sup>7</sup> This is from my unpublished translation.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> The *Maha Prajnaparamita Shastra*, Nagarjuna’s commentary on the Prajna Paramita Sutra.

Nāgārjuna said that there are four kinds of demons: the demon of delusive desires, the five *skandha* (aggregates), death, and the celestial demon. Finally he said that all demons are actually only of one kind: the five aggregates. The Five Aggregates represent the demon that prevents us from seeing impermanence and arousing bodhi-mind. The five aggregates are the none other than our own body and mind. Our body and mind are nothing but ourselves. There is nothing else beside the five aggregates. Our body and mind are the Mara.

In “Hotsubodaishin,” Dōgen concludes that arousing bodhi-mind is seeing impermanence and that our five aggregates (our own body and mind) are the Mara that hinder us from seeing impermanence. Now I would like to compare this statement with something he wrote in *Shōbōgenzō* “Makahannyaharamitsu,” which is the very first fascicle he wrote in the *Shōbōgenzō* collection in 1233, the year he founded Kōshōji monastery. This fascicle contains Dōgen’s comments on the Heart Sutra:

The time of Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva practicing profound prajna paramita is the whole body clearly seeing the emptiness of all five aggregates. The five aggregates are forms, sensations, perceptions, formations, and consciousness; this is the five-fold *prajna*. Clear seeing is itself prajna.

To unfold and manifest this essential truth, [the Heart Sutra] states that “form is emptiness; emptiness is form.” Form is nothing but form; emptiness is nothing but emptiness -- one hundred blades of grass, ten thousand things.<sup>10</sup>

In this text, Dōgen explains that the five aggregates are the five-fold prajna (wisdom) that sees emptiness. The five aggregates are both Mara (demon) and the five-fold prajna. It could be possible that Avalokiteshvara represents the five aggregates. Avalokiteshvara sees that only five aggregates exist and they are empty. There is nothing other than the five *skandhas*. Then there cannot be Avalokiteshvara outside the five aggregates. Five aggregates clearly see the emptiness of five aggregates. That is, five aggregates settle down as being simply and peacefully five

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<sup>10</sup> This is from my unpublished translation. Another translation is in *Master Dōgen’s Shōbōgenzō*, Book 1. pp. 25–26.

aggregates without the separation between the subject that grasps the five aggregates themselves as “me” and the objects that are grasped by the subject as “other.”

### Conclusion

Overall, in Dōgen’s teachings, it can be inferred that the “Earth” on which Dōgen was walking, staying, sitting, and lying down is actually the impermanence of the five aggregates, our own body and mind. When we fail to see the reality of impermanence, selflessness, and emptiness of the five aggregates and cling to them as “I,” the entirety of our body and mind becomes Mara. When we are liberated from self-clinging and see the impermanence and emptiness of the five aggregates, they are five-fold prajna and Avalokiteshvara. On the ground of the impermanence of the five aggregates, when we see impermanence, no-self, and emptiness, the five aggregates are Avalokiteshvara.

When we grasp the five skandhas as “my” body and mind and attach ourselves to them, then we become self-centered and our life becomes samsara. We fall down on the ground. As Dōgen said, in *Shōbōgenzō* “Inmo,” when we fall down because of the ground (earth), the only possible way to stand up is by depending on the ground. We stand up by clearly seeing the emptiness of the five aggregates. We fall down and stand up millions of times in our practice. This is the transformation of our life from five aggregates as ignorance to five-fold prajna and from the Mara to Avalokiteshvara. As Dōgen said in *Shōbōgenzō* “Hotsumujōshin,” we should arouse bodhi-mind a hundred thousand myriad times. This transformation is not a one-time enlightenment experience. We let go of the five aggregates moment by moment.

In summary, the meaning of the expression “dropping off body and mind” (*shinjin-datsuraku*) should be very clear. It is not a particular psychological experience, such as going up into space as depicted in the Dōgen movie. Rather, it is the clear seeing of the entire body-and-mind; the five aggregates as simply five aggregates, without any grasping. All things are the five aggregates. The five aggregates simply being the five aggregates themselves without clinging is prajna, and that is our practice of zazen. Zazen enables the five aggregates (our own body and mind) to transform themselves from being the Mara to being Avalokiteshvara. This is what encompasses the very foundation of Dōgen’s teachings.



## **Book Reviews**





**James D. Hodgson, Sano Yoshihiro, and John L. Graham, *Doing Business with the New Japan: Succeeding in America's Richest International Market*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2008. 238 pp. ISBN 978-0742555334 (paperback), \$29.95.**

*Reviewed by Don R. McCreary*

This helpful guide for American businessmen answers many of their usual questions, such as the following: Why don't they respond to my offer immediately? Why is this taking so long? Why do they keep asking the same questions over and over? Should I lower my price right away? How can I find out what they are really thinking? The co-authors are well equipped to answer these questions and many more. The three authors have accumulated nearly one hundred years of business experience among them. Hodgson was the ambassador to Japan in the 1970s; Sano is the president of an investment banking and consulting firm, and Graham is a professor of marketing, specializing in international negotiations.

The first section, "Cultural Differences," containing the first four chapters (9–54), considers points that many American businessmen may not understand very well, such as differences in time horizons, levels of politeness, and differing ideas on the value of the *aisatsu*, the initial meeting. Hodgson, the former ambassador, weaves together several worthwhile anecdotes that illustrate the long term perspective, importance of form, and the strategies regarding direct and indirect refusals. This section includes chapters on "The American Negotiation Style" and "The Japanese Negotiation Style." An explanation of the American style, illustrated with specific points from case studies, is essential, since more than a few Americans are unaware that an identifiable style even exists. Some of the points addressed are: "get to the point; lay your cards on the table; don't just sit there, speak up; don't take 'no' for an answer; and a deal is a deal" (33–36).

The chapter on the Japanese negotiating style examines *tateshakai* (the vertical society), *ringi kessai* (the internal decision-making process), and cultural features, such as *tatemaie-honne*, *amae*, *ishin-denshin*, *nemawashi*, "banana sale" tactics, and multiple ways to avoid saying "no" (43–52). These features are well illustrated with vignettes and anecdotes from actual cases. This chapter includes, "The Special Problem for American Sellers" (52–53), which occurs when the seller with a lower status (often from an unknown company in the U.S.) maintains his usual

negotiation tactics with “hard sell” persuasion. “Japanese buyers are likely to view this rather brash behavior in lower status sellers as inappropriate and disrespectful. Japanese buyers are made to feel uncomfortable and thus, without explanation, politely shut the door to trade” (53). They recommend employing a *shokaisha*, a respected go-between, who knows executives in the Japanese company that will be the buyer of the American product.

The second section, “The Business of Face-to-Face Negotiation,” comprising five chapters (55–132), addresses contrasting issues that can affect American perceptions of the amount of progress in negotiations, such as individual–group, justice–harmony, adversary–consensus, and substance–form. Many valuable points related to the negotiation process, such as the selection of the team members, essential personal qualities of the lead negotiator (self-confidence and social competence, among others), training and preparation, manipulating the situation (the location, number of people, and physical arrangements) are covered with sound recommendations. The authors also go into detail about the four stages of negotiation: non-task sounding, exchanging task-related information, persuasion, and making concessions, recommending several techniques that have worked in past case studies. A few recommendations include: “an informal channel of communication” (115), asking questions, making self-disclosures, and managing “positive influence tactics” (117). In addition to Graham and Sano’s reporting of actual case studies, Hodgson contributes several valuable anecdotes based on his diplomatic and business experiences.

The third section, “Other Crucial Topics,” which is five chapters long (133–202), revisits cultural and personality issues, such as the dangers of stereotyping, homogeneity in Japan, and sexism in business settings. This section includes accounts of well-known negotiations, such as the GM–Toyota joint venture, the Japan–U.S. rice and beef negotiations, which were conducted between the two governments. The final chapters examine the slowdown in the Japanese economy from the 1990’s up to 2008, which updates Graham and Sano’s first edition of this book. In the final chapter, “The Future of U.S.–Japan Relations,” the authors believe “a ‘good news’ future exists for Japan” (202); however, they warn that although the Japanese business community benefits from substantial knowledge about the US, “knowledge *about* is not understanding *of*. Knowledge may lead to understanding, but it is insufficient by itself” (202).

The fourth section, “Appendix: Research Reports” (203–222) is well worth a close read, especially by academics interested in negotiations

and communication styles. Graham and Sano have compiled the results of their research articles over the past thirty years and have explained the condensed results via ten “focal points,” including maintaining the rhythm of the conversation, using silence as a strategy, and addressing misunderstandings. The book’s final pages include an adequate bibliography and a thorough index. This textbook and detailed guide to cross-cultural negotiations, filled with abundant case studies and anecdotes, should be a mandatory text for every American businessman who would like to begin a relationship with a Japanese company.

**Takeo Iguchi, *Demystifying Pearl Harbor: A New Japanese Perspective*, trans. David Noble. Tokyo: International House of Japan, 2010. 343 pp. ISBN 978-4924971295 (hardcover), \$23.96.**

*Reviewed by Daniel A. Métraux*

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor is one of the seminal events of American history. It forced America’s entry into World War II and marked its emergence as a world power and dominant actor on the world scene. Unfortunately, many aspects of the attack remain shrouded in mystery. Just why the Japanese decided to strike the major U.S. naval base in the Pacific (and who bears greater responsibility for this egregious act of aggression) will be debated by American and Japanese scholars and historians for decades to come. Many Americans have condemned Japan for what they regard as a naked act of aggression, while more than a few Japanese apologists have labeled the attack as an act of justified self-defense.

There are enough books on Pearl Harbor to fill a small library, but one of the very best and most conclusive tomes is Takeo Iguchi’s recent study, *Demystifying Pearl Harbor: A New Perspective from Japan*. Iguchi, who hails from a distinguished family of diplomats and who himself was a Japanese ambassador before embarking on an academic career in Japan and the United States, has written a clear and elegant book that should appeal to a wide audience interested in this critical period of American, Japanese, and world history. This work would be especially useful as a case study for any course that touches on World War II. What makes the book even more interesting is the author’s own personal involvement in and reaction to the

Pearl Harbor crisis. Iguchi, born in 1930, was living in Washington with his father, a diplomat at the Japanese Embassy, when his country attacked Hawaii.

### **The Long Road to Pearl Harbor**

Iguchi commences his study with a careful historical analysis of Japan's emergence as a world power in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and the gradual spread of Japanese influence and military power on the East Asian mainland through the late 1930s. He examines in detail the growing diplomatic crisis between the United States, Great Britain, and Japan that led to the December 1941 military showdown. Iguchi's very objective and neutral approach considers the merits and demerits of the policies and actions of all the principal actors.

The key to the book, however, is Iguchi's focus on the Japanese transmission of what in effect was their declaration of war. American officials angrily alleged that the Japanese delayed their declaration of war until after the actual attack began. Iguchi examines in great depth the Japanese framing of Japan's final memorandum to the U.S. and its delayed transmission to the Japanese embassy, and thus to the U.S. Department of State. Iguchi reaches the important conclusion that ranking Japanese military officials and possibly the Foreign Ministry colluded to delay the transmission of the full declaration to Washington in order to protect the surprising nature of the forthcoming attacks on Pearl Harbor and in Southeast Asia. Iguchi also alleges that Japanese military officials intercepted an urgent telegram from President Franklin D. Roosevelt to the Emperor of Japan that arrived just before the Pearl Harbor attack was set to begin. The telegram, which called for a peaceful resolution to the crisis, was only delivered after the fighting began.

Iguchi also argues, convincingly, that after Japan's defeat in 1945, government officials covered up the collusion of military and Foreign Ministry officials before Pearl Harbor to give them an air of innocence at the postwar Tokyo War Crimes trials. Japan claims, to this day, that the fault for the transmission delay lay with the Embassy, Iguchi notes, are a ruse to absolve Foreign Minister Togo Shigenori of any responsibility for the attack.

### **The Failure of Diplomacy**

Iguchi's early discussion of the failure of diplomacy and the road to war is critical for an understanding of what happened later. He alleges

that war between the United States and Japan was not inevitable and that it could have been avoided, even at the last moment. The author's careful analysis of Japanese diplomacy shows a government often at cross purposes with itself. There was apparent confusion in the Japanese government and military as to the true nature of Japan's goals. Should Japan confront the Soviet Union over northern China? Would it be better to seek greater accommodation with the British and Americans, or should Japan gamble on war? Iguchi outlines in great detail the intricate struggle for power as different factions within the nation's political and military hierarchy struggled to gain ascendancy. Iguchi notes, "In a nutshell, the foreign policy pursued by Japan in 1940 and 1941 was inconsistent, unsteady, and a bit haphazard" (51). There was even a time when the U.S. and Japan came "tantalizingly close to a provisional agreement" only to see a further breakdown of discussions. The Japanese military was more concerned with its war in China and a potential threat from the Soviet Union until well into 1941.

Although Iguchi is a bona fide Japanese scholar, his conclusions are wholly objective and he is far more critical of the Japanese than the Americans. He totally rejects the oft-quoted thesis that the Roosevelt administration deliberately provoked Japan into attacking Pearl Harbor as a backdoor method of entering the European theatre to rescue Britain. Iguchi also challenges the notion that American economic sanctions and its demands for a complete Japanese withdrawal from Indochina and China, as well as a termination of the tripartite pact with Italy and Germany, directly forced Japan to attack the United States and Britain. However, he does note that Prime Minister Tojo "asserted that if Japan were to withdraw from China, four years of blood and sacrifice" on the part of the Japanese military "would be for naught" and that such a withdrawal would have disastrous consequences for Japan's control over Manchuria, Korea, and Taiwan. Only in late November did Japan conclude any chance of an agreement with the U.S. and U.K., that U.S. global strategy was designed to continue American "world hegemony" and that Japan had no clear path but war. A Japanese document composed on November 29 concludes, "America as yet making no preparations for war. We are truly on the verge of achieving a blitzkrieg against the U.S. that will outdo even the German blitzkrieg against the Germans" (67).

Iguchi effectively counters the frequently claim that the negotiations between Ambassador Kichisaburō Nomura and Secretary of State Cordell Hull were not serious. Many parties in Japan and the United

States genuinely hoped for a last minute settlement. "The American approach was to create a *modus vivendi*," and the intent of Hull's sharp note of late November was a further attempt for a comprehensive settlement. By then, major military powerbrokers in Japan had decided on war, but failed to inform anybody in their embassy in Washington of the impending attacks.

Iguchi, a highly trained legal scholar, builds a case that while both sides must share some of the blame for the Pearl Harbor tragedy, the preponderance of guilt lies with Tokyo. There may never be a definitive book that solves all the Pearl Harbor mysteries, but Iguchi's masterpiece comes close. This work deserves wide circulation in schools, colleges, and universities and is "must-read" for any student or teacher wanting to know why December 7, 1941 is a day which, as President Roosevelt noted, will "live in infamy."

**Robin M. LeBlanc, *The Art of the Gut: Manhood, Power, and Ethics in Japanese Politics*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010. 229 pp. ISBN 978-0-520-25917-1 (paperback), \$24.95.**

*Reviewed by Daniel A. Métraux*

Japanese politics has experienced revolutionary change in the past decade. The traditionally stable postwar system, where the dominant conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) held power, but where a cluster of progressive political parties obtained enough seats in both houses of the Diet to prevent the LDP from amending the nation's constitution, has disappeared. A prolonged recession, voter fatigue with one-party rule, and corruption and weakness among LDP leaders led to the overwhelming victory of the Democratic Party of Japan in the 2009 elections. The inherent weakness of the new government, however, leaves Japan's political future very much in doubt.

Japan's current political instability will provide ample grist for political scientists for years to come. Unfortunately, however, many of these writers are only witnessing the very tip of the Japanese political iceberg. Beneath the surface, on the local, prefectural, and regional levels, there are also immense changes occurring. Traditionally, power in Japan was concentrated in the hands of a powerful central government, and the

role of local government was to implement policies set forth in Tokyo. Robin LeBlanc, a professor of political science at Washington & Lee University, states clearly in her most recent book, *The Art of the Gut: Manhood, Power and Ethics in Japanese Politics*, which these tendencies are changing. Local governments, in recent years, have demonstrated fresh ideas and approaches to dealing with a variety of issues that directly affect the lives of the average Japanese. In recent decades, progressive approaches that challenge conservative policy, from polluter regulation to public provision of health care for the elderly, have originated in local governments and later been reworked and adopted by the LDP at the national level” (10).

Popular participation in national politics by the general public is minimal when compared with some Western democracies. Japanese very dutifully participate in national elections at the ballot box, but otherwise eschew political activity. However, especially in recent years, highly motivated individuals and citizen’s groups have become active at the local level. Local government provides “a greater number of access points for citizen participation,” and the large number of seats in local assemblies provide well-organized small groups to win one or more seats that will guarantee that their voice will be heard (11).

Another change has been the role of women in politics. While a few women have made their mark in national politics, it is at the local level, often in citizen’s movements, where they have had a greater impact. LeBlanc notes that “Japanese female politicians are using their experiences as housewives and mothers to justify themselves as spokespersons for ordinary citizens on issues such as care for the aged, consumer and environmental protection, and freedom of information” (42). Japanese politics is still male-dominated, but female activity, particularly at the local level, is indeed bringing about change.

Robin LeBlanc’s *The Art of the Gut* deals with a variety of related themes including the role of men in Japanese politics, but her case study of a citizen’s movement against the construction of a nuclear power plant in their town provides a fascinating example of how a small group of determined citizens can take on huge national corporations and the national power structure and ultimately prevail. LeBlanc’s study supports anthropologist Margaret Mead’s famous statement that, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has,” is as true for Japan as the United States.

The great earthquake of March 2011 and the subsequent meltdown of nuclear power plants at Fukushima have made many Japanese opposed to the reopening of these plants and the construction of new ones. When I visited Tokyo in November of 2011 and May of 2012, I witnessed large public demonstrations against the use of nuclear power in Japan, but such opposition is hardly new. LeBlanc includes a study of an anti-nuclear power plant movement in a small rural city that dates back many years to the 1990s and beyond.

Using superb ethnographic techniques, LeBlanc settled in rural Takeno-machi (a pseudonym) where she studies the activities of local activists who oppose the construction of a nuclear power plant in their town. The leader of the two protagonists, a small sake merchant, "Baba-san," is infuriated when he and other townsmen hear that a large national utility company has bribed local political leaders to accept the plant with the hope that these bribes and the fact that construction will create many new jobs for the locality will cause them to ignore the inherent dangers of having such a facility in their neighborhood. Baba-san initially supports the idea as being good for the local economy, but when he and his neighbors actually have a chance to weigh the merits and demerits of the project, they begin to have doubts. Their worries and disgust with the corruption brought in by outside money cause them to take a leading role in an anti-plant movement known as the Referendum Association.

The power company had bought enough land to build its plant and had gotten the go-ahead from local politicians, but within this land was a small parcel still owned by the town. Construction could not take place until the company had bought that parcel from the town and sale of that piece of land required the consent of the local town assembly. The strategy of the Referendum Association was to run candidates in local elections to prevent the sale. They ran several candidates, several of which including a couple of local women were victorious. Eventually after several years of struggle the Referendum Association succeeded in preventing construction of the plant.

While the more interesting sections of the book focus on Baba-san and local doings in Takeno-machi, LeBlanc also introduces us to another local politician, Takada-san, the son of a long-time LDP assemblyman in Tokyo's very densely populated Shirakawa Ward. LeBlanc describes the tradition in Japanese politics of powerful political elders who pass on their seats of power to their sons and grandsons. The Takada family is certainly a good example of this tradition. When the father retires from political life, his son runs to take his father's place. We see in detail how the son inherits



his father's support base as well as a web of accumulated family obligations.

Throughout LeBlanc's *The Art of the Gut*, the reader gets to see the inner workings of Japanese politics on the local level. Her approach is a bit unorthodox—she rents a room in the Baba home and sits in on many of their strategy sessions. One sees political activity including tight meetings, campaign speeches and election-organizing in both rural and urban Japan. LeBlanc is a wonderful writer who moves away from scholarly jargon to provide the reader with a lively “you are here” look at the inner fabric of Japanese politics.

This book is also about the role of men in Japanese politics. She writes: “Because I had studied women in politics as a young researcher, I was at first surprised by the extent to which the men I observed in Shirakawa and Takeno felt and described themselves as constrained in their choices *simply because they were men*. Even Baba, whom his fellow activists viewed as powerful, felt this way. Most of the time these men... [felt] they were just doing what they thought was necessary to avoid trouble. They considered avoiding unnecessary trouble to be a fundamental requirement for being a grown man; one who could meet his primary responsibilities, which were usually characterized as those of a breadwinner and head of household” (21).

Robin LeBlanc's *The Art of the Gut* provides a very broad analysis of the rapidly changing dynamics of Japanese politics. She devoted approximately eight years to this study (1999–2007), which enabled her to chart the long term evolutionary changes that occurred in Japan even before the revolutionary election of 2009. LeBlanc is a splendid ethnologist and student of politics and this work certainly will remain one of the true classics of modern Japanese studies.

**Ken C. Kawashima, *The Proletarian Gamble: Korean Workers in Interwar Japan*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009. 297. ISBN 978-0-8223-4417-9 (paperback), \$23.95.**

*Reviewed by Bernice J. deGannes Scott*

*The Proletarian Gamble* is an important, informative, and commendable work. In my view, this book is an indictment, and justifiably

so, of the Japanese—the government, private citizens, and public and private institutions—for the mistreatment of Korean workers in Japan during the interwar years. Also censured are Japan-based Korean social-welfare organizations that were complicit in a system that facilitated ethnic discrimination, particularly in the labor and housing markets.

In keeping with the title of the work, Kawashima situates *The Proletarian Gamble* within a Marxist theoretical framework. In his words:

...[the] historical conjuncture, between agrarian immiseration in Korea in the 1920s and 1930s, and industrial recession in Japan during the same decades [was]...the historical origin of both Korean poverty and organized Korean working class movements in Japan (47).

In choosing to use the term “agrarian immiseration,” Kawashima is implying that the tradeoff between rising capitalist profits and the worsening condition of the worker, as predicted in Marxist theory, had occurred in the Korean agricultural sector. Throughout the book, Kawashima deftly incorporates the works of Marx and other theorists, such as Louis Althusser, Friedrich Engels, Jacques Ranciere, and John Charles-Leonard de Sismondi, and he references Grace Chang and Martin Kopple as he explains how capitalist production has diminished labor to a contingency status. He consistently draws upon historical events in Korea and Japan, and places these events within the framework of the capitalism–communism discourse.

The plight of the Korean worker is epitomized in the story of migrant worker, Koh Joon-sok, whom Kawashima introduces in the first pages of the book. Koh resides in a single room in a Korean-managed rooming house for day workers. He is unemployed, but had previously worked at three different establishments. In those jobs, he had been forced to endure verbal abuse from his Japanese employers, who paid him wages that were lower than those of his Japanese co-workers. His only prospect for employment is a temporary job in the public works programs, for unlike the boom years of World War I when Koreans had been recruited to work in factories and coalmines, these jobs are now reserved for Japanese workers. If Koh does find a factory job, it will be in a small family-owned that is labor-intensive, and needs his unskilled labor power.

Kawashima informs us that the majority of Korean workers in interwar Japan were not employed in manufacturing. Rather, they were chronically unemployed immigrant day-workers in the public works industry—an industry created by the Japanese government to address shortfalls in urban and trans-urban amenities. Still, he categorizes the Korean workers as proletariats. While students of Marx may question the rationale, Kawashima identifies two characteristics of the Korean workers he believes justify their inclusion in the proletarian class, namely, their labor power was commodified, and they existed as a surplus population (11). He explains that the labor market transaction of Korean workers (that is, the sale and purchase of their labor power) was never completed. Instead, the process was constantly interrupted because of exploitation and ethnic discrimination against them. They had difficulty finding work, and when they did, they were paid wages that were 30 percent to 60 percent lower than those of Japanese workers. Many lived in substandard housing because of eviction or the refusal of Japanese landlords to rent to them. Kawashima describes the workers, in Marxist terms, as “virtual paupers” (66).

The Japanese society that emerges from this work is one fraught with discrimination and collusion against a group of workers because of their ethnicity. Kawashima chronicles the complicity of the Japanese government and public institutions, private citizens, and Japan-based Korean institutions in their actions against the Korean workers—the (sometimes violent) eviction of Koreans from housing, and the subsequent vindication of landlords in the courts (118); the “intermediary exploitation” (151) by Korean-managed, state-funded private welfare organizations, and the social stratification by the police into “good-natured and virtuous” and “radical” Koreans (155). At times, the workers did put up resistance—they became involved in Korean and Japanese communist labor unions (132), they went on strike, and they defended themselves against violent attacks by the *Soaikai* (a Korean social-welfare organization), or by landlords (120). They also adopted Japanese names to increase their chances of obtaining decent housing.

The events recorded in this book raise issues of xenophobia, citizenship, institutional discrimination, workers’ rights, and basic human rights. First, there was the inherent oppressiveness of the colonial relationship that began in 1910 with Japan’s annexation of Korea (Japan’s colonization of Korea ended in 1945). Next, the Korean workers were immigrants in Japan, and the Japanese asserted their citizenship by

discriminating against the immigrants, consequently depriving them of basic human and workers' rights. The segmentation of the labor force by the Japanese state and employers placed the Korean workers in a subordinate position to their Japanese counterparts. This division, though not created by the workers themselves, brought to mind the sentiment expressed by Marx and Engels:

...organization of the proletarians into a class, and, consequently, into a political party, is continually being upset again by the competition between the workers themselves.<sup>1</sup>

Kawashima states that he wrote this book to record the history of Korean workers in interwar Japan, and to fill the void in the body of work dedicated to studies of labor in modern Japan. He has done a superb job, and the high quality of the work speaks for itself. As I noted earlier, I regard this work as an indictment. The details presented are serious enough to draw criticism from those who would hope that this moment of history be forgotten. Fortunately, anyone attempting to challenge the authenticity of this work would encounter great difficulty. Kawashima's references are many, and he strongly supports his research with theory-based references, and with evidence from primary source documents consisting of archival material from public and private collections.

This text is a valuable classroom tool for use in diverse areas of study. Students of Asian Studies, Area Studies, Economics, Political Science, Labor Studies, International Studies, and History would benefit from the information. All told, though, the book belongs in every library.

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1998), pp. 18–19.

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