

**ACTA ASIATICA VARSOVIENSIA**  
**NO. 27**

## ACTA ASIATICA VARSOVIENSIA

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To the memory of Professor Karin Tomala  
Whom we lost for ever



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OLGA BARBASIEWICZ

# The Cooperation of Jacob Schiff and Takahashi Korekiyo Regarding the Financial Support for the War with Russia (1904–1905) Analysis of Schiff and Takahashi's Private Correspondence and Diaries

## Abstract

This paper presents the problem which the Japanese Government had in gaining financial support for the war with Russia (1904–1905). It is based on the private correspondence and diaries of Jacob Schiff and Takahashi Korekiyo, which provide a closer look at the problem of conducting the war. It also shows the first moment when Japan confirmed its position as a world power, becoming the first Asian country which was treated as an equal partner by the Western powers.

## Introduction

The Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905 was broadly described in numerous papers. The incredible victory of the Japanese army over Russia's brought Japan into the club of leading countries and confirmed its position in the world. Nevertheless, not much has been written about the financial recourses that were used for waging the war. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Japan was still conducting its modernization under the rule of Emperor Meiji. This modernization was visible in all spheres from daily life, to policy, economy and business. In 1904 Japan was only 36 years after the start of the Meiji Restoration. So, the main aim of this article is to answer this question: how was it possible to gain financial support for the war with Russia, and how did Japanese-American relations help to win the victory in this war?

The aforementioned question of Japanese-American relations is relevant, because they always seemed to be unequal, and emphasized the power of the United States over the other countries, especially those from Asia. Regarding this problem, the next question that arises is: how was it possible to gain American support for Japan's war with Russia? To answer those questions I will analyze the correspondence and private diaries of two people who contributed towards the financial support of the war, namely Jacob Schiff and Takahashi Korekiyo.

## Takahashi Korekiyo and Jacob Schiff

The Meiji Restoration in Japan included numerous reforms, including the adoption of the yen as the official currency in 1871, and one year later the introduction of the National

Bank Regulation (*Kokuritsu ginkō jōrei*), which formed the basis for the establishment of the Japanese financial system.<sup>1</sup> In 1880 the Yokohama Specie Bank (*Yokohama Shōkin Ginkō*) was established, and a year later the Bank of Japan (*Nippon Ginkō*) started its activity.<sup>2</sup> Although the bank was a private venture, it was controlled by the government. In 1883 this institution was given a monopoly on controlling the money supply, and so the other banks were transformed into commercial banks.<sup>3</sup> The regulations which controlled the banks' activities were patterned after British models. In 1885 the first emission of the banknotes issued by the Bank of Japan took place. Two years later Japan adopted the gold standard<sup>4</sup>, which allowed financial transactions to be conducted worldwide.

Takahashi Korekiyo became the seventh president of the Bank of Japan, and during his activity as vice-president of this institution, he gained funds for the warfare with Russia.

Takahashi Korekiyo was born on July 27, 1854 in Edo (the former name of Tokyo). From the early years of his life he studied English. In 1866 he gained a job as a dogsbody in the London India and Chain Bank, which won him a scholarship to continue his English studies in the United States of America.<sup>5</sup> After a two-year stay abroad, he came back to Tokyo, and under the supervision of the politician and minister of education Mori Arinori he continued his studies at the Nankō University (the former name of the University of Tokyo). In 1872 Takahashi started his job as an interpreter in the Ministry of Finance, and one year later he moved to the Ministry of Education. After the establishment of the Institute of Trademark Registration as a part of the Engineering Department in the Ministry of Agriculture and Trade in 1884, it was headed by Takahashi.<sup>6</sup> This led him on another journey, this time to Europe and the United States, the aim of which was the preparation of a new patent law in Japan. In 1889, Takahashi became the head of the Patent Department, but in the same year he left Japan for Peru to run a silver mine. When this venture fell through, he got a position as the head of the construction office of a new seat of the bank, and then its employee, thanks to Kawada Koichirō, the then President of the Bank of Japan.<sup>7</sup> During the First Sino-Japanese war (1894–1895) Takahashi was responsible for investing in the bond market of the Bank of Japan, through which the state budget could gain the funds it needed to prosecute the war with China.<sup>8</sup> After this armed conflict, Takahashi was moved to the Yokohama Specie Bank, which became an important institution in the international business brokerage thanks to his activities. In 1889, Takahashi went on another journey abroad, and one year later he took the position of vice-president of the Bank of Japan.

His main task was to gain financial support for the increased expenditures on armaments, associated with the approaching war with Russia. To acquire foreign capital just after war

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<sup>1</sup> Michał Kołodziejski, *Takahashi Korekiyo (1854–1936) a gospodarka międzywojennej Japonii* [Takahashi Korekiyo (1854–1936) and the Japanese Interwar Economy], Warszawa: Trio, 2004, pp. 18–19.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.boj.or.jp/about/outline/history/his\\_1850.htm/](http://www.boj.or.jp/about/outline/history/his_1850.htm/) (accessed 20.01.2014).

<sup>4</sup> The gold standard was the first international monetary system in which the unit of account was based on a given amount of gold.

<sup>5</sup> Kołodziejski, *Takahashi Korekiyo...*, pp. 26–27.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33–34.

broke out, in 1904 Takahashi and his secretary went to the United States, and then to Great Britain. The person who acceded to Takahashi's requests and partially financed the Japanese war was Jacob Schiff, the president of the Kuhn, Loeb & Co. Bank, who became an ally of the Japanese side in the Russo-Japanese War, mainly because of his suspicion of Tsarist Russia, which was conducting an anti-Jewish policy.

The Kishinev pogrom<sup>9</sup> in 1903, as well as those which took place two years later in Bialystok and Odessa, caused an influx of Jews community to the United States from areas under the control of the Tsarist authorities. Emigrations of similar intensity occurred in the 1890s, and caused the creation of a special commission by the then President Benjamin Harrison, the aim of which was to examine this case. Among the members of this commission, and one of its initiators, was Jacob Schiff. The anti-Jewish activities in Russia were a reason why Schiff became a supporter of Japan in the war, which started in 1904.

Jacob Schiff was born on January 10, 1847 in Frankfurt am Main, as the son of a rabbi. When he turned eighteen he moved to the US, when he started his job as a banker. He eventually became president of Kuhn, Loeb & Co. bank, thanks to which he could financially support the victims of Russian riots who came to the US, as well as Orthodox and Reform Jewish institutions.<sup>10</sup>

Takahashi and Schiff met for the first time in April 1904 in London<sup>11</sup>, where Takahashi as vice president of the Bank of Japan had been trying to gain a loan for the ongoing war. Before returning to Japan, Takahashi took part in an official dinner, where he told Schiff about his fears that the loan would be refused.<sup>12</sup> Schiff listened carefully to the story about the successes of Emperor Nicholas II. Schiff privately abhorred the Tsar, because of the Kishinev pogrom. Despite this conversation, Takahashi forgot about the meeting with the banker, and so when he received a message that Schiff wanted to meet him, he did not remember who he was. When he wanted to find out something about this person, he was told: "A member of the American bank Kyhl, Loeb. A powerful force on the world money market, a main element of international capital. A Jew".<sup>13</sup> Their next meeting resulted in a long lasting friendship between Schiff and Takahashi. At first, the banker proposed a loan of 5 million pounds<sup>14</sup>, but finally the sum was increased to 200 million dollars.<sup>15</sup> Schiff not only supported the Japanese side with his own capital, but also encouraged members of the First National Bank and the National City Bank to support Japan.<sup>16</sup>

In 1906, Jacob Schiff visited Japan for the first time. He was received by the Meiji Emperor and was the first foreigner in history to be awarded the Order of the Rising Sun.<sup>17</sup> During the ceremony, Schiff broke the imperial palace rules and raised a glass to the

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<sup>9</sup> This had been provoked by rumors about the ritual murder of a Christian peasant.

<sup>10</sup> Naomi Cohen, *Encounter with Emancipation. The German Jews in the United States 1830–1914*, Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1984, p. 234.

<sup>11</sup> Marvin Tokayer, Mary Swartz, *The Fugu Plan. The Untold Story of the Japanese and the Jews during The World War II*, London, New York: Paddington Press Ltd., 1979, p. 45.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>15</sup> Ben-Ami Shillony, *The Jewish Role in the Russo-Japanese War*, in *Collected Writings of Ben-Ami Shillony*, Tōkyō: Japan Library and Edition Synapse, 2000, p. 318.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem.*

Emperor, comparing him with the American president George Washington: “first in war, first in peace, first in the hearts of his countrymen”.<sup>18</sup> Schiff was also invited to private dinners at the houses of the former prime minister of Japan, Okuma Shigenobu, the President of Daiichi Bank, Shibusawa Eiichi, and the mayor of Tokyo, Ozaki Yukio.<sup>19</sup> During his stay in Japan, Schiff contributed 9000 yen (equivalent to 4500 US dollars) to the Japanese Red Cross.<sup>20</sup> Banker came back to the US with Takahashi’s fifteen-year-old daughter, who spent three years at his place.

Jacob Schiff described his stay in Japan in a letter to his family:

“Everybody from the Mikado down does his utmost to be kind to us, and we have therefore been given an opportunity to study every phase of life in Japan. The day after our arrival in Tokio, the Emperor received me in special audience, bestowed upon me the Order of the Rising Sun, and gave a luncheon in my honor for about fifteen people. (...) After this a succession of dinners and garden festivals followed, on the part of the American Chargé d’Affaires, the Minister of Finance, the directors of the Bank of Japan, etc. (...)

The Government [of Japan – author’s note] appears to be perfectly organized, to be proceeding conscientiously in all departments, and not to be greatly influenced by public opinion. (...) It rather seems to me that the chief strength of the country must be sought in the continued development of industry.”<sup>21</sup>

Schiff appeared in Japan once again in 1917, as the president of the American Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, to ask for approval to make Kobe and Yokohama the transit centers for Jewish immigrants.<sup>22</sup> AHIAS had one temporary seat in Yokohama, but also another in Harbin, where residents were Jews with Russian roots. Schiff died two years later in New York.

In 1911, Takahashi Korekiyo became President of the Bank of Japan. Two years later, for the first time, he became the Minister of Finance, a position which he held six times. In 1921 he was elected Prime Minister of Japan. He played this role for less than a year, from November until July 1922.<sup>23</sup> Takahashi was murdered in 1936 during the February 26 Incident<sup>24</sup>.

### Cooperation in supporting the Japanese government during the Russo-Japanese War

A very important source of information about Schiff’s attitude toward the Japanese matter is his collected letters<sup>25</sup>; on the basis of Jacob Schiff’s correspondence and Takashi

<sup>17</sup> Cyrus Adler, Mortimer L. Schiff, *Jacob H. Schiff: His Life and Letters Part I*, New York: Doubleday, Doran: Garden City, 1928, p. 228.

<sup>18</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>19</sup> Shillony, *The Jewish...*

<sup>20</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>21</sup> Adler, Schiff, *Jacob H. Schiff...*, pp. 235–236.

<sup>22</sup> David Kranzler, *Japan before and during the Holocaust*, in *The World Reacts to Holocaust*, David S. Wyman (ed.), Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995, p. 555.

<sup>23</sup> Ewa Pałasz-Rutkowska, *Polityka Japonii wobec Polski 1918–1941* [Japanese Policy toward Poland 1918–1941], Warszawa: Nozomi, 1998, p. 57.

<sup>24</sup> Attacks organized by nationalists, who blamed liberals for the destruction of the national character of Japan. 1400 soldiers took part in those attacks. Besides Takahashi, the PM Saitō and PM Okada’s brother-in-law were also killed.

<sup>25</sup> Adler, Schiff, *Jacob H. Schiff...*

Korekiyo's diaries, the cooperation between the American banker and the Japanese government will be analyzed.

Schiff became seriously interested in the Japanese case in 1904. Information regarding this matter can be found in Takahashi's his notes, in which he described Schiff and their cooperation in detail.<sup>26</sup>

"It was one evening toward the end of April, 1904, that I met Mr. Schiff for the first time. I had then just arrived in London as Special Financial Commissioner of the Imperial Japanese Government. The Russo-Japanese War having broken out in February of that year, I had been despatched there with the mission of watching the financial interests of my country and negotiating loans for our Government according to needs and opportunities (...).

I crossed the Atlantic with the hope that conditions in London would be comparatively favourable to the prosecution of my task. (...)

It was at the juncture that I happened to sit by the side of Mr. Schiff at a dinner given by my personal friend, Mr. Arthur Hill. Mr. Schiff was introduced to me simply as an American financier on his way home from a visit to the Continent. I had not then a clear notion of this position and personality; but finding him uncommonly interested in the war as well as in the affairs of Japan, I naturally did my best to explain to him the situation of my country. (...) On the following day I received from Mr. A.A. Shand of Parr's Bank the intimation that an American banker was inclined to take up the issue of the remaining portion of our loan then under negotiation, and I learned that the banker was no other person than Mr. Schiff, of Messrs. Kuhl, Loeb & Co, of New York (...). It must be remembered that all this came to pass before Japan won the battle of the Yalu, which was ended on the 1st of May. Mr. Schiff's move to throw in his lot with Japan was taken before her first decisive victory. (...) Within a few days of the memorable battle, the necessary agreements and arrangements between the Japanese Government, the British issuing banks, and Messrs. Kuhl, Loeb & Co. were concluded. (...) The result was the issue on the 11<sup>th</sup> of May of the Imperial Government's 6 per cent. Sterling Loan for £10,000,000<sup>27</sup>. The American portion of £5,000,000 was purchased from the British group by Messrs. Kuhl, Loeb & Co., and was issued in New York on the same Day as in London by the group consisting of Mr. Schiff's firm, the National City Bank, and the National Bank of Commerce. (...)

How Mr. Schiff became interested in Japan I did not know fully at the time. He left London soon after the conclusion of the negotiations. (...)

Shortly after the flotation of our second 6 per cent. loan, I returned home with the object of verbally reporting to the Government on various aspects of our financial operations abroad. Stopping on the way in New York, I was able to exchange views with Mr. Schiff in a mutually frank and whole-hearted manner. (...) His initial move in taking the side of Japan was avowedly actuated by his ideas about Russia. (...) I saw in him a true friend of my country, and my personal friendship with him may also be said to date from that time. (...)

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 213.

<sup>27</sup> The unit with the highest face value was the British pound sterling. It was equal to the amount of 4.50 Portuguese escudos; 4.87 US (and Canadian) dollars; 9.40 Russian roubles; 9.76 Japanese yen; 12.10 Dutch guilders; 18.16 Scandinavian (Swedish, Danish and Norwegian) crowns; 20.43 German marks; 24.01 Austrian crowns. Source: [http://www.gazetabankowa.pl/pl/dokumenty/Historia1900\\_1909](http://www.gazetabankowa.pl/pl/dokumenty/Historia1900_1909) (accessed 24.05.2008).

Mr. Schiff was joyous over the substantial success of our arms [in 1905 – author’s note]. It was a source of great satisfaction to him that what he expected of Japan at the outset was being fulfilled. Discussing the prospect of the loan under consideration, Mr. Schiff assured me that he would concur in any terms that might be argued upon between the Japanese Government and the London group. With this *carte blanche* from him, I went over to England (...) The result was the issue on March 28<sup>th</sup> of the Imperial Japanese Government 4,5 per cent. Sterling Loan of £30,000,000 (...) All the arrangements were completed in a few days and the Imperial Japanese Government 4,5 per cent. Sterling Loan (second series) for £30,000,000 was issued on the 11<sup>th</sup> of the month [July – author’s note], the amount being equally divided among the three countries. The German group consisted of the Deutsch – Asiatische Bank, with whom eleven leading banks were associated, and Messrs. M.M. Wartburg & Co.”.<sup>28</sup>

Regarding Jacob Schiff’s remarks, it is worth mentioning that he had referred to Japan in his correspondence a long time before the Russo-Japanese War started, namely in 1891, when in a letter addressed to General James Wilson he wrote:

“Did you read of the death of Koyinira Yoshida<sup>29</sup>? I was indeed sorry to learn that so brilliant and comparatively young a man, who I believe has done more than many others of his countrymen to spread civilization in Japan, has been taken away”.<sup>30</sup>

Details of the first negotiations held by Schiff and Takahashi, about which Takahashi wrote in his diary, are confirmed by the letter sent by Lord Revel Stoke of Baring Bros. & Co. on May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1904, which remarked his gratitude for the cooperation with regard to the loan granted to the Japanese government. Meanwhile, the consul-general of Japan in New York and Count Cassini, the ambassador at Washington, received checks for \$10,000, with an annotation that these were anonymous contributions to the war with Russia.

On August 25, 1905, before the peace settlement between Japan and Russia in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Schiff sent the following letter to Takahira Kogorō:

“Bar Harbor, August 25, 1905.  
His Excellency, K. Takahira,  
Minister of Japan and Envoy Plenipotentiary,  
Portsmouth, N. H.

Dear Mr. Minister:

I have greatly hesitated whether I should address you, and I earnestly beg of you in advance that you do not misunderstand the purpose and spirit of this letter. I know Japan needs the advice of no one, and that those who at this crucial moment have the responsibility to decide whether the war shall be continued or not must best know what the interest of their country demands. I have thought, however, that an expression of my part as to the effect of a continuation of the war upon the borrowing powers of Japan in foreign markets might not be unwelcome to Baron Komura and you, and it is upon this I have concluded to write you.

<sup>28</sup> Adler, Schiff, *Jacob H. Schiff*..., pp. 213–226.

<sup>29</sup> Schiff was thinking about Yoshida Kiyonari, the student of Mori Arinori, the Japanese politician and businessman who was also active in the US and Great Britain.

<sup>30</sup> Adler, Schiff, *Jacob H. Schiff*..., p. 212.

It is quite evident, if the reestablishment of peace does not result from the present negotiations, the conclusion will force itself upon the Word that the war must be continued *à outrance*, or until either Japan or Russia shall become completely exhausted. It is true, Russia will not be able to find money to any large extent for a continuation of the war, either in Paris or Berlin, but she will at once have recourse to her very considerable gold reserve and will not hesitate to abandon the gold standard for the time being. It will be a terrible blow to her commerce, to her national credit and to her entire future, but she will in the hour of her despair not flinch from inflicting it in order to secure the sinews of war.

As to Japan, there will be an immediate fall in the price of her foreign Loans of from 5 to 10 per cent. This in itself would be nothing. When investors buy bonds at war prices, they must also take the chances which war brings with it. What I do apprehend, however, is that the money markets of the United States, England, and Germany will, with the belief of a war *à l'outrance*, no longer be prepared to finance Japan's requirements to any great extent. It is this I deemed my duty to say to you and Baron Komura, though I shall add the assurance that my own firm will stand by Japan with all the resources and influence at its command, whatever may come of the negotiations at Portsmouth.

With expressions of high esteem, both for you and Baron Komura, I am,  
Yours most faithfully,  
Jacob H. Schiff".<sup>31</sup>

In 1907, the Japanese government offered to change the war rates from 6 per cent to 5 per cent. This was during the entering the global crisis in 1907, which was the effect of the end of Russo-Japanese war and the earthquake in San Francisco, and was due to the monopolization of a great part of the world economy.

During that time, Schiff wrote to Takahashi:

"Bonds in Paris and London is naturally not as advantageous to your Government as had been moped, yet with the great change which has come over the international money markets, and which for the time being has practically closed the American market not only to foreign, but also to the best Home investment, I think it is an accomplishment that you can be proud of to float £23,000,000 of 5 per cent.".<sup>32</sup>

When after the Russo-Japanese War, the specific political, economic and military interests of Japan in Korea were accepted under the Portsmouth Treaty (*Pōtsumasu-jōyaku*), the American legacy was closed and moved to Tokyo.<sup>33</sup> The then American consul, Willard Straight, was delegated to Mukden as a consul general. During that time, the question arose of which power would take control over the Trans-Siberian railway, as part of the plan for a global transport system. Schiff postulated that control should be taken by Japan, which was mentioned in his letters.<sup>34</sup>

The correspondence of Jacob Schiff depicted above and the parts of Takahashi Korekiyo's diary collected in *Jacob H. Schiff: His Life and Letters*, help us to examine the question of gaining financial support for the war with Russia more closely.

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., pp. 231–232.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., pp. 239–240.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p. 246.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p. 247.

### Jacob Schiff and his interest in Japanese policy

The Japanese case was also the subject of correspondence between Jacob Schiff and leading representatives of the United States government. Privately, remarks and observations regarding the situation in Japan can also be found in the banker's private correspondence.

During his first official visit to Japan, which took place just after the end of the Russo-Japanese War, Schiff assessed the policy of the Japanese government in a letter addressed to his family:

"Japanese Policy is very evidently directing all its attention to the creation of new markets by colonization, especially in Korea and Manchuria. There is no doubt that everything is being done to bring China and her great resources under Japanese influence".<sup>35</sup>

Also, in official letters sent by Schiff to the dignitaries, the subject of the Japanese policy was mentioned. In the letter dated November 5, 1908, which was addressed to the President of the United States, the banker describes the situation in the Country of the Rising Sun in the following way:

"The people of Japan, who in recent years have so greatly astonished the World, have, as part of the government, a class called 'The Elder Statesmen'.<sup>36</sup> These are men, generally four or five in number, whose worth has been tried for a long number of years in the service of their country, and who, when their active career ends, are called to the side of the Emperor, as his counselors upon questions of great moment to the Empire. Their advice is considered so potent that neither the Emperor nor the Diet would think of ignoring it. It is given with great deliberation, always prevails, and has saved the nation from many errors which otherwise might have been committed".<sup>37</sup>

Jacob Schiff also described his observations of the Japanese in his letters. This correspondence helps us to have a closer look at the life of the Japanese upper classes, forty years after the beginning of the modernization of this country. From part of a letter dated April 8, 1906:

"Mr. Takahashi himself lives according to the Japanese custom, but we got along quite well at a luncheon which we took at his house, sitting and eating in the Japanese custom".<sup>38</sup>

In the same letter one can find another reference to the citizens of Japan:

"The impression I have formed of the people [of Japan – author's note] is that they are possessed of great intelligence, industry, and modesty".<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Adler, Schiff, *Jacob H. Schiff...*, p. 236.

<sup>36</sup> He meant the Japanese oligarchy formed from the most active members of the Meiji reforms, who contributed to overthrow of the Shogunate system, and who descended from the samurai middle class from feudal principalities in the south-west of Japan.

<sup>37</sup> Adler, Schiff, *Jacob H. Schiff...*, Part 2, p. 33.

<sup>38</sup> C. Adler, M. L. Schiff, *Jacob H. Schiff...*, Part 1, p. 235.

In subsequent years Schiff often examined the topic of Japanese foreign policy, especially towards China. In a letter written on September 3, 1919, addressed to Takahashi, he peremptorily criticized the problem of Shantung:<sup>40</sup>

“As to China, it is very much to be hoped that Japan and China may between themselves find a satisfactory solution, which at present is being used to so unjustifiable an extent for ulterior purposes, to create discord between Japan and the United States, which I am sure, neither in your nor our own country, no honest and patriotic citizen desires”.<sup>41</sup>

Schiff intervened especially strongly on American policy toward China. He insisted that the American authorities undertake cooperation with Japan and work together for the development of China. His proposals were shown in a letter written to the Counselor to the Department of State:

“The relations of the United States with China and also with Japan have, for a very long time, occupied my mind to a considerable extent, and as you may perhaps remember my having said to you personally at Bar Harbor, my conviction is that it is better for China that Japan be permitted to play the role of big brother to her than if this be opposed, (...). Japan, because of Her nearness to China, of Her own experience gained since the days of Perry, of the ability and efficiency of Her people and government, and for other reasons, understands better than perhaps China herself, and certainly better than any other nation, the needs of China and the manner in which it will be possible to organize China into a modern state, and should be rather encouraged than discouraged in this task which Japan has set for herself, and in which she has already gone a good ways forward, even if she is doing this, no doubt to a great extent, from selfish motives. The proper remedy appears to me to be that we get alongside Japan in the reorganization of China; that to some extent we join hands with Japan in the labor of modernization which has to be done in China, and for which China needs outside help and cooperation. What will be needed more than anything else by China is Money, and in amounts which Japan cannot possibly furnish, and I believe, because of this, she will welcome our cooperation (...). We could thus not only render a considerable service to China and to the World in general, but our country would gain tremendous advantages, aside from the most important fact that the, to say the least, unpleasant and irritating Japanese question would thus be made possible of entire removal”.<sup>42</sup>

## Conclusion

Basing on the aforementioned portion of the correspondence, we can assume that Japanese problems were never indifferent to Jacob Schiff. In 1920 the banker was still in

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 236.

<sup>40</sup> After a secret agreement with France, Great Britain and Italy in 1917, Japan was to receive former German colonies in the Far East. Therefore, during the Paris Peace Conference, such arrangements were officially confirmed. This resulted in a discontent of China, due to the lack of decision on the transfer of Shandong to the Chinese authorities.

<sup>41</sup> Adler, Schiff, *Jacob H. Schiff... , Part 2*, p. 208.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., pp. 261–262.

touch, privately as well as officially, with Takahashi, cooperating with him regarding the Chinese case. Schiff, who always cared about Japanese policy, openly criticized and gave advice regarding the policy of Japan. Moreover, he always supported the Japanese government's decisions, and often acted as a middleman between Japan and the US.

Analyzing the sources which provide us with the private opinions of those two important figures is extremely helpful in discovering the sources of Japanese success in the Russo-Japanese War. It is worth emphasizing that no one can answer whether it would have been possible to win the war without the financial support from the West, something which was possible only because of the private aversions of certain people. Those dislikes helped Japan to gain fellow feelings and support, especially in the US, even if the general attitude of Americans was often very racist.<sup>43</sup> They also were helpful in helping Japan 'join the club' of world powers, which came to a head during World War I. The victory in the Russo-Japanese War was certainly the first political milestone in Japan becoming a global power and assuming a leading position in the world.

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<sup>43</sup> For more details: Walter LaFeber, *The Clash: U.S.–Japanese Relations throughout History*, London and New York: W.W. Norton&Company, 1998.

KAROLINA BROMA-SMENDA

## *Enjo-kōsai* (compensated dating) in Contemporary Japanese Society as Seen through the Lens of the Play *Call Me Komachi*

### Abstract

The practice of *enjo-kōsai* ('compensated dating') arose in the mid-1990s in Japan. It is a trend where an older, wealthy man sponsors attractive and significantly younger women (often high school girls) for their companionship and sometimes sexual services. Those young girls, by becoming involved in an *enjo-kōsai* relationship, are trying to make money to purchase brand clothes and accessories. *Call Me Komachi* (2003) is a play which deals with the *enjo-kōsai* problem. The main protagonist is a high school girl named Reika, who has an older sponsor. Ono no Komachi, who is mentioned in the title of a play, was a famous Japanese poet of the early Heian Period. Why is a poet from ancient Japan mentioned in the title of a play about a problem of modern Japanese society?

### Introduction

Since the mid-1990s, the phenomenon called *enjo-kōsai* 援助交際 (compensated dating)<sup>1</sup> has become quite common practice in the contemporary Japanese society. According to the *Hyakkajiten Maipedia* (Encyclopedia Maipedia), the term *enjo-kōsai* generally refers to a situation in which female students from junior and senior high schools try to make extra money by dating older men. Then, the girls can spend the extra money on brand clothes and accessories.<sup>2</sup> The man engaged in sponsoring attractive and significantly younger women (in the form of financial support or luxurious gifts) in exchange for their companionship is often called a "sugar daddy" (*shugā dadī*).<sup>3</sup> The *Genius Japanese-English Dictionary*, besides translating the term *enjo-kōsai* as "compensated dating", also presents two additional meanings for it: "schoolgirl prostitution" and "sugar daddy business".<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The term *enjo-kōsai* literally means a 'mutually-beneficial relationship'. See Mamoru Fukutomi, 'An Analytical Study on the Causes of and Attitudes toward «Enjo-Kōsai» among Female High School Students in Japan', Asian Women's Fund, 1997, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Hyakkajiten Maipedia* [Encyclopedia Maipedia], Hitachi Shisutemu Indosaabisu, electronic dictionary.

<sup>3</sup> *Pāsonaru katakana go jiten* [Personal Dictionary of *katakana*], Gakken, electronic dictionary.

<sup>4</sup> *Jiniasu waei jiten dai ni han* [Genius Japanese-English Dictionary, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition], Taishukan, electronic dictionary.

The *enjo-kōsai* phenomenon received relatively wide coverage in the major Japanese media seventeen years ago.<sup>5</sup> In fact, this type of ‘compensated dating’ was mostly considered to be a form of child prostitution, which by definition always involves some forms of sexual activity.<sup>6</sup> Probably due to the media focus on the *enjo-kōsai* phenomenon, it has been researched in both Japan and in the West. The sociologist Kōji Maruta explored the case of *enjo-kōsai* from the point of view of gender, love and communication.<sup>7</sup> In a publication entitled *Sei no jiko kettei genron* (Theories of Sexual Self-determination) from 1998, there is a whole chapter presenting the practice of *enjo-kōsai*.<sup>8</sup> The phenomenon of ‘compensated dating’ in Japan has also been researched by Western scholars; one such publication is entitled *Schoolgirls, Money and Rebellion in Japan* by Sharon Kinsella (2014), which explores the history and politics underlying the cult of girls in contemporary Japanese media and culture. Kinsella attempts to present a picture of contemporary Japanese society from the 1990s to the start of the 2010s.<sup>9</sup> Here, it ought to be emphasized that I have not carried out any practical research specifically into the case of *enjo-kōsai*, and so I will base my analysis on publications and research reports connected to ‘compensated dating’. Most of the sources I will present or quote in this paper were published between 1997 and 2007, since within that period of time *enjo-kōsai* was an important feature of academic works and media content in Japan.<sup>10</sup>

Finally, literature, films and popular culture dealt with the *enjo-kōsai* problem by tending to present it in a rather negative light. One example of this is a modern play entitled *Call Me Komachi* (2003). It is a one-woman play co-authored by Christie Nieman, an Australian writer; Kaori Hamamoto, a Japanese actress; and Miki Ogawa, a Japanese theatre director. The genesis of this play originated during one of

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<sup>5</sup> The peak of media focus on *enjo-kōsai* was in 1997, when the term ‘compensated dating’ was used almost 60 times in articles, titles and headlines in Japanese media. See Sharon Kinsella, *Schoolgirls, Money and Rebellion in Japan*, New York: Routledge, 2014, p. 11.

<sup>6</sup> There are different definitions of ‘prostitution’ in various sources. It is believed that the term derives from the Latin word *prostitutio*, which describes a person engaged in sexual intercourse for financial gain. Other sources explain that the term ‘prostitution’ derives from Latin verb *prostare*, which can be translated as ‘to place forward’, ‘to put up front for sale’. The Polish sexologist Prof. Zbigniew Lew-Starowicz defines prostitution as an act of sexual intercourse (hetero- or homosexual) for financial reward. He considers prostitution to be a kind of ‘service’, where the body of a prostituting person is a ‘product’ being bought by a client. There is no emotional bond. Renata Gardian-Miałkowska, a pedagogue from the Maria Grzegorzewska Academy of Special Education, emphasizes that nowadays prostitution has various forms. One of them is called ‘sponsoring’, which is a trend, when young and educated women offer sexual services in exchange for financial support or luxurious gifts. See Katarzyna Charkowska, *Zjawisko prostytucji w doświadczeniach prostytutkiujących się kobiet* [The Case of Prostitution through Experiences of Female Prostitutes], Kraków: Impuls, 2012, pp. 11–16.

<sup>7</sup> See Kōji Maruta, *Dare ga dare ni nani wo uru no ka?* [Who Sells What to Whom?], Nishinomiya: Kwansei Gakuin University Press, 2001.

<sup>8</sup> See Yukiko Hayami, ‘Enjo-kōsai wo sentaku suru shōjo tachi’ [Girls Who Choose *enjo-kōsai*], in *Sei no jiko kettei genron* [Theories of Sexual Self-determination], Shinji Miyadai, Yukiko Hayami, Naohide Yamamoto (eds.), Tokyo: Kinokuniya Shoten, 1998, pp. 15–38.

<sup>9</sup> See Kinsella, *Schoolgirls, Money and Rebellion...*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 10–11.

Hamamoto's<sup>11</sup> frequent trips to Japan, during which she noticed that adolescent girls were in the habit of dressing in a sexy and childlike manner. Thus, the main subjects of the play are teenage females, one of whom, named Reika, is making money by acquiring an older man, who agrees to sponsor her. Two other characters in the play are geishas<sup>12</sup>, since Hamamoto compares the trend of 'compensated dating' to the subservience of geishas from the pre-World War II period. Moreover, the title of a play contains the name 'Komachi', a clear reference to Ono no Komachi (c. 825–c. 900), who was a famous court female poet of the early Heian Period (8<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> centuries), renowned for her beauty. Representations of Ono no Komachi in a number of literary works often combine a strong image of a seductive *femme fatale* notorious for rejecting her suitors, which likely has its origin in the fact that it is believed that when Ono no Komachi became old she lost her beauty, and she ended her life as a lonely and insane woman, because she did not get married.

Although Ono no Komachi lived more than a thousand years ago, she is still present in Japanese culture. It is thus crucial to explore why her name is utilized in the title of a play about 'compensated dating'. I will argue that the image of Ono no Komachi in the play *Call me Komachi* is an extreme example of medievalization<sup>13</sup> and marginalization<sup>14</sup>, since she is often connected with improper behavior, and she appears in Japanese medieval<sup>15</sup> didactic works as an example of a 'fallen woman'. In this paper I will demonstrate that her constructed representation is the very reason why she was included in the title of the play *Call Me Komachi*. What does 'Komachi' mean? Call me who? A beauty? Or a fallen lady? What kind of connection links Ono no Komachi, a poet from the Heian period, with girls engaged in *enjo-kōsai*?

This article is an attempt to clarify possible reasons for which the name of Ono no Komachi is mentioned not only in the title, but also in the text of the play. I begin my analysis with a definition of the *enjo-kōsai* practice. Then, I will present some facts about the historical figure known as Ono no Komachi, as well as some information about her

<sup>11</sup> Kaori Hamamoto has lived in Australia since 1992.

<sup>12</sup> Geisha (*geigi* or *geiko*) is a traditional Japanese female entertainer, whose skills include various arts like dancing, singing and playing music. Geishas as male companions at banquets were specialized only in traditional Japanese arts in opposite to courtesans (*yūjo*). The origins of the geisha's profession are located in the Hōreki Era (1751–1764). See *Hyakkajiten Maipedia*...

<sup>13</sup> Medievalization is a process of legendarization made according and due to certain notions characteristic for the Japanese medieval period. According to Susan Matisoff's research, people from medieval times learned about the aristocratic culture of Heian Period through literature and drama. It seems that much information was added to legends about earlier poets and writers to attract the attention of the audience. Ono no Komachi was not the only one who underwent the medievalization process. Other poets whose famous lives were described in legends are Ariwara Narihira (825–880), Semimaru (early Heian Period) or Izumi Shikibu (mid-Heian Period). See Susan Matisoff, *The Legend of Semimaru. Blind Musician of Japan*, Boston: Cheng & Tsui Company, 2006, pp. 11–19.

<sup>14</sup> Terry Kawashima defines the 'margin' as an unstable and negotiable result of textual effects generated by authors and compilers who desire to promote certain ideas and practices at the expense of the targets of marginalization. See Terry Kawashima, *Writing Margins: The Textual Construction of Gender in Heian and Kamakura Japan*, Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2001, pp. 1–23.

constructed representations. Since the image of a misbehaving woman is often attached to Ono no Komachi, I consider that her name is used in a play rather negatively. Christie Nieman, one of the play's coauthors, noted that girls involved in *enjo-kōsai* are usually considered to be evil villains by the Japanese media.<sup>16</sup> Subsequently, I analyze the text of the play *Call Me Komachi* in order to determine how the trend of 'compensated dating' is presented, and how the name of Ono no Komachi became attached to it. Finally, this article also attempts to answer the question of whether *enjo-kōsai* is only a Japanese phenomenon.

### ***Enjo-kōsai* – girlhood for sale**

The term *enjo-kōsai* was recognized in Japanese society at the beginning of the 1980s. At that time, it was used to refer to long-term 'contractual' relationships between women working in the sex industry and male customers.<sup>17</sup> In the early 1990s the phrase was picked up by women who used so-called telephone clubs (*terekura*). Telephone clubs were places where men could leave messages and wait for calls back from women interested in meeting them. Finally, from 1994, the term *enjo-kōsai* started refer to paid dates with high school girls. It seems that in the mid-1990s most school girls were using the phrase to mean payment for sexual intercourse.<sup>18</sup> It seems that the problem of 'compensated dating' is related to the materialistic culture that values brand-name clothes higher than ethics. The mainstream mass media and advertising tycoons encouraged young women to appreciate commodities by famous designers like Dior, Prada or Chanel. Adolescent girls are usually susceptible to such influential media, so the urge to purchase expensive brand-name clothes often becomes the main goal of their lives. In the case of middle-class teenagers, their pocket money is usually not enough to buy all the things they desire. Thus, a lot of them decide to start an *enjo-kōsai* relationship with an older man who pays for their companionship.

Jennifer Liddy, who worked as an English teacher at high school in Asahimura (Niigata prefecture), noticed girls involved in *enjo-kōsai* practice in her school, and she described them in the article 'Name Brand Beauties for Sale' for freezerbox.com in the following manner:

Two girls spread out on the sidewalk in front of the 7-Eleven 24-hour convenience store. It's past midnight but the air is balmy and smells of sea breeze, grilled meat and train exhaust. The girl on the left is named Mariko. She wears a Gucci, triangle-cut, tight, short-sleeved, powder-blue T-shirt with psychedelic butterfly decals. Her friend, Yumi, looks identical, except for her hair, which is clipped up in a knot and held by a

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<sup>15</sup> In addition to popularizing the court literature from the Heian Period among lower social classes, another characteristic for the Japanese medieval period is the idea of *mappō* (the age in which the Buddha's law will degenerate) and the generally strong influence of Buddhism. See Barbara Ruch, 'Medieval Jongleurs and the Making of National Literature', in *Japan in the Muromachi Age*, John W. Hall and Takeshi Toyoda (eds.), Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1977, pp. 279–309.

<sup>16</sup> Jacqueline Maley, 'Who's Your Sugar Daddy?', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, July 9, 2004, <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2004/07/08/1089000287054.html> (accessed 29.06.2013).

<sup>17</sup> Fukutomi, 'An Analytical Study on...', p. 4.

<sup>18</sup> Kinsella, *Schoolgirls, Money and Rebellion...*, pp. 27–28.

Burberry's barrette. They both carry Fendi bags that match the black DKNY jeans they have cut down into short-shorts. They're cute as in Hello Kitty cute, not the sexy nymphs they think they are with their expensive name brand clothes. They look comic with smudges of Channel purple metallic lipstick on their front teeth. Their Dior sapphire-blue eye shadow drives their eyes inward, making them look a little like cross-eyed circus clown. They clutch their Peace brand cigarettes, letting the smoke pour out their mouths, suggesting to anyone who takes a second look that they're just normal, average Japanese teenagers.<sup>19</sup>

Mariko and Yumi are typical examples of high school girls who are engaged in *enjo-kōsai*. During the daytime, they are high school students dressed in school uniforms, dreaming of Brad Pitt and thinking about attending the university after graduation.<sup>20</sup> But Mariko and Yumi are not troublemakers, they help their ageing grandparents and parents with their younger siblings. They listen to their teachers and they appear to be smart students. However, in the evening or at the weekend the same girls put on brand-name clothes and they go out for a date with older men. Mariko and Yumi usually arrange their dates at an agreed place, where they are picked up by their 'dates'. They all go to a restaurant, pub or karaoke bar for several hours. After that, the girls are paid for their time. During one of those 'dates' each of them could earn up to 8000 yen<sup>21</sup> (c. US\$82).

The *enjo-kōsai* practice is strongly connected, like everything in Japan, to the development of technology. In the mid-1990s, teenage girls began to use telephone clubs. Then, some girls started meeting the callers in person.<sup>22</sup> For example, Reika, a protagonist in the play *Call Me Komachi*, joins a telephone club, where she leaves a message saying that she is looking for a relationship with a man, and that she likes Walt Disney and fluffy things.<sup>23</sup> That is how she eventually finds her 'date' and later sponsor.

Another way to arrange *enjo-kōsai* meetings in Japan nowadays is via cell phones, which Japanese young people use literally everywhere at all times.<sup>24</sup> Firstly, girls register their mobile phone numbers on a special website called *deai kei saito* (the 'match making' website). Then, they wait for calls from men who are looking for dates, conversation, dinner and sometimes something more, in other words for sexual intercourse. That is probably why in Jennifer Liddy's opinion, *enjo-kōsai* is an euphemism for teenage prostitution:

The Japanese call what Yumi and Mariko 'do' *enjokosai*. [...] *Enjokosai* is a touchy and sometimes embarrassing subject to discuss. Many Japanese choose to ignore the fact that it provides more money than a female adolescent will ever earn at a part time job. [...]

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<sup>19</sup> Jennifer Liddy, 'Name Brand Beauties for Sale', freezerbox.com, March 14, 2002, <http://www.freezerbox.com/archive/article.php?id=188> (accessed 29.06.2013).

<sup>20</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>21</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>22</sup> Laura Miller, 'Those Naughty Teenage Girls: Japanese Kogals, Slang and Media Assessments', *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, Vol. 14, Issue 2, American Anthropological Association, 2004, p. 239.

<sup>23</sup> Christie Nieman, *Call Me Komachi*, Melbourne: Lemon Tart Productions and Playworks, 2003, pp. 3–4.

<sup>24</sup> According to the Nomura Research Institute, in 2003 95.7% of Japanese women under the age of 20 had a cell phone or a pager. See Miller, 'Those Naughty Teenage Girls...', p. 229.

Enjokosai is a hush-hush style of teenage prostitution. Unlike the horror stories of chained-up, child prostitutes, enjokosai doesn't happen in back alleys. These girls don't hustle on the streets. There's no Pimp-san lurking in the shadows.<sup>25</sup>

Due to the increase in 'match making' websites and the number of girls engaged in 'compensated dating', in the 1990s *enjo-kōsai* became a hot topic in the major Japanese media, since it was considered to be a form of teenage prostitution. The public opinion was shocked, because the men who were 'buying sex' included people of high public trust, such as teachers, police officers and even court judges.<sup>26</sup> In 1997 the Asian Women's Fund<sup>27</sup> asked Mamoru Fukutomi, a psychology professor from Tokyo Gakugei University, to conduct a survey on *enjo-kōsai*. Firstly, he randomly selected about 960 high school female students between the ages of 15 to 18 to poll. About 63% of them (600) responded to his survey. Fukutomi found out that 2.3% of girls who had experienced *enjo-kōsai* had had sex, another 2.3% of respondents had engaged in other sexual activities (like kissing or oral sex), and 4.8% of girls had merely talked or had drinks with their 'dates'.<sup>28</sup> When the girls were asked about the reasons that caused them to have sex with older men, they responded as follows:

[...] 13 girls said they wanted money. Four did it because a man suggested it. Three girls thought it caused no problems with anyone else. Three did it for fun. Two did it because they knew they could quit at any time. One girl said she wanted stimulation, another was lonely, and another just let it happen without much thought, while another said she needed to blow off some steam and another girl wanted to have sex.<sup>29</sup>

Fukutomi argues that these young girls are victimized by men. He believes that girls need brand-name clothes and accessories because they provide them with a good reputation at school. Moreover, Fukutomi emphasizes that Japan's sex culture is peculiar and that men's views on sexuality are highly influenced by the mass media, which create a widespread image of younger partners as more attractive:

[...] we can see that the images of 'enjo-kōsai' which appear in the media are not portrayed with sensitivity to the humans rights of women. This reflects the common attitude in Japan that school girls are sexual objects.

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<sup>25</sup> Liddy, 'Name Brand Beauties...'.

<sup>26</sup> Ibidem.

In May 1999, Satō Toshiyuki, a senior official in the Foreign Ministry, was arrested for paying junior high school girls to watch him perform indecent acts. See Kinsella, *Schoolgirls, Money and Rebellion...*, p. 43.

<sup>27</sup> The Asian Women's Fund (*zaidan hojin josei no tame no ajia heiwa kokumin kikin*; also abbreviated to *ajia josei kikin*) was a fund set up by the Japanese government in 1994 to distribute compensation to 'comfort women' (a.k.a. 'wartime comfort women' (*ianfu*), who were taken to former Japanese military comfort stations for a certain period during wartime and forced to provide sexual services to officers and soldiers) in South Korea, the Philippines, Taiwan, the Netherlands and Indonesia. The fund was dissolved on March 21, 2007. See 'Digital Museum: The Comfort Women Issue and the Asian Women's Fund', [www.awf.or.jp/index.html](http://www.awf.or.jp/index.html) (accessed 13.10.2013).

<sup>28</sup> Mamoru Fukutomi, '*Enjo-kōsai* ni tai suru joshi kōkōsei no ishiki to haikai yōin – hōkokusho [Environmental Factors Influencing High School Girls and Their Consciousness in Relation to Compensated Dating – Report]', Asian Women's Fund, 1998, p. 13.

<sup>29</sup> Liddy, 'Name Brand Beauties...'.

In pornographic magazines, comics, and videos, female students are exploited as sexual subjects. However, the mainstream media, whilst occasionally discussing 'enjo-kōsai' in serious terms, does not pay enough attention to the human rights of female high school girls. Sexual images of female students in the media are pervasive. These influence the students' own self-image, which in turn leads to their secondly and tertiary sexual exploitation.<sup>30</sup>

Sharon Kinsella also discusses 'compensated dating' as a media phenomenon, attempting to present how the image of the 'deviant girls subculture' was created by weekly magazines written by and for older male readers. Moreover, she points out that about 30% of porn movies produced in 1996 were about high school girls, increasing to about 60% in 1997.<sup>31</sup> Liddy, like Fukutomi, describes the girls involved in *enjo-kōsai* as victims of men. Furthermore, she calls the men buying time and sex from young girls paedophiles who are escaping justice.<sup>32</sup> Liddy noticed that the majority of Japanese people blame the young girls when a criminal case of *enjo-kōsai* involves sexual abuse, rape, assault and battery etc. occurs. Then those girls are considered to be law-breakers, who themselves solicited dates with older men. Usually, nobody thinks about men's guilt or asks why older men want to spend time with a girl who could be their daughter's age.<sup>33</sup> Although Japan is considered to be one of the safest countries in the world, there are cases when a man abuses his power in a relationship with the teenager he is 'dating'. Liddy gives an example of such a case in her article:

Before I came to Asahi Mura there was a horrible case of enjokosai that caused national attention. [...] one very lost girl, whom we will call Girl X, became involved in enjokosai but couldn't keep herself together. Two years ago during the summer, Girl X had a 'fling' with a 38-year-old big paedophile. From a town 2 hours away, he was practically unknown. He was good looking, a big spender, and moved slow. Slow enough that when he did ask for sexual favors, Girl X couldn't say no. He wanted a threesome; he got it. He wanted to watch as she masturbated, fine. He wanted [anal sex], he did. By that November, the girl had a confirmed diagnosis of an STD, a pregnancy scare, and a black eye. Then she ran away to Tokyo. Her family can only guess what has happened to her.<sup>34</sup>

Even Mariko and Yumi consider Girl X as the one who got involved too much and forgot who she was. Like other girls who are experiencing *enjo-kōsai*, they are not afraid of being raped or hurt by a 'date'. Those girls often argue that 'selling sex to adults for money is a personal affair'.<sup>35</sup> Concern about being raped is nothing in comparison with money they can earn. It may be concluded that what those young girls do might be called transforming their sexuality into financial benefits.

<sup>30</sup> Fukutomi, 'An Analytical Study on...', pp. 5–6.

<sup>31</sup> Kinsella, *Schoolgirls, Money and Rebellion...*, pp. 39–59.

<sup>32</sup> Liddy, 'Name Brand Beauties...'.  
<sup>33</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>34</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>35</sup> Jamie Smyth, 'Enjo-kōsai: Teen Prostitution, a Reflection of Society's Ills', *The Tokyo Weekender*, September 4, 1998, [http://flatrock.org.nz/topics/men/name\\_brand\\_beauties\\_on\\_sale.htm](http://flatrock.org.nz/topics/men/name_brand_beauties_on_sale.htm) (accessed 29.06.2013).

However, there are also perspectives in Japan which underline the ‘empowerment’ and ‘financial independence’ of the girls involved in ‘compensated dating’. A number of Japanese feminist scholars, such as Chizuko Ueno and Yukiko Hayami, see the girls’ choice to engage in *enjo-kōsai* relationships as acts of resistance, rather than a reflection of Japanese society’s problems. Ueno argues that schoolgirls derive a sense of power, independence and control of their bodies from the practice of ‘compensated dating’. Hayami also suggests that the behavior of these girls should be understood as a rejection of control on girls and women in Japan.<sup>36</sup> Ueno, as a member of the Sexual Rights Legislation Society<sup>37</sup>, campaigns for the end to all restrictions on female sexual autonomy. She considers ‘compensated dating’ to be a form of revenge taken by girls against their parents, as she explains that upon seeing the hypocrisy of their parents, the girls ‘go on to exercise their right to sexual autonomy as an act of retaliation’.<sup>38</sup>

As mentioned above, *enjo-kōsai* attracted national attention in Japan in the 1990s, and started to concern Japanese policy makers. Due to the pressure to crack down on ‘compensated dating’ and other forms of juvenile misbehavior, the Law for Punishing Acts Related to Child Prostitution and Child Pornography and for Protecting Children (*jidō baishun jidō poruno ni kakeru kōitō no shobatsu oyobi jidō no hogotō ni kan suru hōritsu*) was passed in 1999. This law prohibited an adult from paying a person under the age of eighteen for obscene acts. Despite that, David Leheny points out that Japanese policymakers viewed girls involved in *enjo-kōsai* as ‘symbols of a society gone astray’ while their ‘male customers’ were not blamed at all.<sup>39</sup> Conservative members of the Diet and the police believed that stricter punishment of youth misdemeanors was required. As a result, the New Youth Law (*shin shonen hō*) was established in 2000. This new law stipulated that juveniles between the ages of 14 and 20 would be responsible parties liable to criminal punishment if caught in the act of voluntary prostitution, indecent proposals or pimping. In 2007 the Youth Law was updated, changing the age of criminal liability to the ages of 11 to 18 years old.<sup>40</sup>

Finally, preventing adolescent females from getting involved in *enjo-kōsai* and prostitution is a long and difficult process, which necessitates the implementation of many more laws and sex education at schools. Japanese liberal and feminist authors consider sex education to be the real solution allowing juveniles to avoid sexual abuse.<sup>41</sup> Care should be taken not to ostracize the girls, but instead to give them assistance and advice to steer them away from ‘compensated dating’. Fukutomi also indicates that parents should talk to their daughters about men’s and women’s positions in society, and should explain to them that there are other ways to earn money, such as part-time

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<sup>36</sup> David Leheny, *Think Global, Fear Local: Sex Violence and Anxiety in Contemporary Japan*, New York: Cornell University Press, 2009, p. 79.

<sup>37</sup> The Sexual Rights Legislation Society (*sei no kenri hōron kai*) was founded in 1996 by the sociologist Shinji Miyadai, the journalist Seiji Fuji, and the children’s rights activist Yūji Hirano. The Society argued that prostitution should be considered an issue for personal discretion. See Kinsella, *Schoolgirls, Money and Rebellion*..., p. 35.

<sup>38</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>39</sup> Leheny, *Think Global, Fear Local*..., p. 72.

<sup>40</sup> Kinsella, *Schoolgirls, Money and Rebellion*..., p. 36.

<sup>41</sup> Leheny, *Think Global, Fear Local*..., p. 79.

jobs.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, the sex education specialist Yukihiro Murase argues that young girls should be taught the value of their own bodies and that sexual intercourse should be connected with emotions.<sup>43</sup> Then it should become easier for them to understand why being involved in *enjo-kōsai* relationships could be destructive for their future lives and professional careers.

### Who was Ono no Komachi?

The female poet Ono no Komachi was a court poet of the early Heian period, who is frequently defined as a great example of female excellence in the area of poetry.<sup>44</sup> Strangely enough, little is known about Ono no Komachi's life, and even the place and dates of her birth and death are uncertain. Her real name is also unknown, even though it has been argued that it could have been Ono no Yoshiko.<sup>45</sup> It is believed that the female historical figure whom we currently know as Ono no Komachi was a granddaughter of Ono no Takamura (802–852), who was a great scholar and poet. Possibly, the father of Ono no Komachi was the governor of Dewa, who served there in 818–823.<sup>46</sup> There are many theories about her possible place of birth and death (Yamagata prefecture, Fukushima prefecture, Akita prefecture)<sup>47</sup>, but the lack of extant reliable historical data prevents scholars from confirming any of those hypotheses. Moreover, it is believed that she was a lady-in-waiting at the imperial court, and that she could have even been the Emperor's consort. In a historical chronicle entitled *Shokunihonkōki* (Continued Late Chronicles of Japan) compiled in 869, among Emperor Ninmyō's (r. 833–850)<sup>48</sup> consorts and concubines, a consort named Ono no Yoshiko<sup>49</sup> is mentioned. Since she likely lived at the imperial court, Ono no Komachi is believed to have been an excellent court poet who possessed an extraordinary skill in composing poetry. In my opinion, however, this representation of Ono no Komachi is a well-constructed image; it seems that the details of her life, which were unknown, were filled with various imaginative guesses throughout the centuries according to the liking and needs of every society that Ono no Komachi was examined by.

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<sup>42</sup> 'Slanted Sex Culture Stoking Deviant Desire in Schoolgirls', *Mainichi Shinbun*, August 29, 2002, [http://flatrock.org.nz/topics/men/name\\_brand\\_beauties\\_on\\_sale.htm](http://flatrock.org.nz/topics/men/name_brand_beauties_on_sale.htm) (accessed 29.06.2013).

<sup>43</sup> Leheny, *Think Global, Fear Local...*, p. 79.

<sup>44</sup> Yōichi Katagiri, *Tensai sakka no kyojō to jitsuzō: Ariwara no Narihira, Ono no Komachi* [True and False Image of Genius Poets: Ariwara no Narihira and Ono no Komachi], Tokyo: Shintensha, 1991, p. 122.

<sup>45</sup> Felice R. Fischer, *Ono no Komachi – A Ninth Century Poetess of Heian Japan*, PhD dissertation, Columbia University 1972, pp. 14–15.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 9–11.

<sup>47</sup> Hitoshi Nishiki deals with the legends related to Ono no Komachi's alleged places of birth and death. See Hitoshi Nishiki, *Komachi densetsu no tanjō* [Origins of the Legend of Komachi], Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 2004, pp. 8–12.

<sup>48</sup> Emperor Ninmyō (810–850) was an Emperor of Japan from the early Heian Period. He was a son of Emperor Saga (r. 809–823) and Empress Danrin (Tachibana no Kachiko, 786–850). Ninmyō's reign lasted from 833 to 850. See *Hyakkajiten Maipedia...*

<sup>49</sup> Fischer, *Ono no Komachi – A Ninth Century...*, p. 15.

There is one feature attributed to the historical Ono no Komachi that appears credible, which is her poetic talent. Ono no Komachi is one of the *rokkasen*<sup>50</sup> – the six best *waka* poets of the early Heian Period, who were defined as such by Ki no Tsurayuki (ca. 872–945)<sup>51</sup> in the Japanese preface (*kanajo*) to the first Japanese imperial poetic anthology, the *Kokin wakashū* (Collected Japanese Poems of Ancient and Modern Times, ca. 920). There are currently about 100 poems attributed to Ono no Komachi, but it is believed that she specialized in love poetry expressing a variety of human emotions. Unsurprisingly, her poetry is often interpreted as deeply subjective, passionate and complex.<sup>52</sup>

Besides her poetic talent, another intriguing feature of ‘Ono no Komachi’ is her *femme fatale*-like image. She has often been called the Japanese Cleopatra (69 BC–30 BC) and Princess Yōkihi (719–756).<sup>53</sup> Most of the legends about Ono no Komachi present her as a lady-in-waiting of indescribable beauty who attracted the attention of numerous men. However, she is also depicted as a coldhearted lady who rejected many of her suitors, and as a result, she became an old and lonely beggar, who lost her beauty and had many regrets about her life. I believe that this *femme fatale*-like image of Ono Komachi was likely created during the medieval era in Japan. In fact, she became the protagonist of five *nō* theatre plays: *Sotoba Komachi* (Komachi on the Stupa, 14<sup>th</sup> c.), *Sekidera Komachi* (Komachi at Sekidera, ca. 15<sup>th</sup> c.), *Ōmu Komachi* (Komachi’s Parrot-Answer Poem, ca. 14<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup> c.), *Sōshi Arai Komachi* (Komachi Clears Her Name, ca. 14<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> c.), and *Kayoi Komachi* (The Nightly Courting of Komachi, ca. 14<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>th</sup> c.)<sup>54</sup>, which presented her in a

<sup>50</sup> The *Rokkasen* poets are Ono no Komachi, Ariwara no Narihira (825–880), Ōtomo no Kuronushi (died 923), Kisen Hōshi (died c. 909), Sōjō Henjō (816–890) and Fun’ya no Yasuhide (died 885). See *Hyakkajiten Maipedia*...

<sup>51</sup> Ki no Tsurayuki was a poet and courtier of the Heian Period. Under the order of Emperor Daigo (r. 897–930), he was one of four poets chosen to compile the *Kokin wakashū* anthology. He wrote a *kanajo* preface to the anthology. Tsurayuki is also the author of the *Tosa nikki* [Tosa Diary, 935], where he described his return journey to Kyoto from Tosa province. See Ayao Yasuda, *Ōchō no kajintachi* [Poets of the Imperial Court], Tokyo: Nihon hōsō shuppan kyōkai, 1975, pp. 59–64.

<sup>52</sup> Steven D. Carter, *Traditional Japanese Poetry. An Anthology*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991, p. 84.

<sup>53</sup> Princess Yōkihi (in Chinese, Yang Guifei) was the beloved consort of Emperor Xuanzong (r. 712–756) of Tang dynasty (618–907). It is believed that she was a very beautiful and brilliant woman. See *Hyakkajiten Maipedia*...

Masahi Nishizawa (ed.), *Koden bugaku ni miru: josei no ikikata jiten* (Encyclopedia of Women: Heroines and Authors in Japanese Classical Literature), Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 2008, p. 167.

<sup>54</sup> *Sotoba Komachi* by Kan’ami Kiyotsugu (1333–1384) tells the story of 100-year old Komachi, who is discussing Buddhist doctrine with two priests from Mt. Koya. She also reminisces about her youth and her suitors.

I will discuss the plot of *Sekidera Komachi* by Zeami Motokiyo (1363–1443) later in this article.

*Ōmu Komachi* by Zeami Motokiyo. The play depicts Komachi as an old poet, who is living in Sekidera Temple. She receives a poem sent to her by Emperor Yōzei.

*Sōshi Arai Komachi* (author unknown) does not present Komachi as a *femme fatale*. She is the winner of Imperial poetry contest.

*Kayoi Komachi* by Kan’ami Kiyotsugu. Komachi is represented as an arrogant beauty who was courted by Fukakusa no Shōshō. He attempted to visit her for 100 nights to earn her love, but he died after his 99<sup>th</sup> visit.

rather negative light. Moreover, the marginalization of her image in the mid-Kamakura Period (1185–1333) led to the creation of a scroll entitled *Ono no Komachi sōsui emaki* (The Picture Scroll of the Rise and Fall of Ono no Komachi), which presented images of Ono no Komachi's body in successive stages of postmortem decomposition. Those kinds of images were being used during Buddhist meditation and were meant to discourage sexual desire in men.<sup>55</sup> Thus, Ono no Komachi became a tool for didactic education in some classes of Japanese society. She is also undeniably one of the most legendary figures of Japanese literature, but above all a mystery that a lot of scholars tried to unnecessarily resolve. Ono no Komachi is still present in Japanese culture, and her constructed representations frequently serve as models for female protagonists in contemporary prose, theatre and popular culture. One such literary work is the modern theatre play *Call me Komachi*.

## The play *Call Me Komachi*

### 1. The archetype of Little Red Riding Hood

*Little Red Riding Hood  
Went walking through a wood  
She met a wolf and stopped to chat.  
Don't ask what happened after that!*

Armand T. Ringer<sup>56</sup>

First of all, I will consider the first act of *Call Me Komachi*, where the main protagonists are two high school girls named Kinu and Reika, who have their own monologues. Kinu is a naive and sensitive young girl. She has just moved from the countryside to Tokyo. She finds the city too big and overcrowded. Her only friend is Reika, but she often criticizes Kinu for romanticizing the past. Another thing that makes Kinu feel uncomfortable is her mother, who wants to introduce her daughter to a friend's son because he is a good match.

Reika takes Kinu to the shopping mall, because, in her opinion, the 'Right Thing' to feel good is purchasing brand-name clothes. However, Kinu prefers visiting galleries to going shopping. She is also very surprised while watching Reika buying luxurious clothes and accessories. During the shopping, Kinu finds herself fascinated with diamond jewelry. Reika wants to buy Kinu a diamond ring, but Kinu cannot afford such an expensive purchase. Kinu finds out quite soon how her friend earns the money for her pricy shopping. When Reika leaves Kinu alone in the mall, it turns out that she is about to meet her sponsor, Mr. Takaaki. In Reika's eyes, Kinu has great potential to find a sponsor too. Reika decides to protect her against boys from the school and encourages her to engage in a relationship with an older man, because she can earn a lot of money. Kinu is terrified because she considers Reika to be her best friend and she just wants to spend some time with her. She thinks that the diamond ring is beautiful and would probably suit her, but it is not worth selling her time.

<sup>55</sup> Terry Kawashima, *Writing Margins: The Textual Construction ...*, p. 198.

<sup>56</sup> Armand T. Ringer (Martin Gardner), *Are Universes Thicker Than Blackberries?: Discourses on Gödel, Magic Hexagrams, Little Red Riding Hood and Other Mathematical and Pseudoscientific Topics*, <http://knightofwords.wordpress.com/2013/03/21/how-could-red-riding-hood-have-been-so-very-good/> (accessed 9.10.2013).

Next, Reika starts her monologue by introducing herself as a ‘real businesswoman’ because her time is her sponsor’s money.<sup>57</sup> Reika is a shopaholic, her need to buy new clothes is like a drug and it consumes a lot of money. Unfortunately, her pocket money is not enough to purchase the things she thinks she really needs. As a resourceful girl, she finds a sponsor, Mr. Takaaki, who spends his money on her. Still, Reika emphasizes that she and Mr. Takaaki do not engage in sexual intercourse, because she has only agreed to sell her time, not her body. Reika is evidently releasing her repressed emotions through shopping. Her parents are overprotective and want her to remain a virgin until she gets married. Moreover, they do not want her to attend the university because they are looking for a husband-to-be for her. Their behavior makes Reika feel like a product which they want to sell. When she was younger, she was her father’s favorite daughter. He used to call her ‘Komachi’ – ‘the most beautiful girl in the world’.<sup>58</sup> However, Reika’s mother did not like this nickname, as in her opinion it was inappropriate to call a young girl ‘Komachi’, after the poet who engaged in many love affairs. The mother finally concludes that ‘Komachi’ is a ‘name for a prostitute’. She thinks that prostitutes are filthy and should not be visible to other people’s eyes.<sup>59</sup> This is the first time when we see a reference to Ono no Komachi in the play. The way in which her name is mentioned presents the duality of this poet’s image. At first, Reika’s father uses the nickname ‘Komachi’ as a synonym for a ‘beautiful girl’. The implication of this nickname is thus positive. But then Reika’s mother, unlike her father, does not appreciate the way her husband nicknames their daughter. The mother considers the name ‘Komachi’ to be suitable for a prostitute. According to her, Ono no Komachi is branded as a lawless woman. Thus we find two opposing images of Ono no Komachi – beauty and prostitute. Although Kaori Hamamoto, one of the co-authors of *Call Me Komachi*, claims that schoolgirls ‘have power’ because they are young and beautiful<sup>60</sup>, it is clear that the nickname ‘Komachi’ is utilized in a play not only as a synonym of ‘beauty’, but also of a girl engaged in an *enjo-kōsai* relationship.

Reika despises her parents and she probably becomes involved in the affair with an older man as a form of revenge. Her parents are, however, not Reika’s only family problem. She has a difficult relationship with her sister, who is jealous of all the admiration Reika was getting from their father. Mamoru Fukutomi explained such behavior in the following way in a *Mainichi Shinbun* interview:

Many teen-age girls involved in prostitution (*enjo-kōsai*) have family problems. They tend to be unable to exercise self-restraint, act impulsively and feel lonely. Many of them either have few chances to talk with their parents or are overprotected by their parents. The looser their relations with their parents, the less reluctant they are to prostitute themselves. However, they are victims in a way, and the men who buy them are to blame.<sup>61</sup>

Finally, Reika gets into an argument with her sister, during which it turns out that she knows about Reika’s sponsor. Moreover, the sister even suspects that their father has also

<sup>57</sup> Nieman, *Call Me Komachi*..., p. 3.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>60</sup> Maley, ‘Who’s Your Sugar Daddy...’.

<sup>61</sup> ‘Slanted Sex Culture Stoking...’.

found a ‘new Komachi’ of his own – a girl he is dating. Once again, the name of Ono no Komachi is mentioned in the case of a girl involved in a relationship with an older man. Even though Reika’s father wants her to remain a virgin and behave properly, he is probably sponsoring a girl who is possibly the same age as his daughters. Such complexity in the relationships makes it truly difficult to identify and define the problem of *enjo-kōsai*, since any man walking in the street or eating lunch with a young girl could be involved in ‘compensated dating’ – but could also be just a father spending time with his daughter.

Reika’s sponsor, whose name is Mr. Takaaki, is a wealthy middle-aged man. His profession is not specified, and he could be anybody – a salaryman<sup>62</sup>, teacher, police officer or mailman. Reika firmly believes that she can get out of this affair at any time. Mr. Takaaki wants more and he suggests that they should start meeting at love hotels. Reika is confused but she realizes that ending the *enjo-kōsai* relationship means no income for purchasing brand clothes. Finally, she decides to spend some time with Mr. Takaaki in a love hotel. Interestingly, Mr. Takaaki is nicknamed ‘Big Bad Wolf’<sup>63</sup> by Reika, a clear reference to the tale of Little Red Riding Hood. According to Bruno Bettelheim’s analysis of the LRRH story, the girl is not as innocent as she seems to be.<sup>64</sup> Reika, alike Little Red Riding Hood, is at the nymphet stage and her sexuality is being created. She is experiencing unconscious sexual impulses and wants to be seduced by a male. Then, she meets a wolf (Mr. Takaaki), who is a metaphor for a sexually predatory man. Bettelheim argues that ‘by giving [Little Red Riding Hood] a red hood, the grandmother is transferring sexual attractiveness to her [...]’<sup>65</sup>. Red is a sexually vibrant and suggestive color, and often symbolizes feelings related with sexuality. Red is also the color of blood with all of its connotations of female physical maturity. In my opinion, Reika is a modern Japanese incarnation of Little Red Riding Hood, but in this case the ‘red hood’ is replaced by the nickname ‘Komachi’.

In conclusion, we see that in the first act of the play, the name ‘Komachi’ is given three different meanings. Firstly, ‘Komachi’ is a synonym for a beautiful girl. It is a reference to all the legends about Ono no Komachi where she appears as an indescribable beauty, even though there are no extant reliable portraits of her. Perhaps this name is simply a word describing beautiful women, but it is also full of incompatibilities. Thus, the image of Ono no Komachi is introduced in a fundamentally negative manner. This is exactly how the name of Ono no Komachi is presented in the second meaning in the play, when it is used as a label for girls engaged in *enjo-kōsai* relationships. In fact, the nickname ‘Komachi’ explicitly refers to a prostitute. Reika’s mother considers prostitutes to be fallen women, with whom no one wants to be associated. In fact, the image of the evil woman (*akujo*) in Japanese iconography has been very popular since medieval times. Thus, representations of Ono no

<sup>62</sup> Salaryman (*sararīman*) is a member of the Japanese ‘new middle class’, who bases his family’s lives on stable, salaried, white-collar employment at large-scale business organisations. His status is based on educational qualifications earned through the national school and higher-education system. See Penelope Francks, *The Japanese Consumer. An Alternative Economic History of Modern Japan*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009, p. 111.

<sup>63</sup> Nieman, *Call Me Komachi*..., p. 10.

<sup>64</sup> Bruno Bettelheim, *Cudowne i pożyteczne. O znaczeniach i wartościach baśni* [The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales], Warszawa: Wydawnictwo W.A.B., 2010, pp. 264–287.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 272–273.

Komachi often combine a strong image of a seductive *femme fatale*.<sup>66</sup> Finally, the third meaning of the nickname 'Komachi' has strong connotations to female sexuality. Considering Bettelheim's analysis of the Little Red Riding Hood story, we may conclude that in the play *Call Me Komachi* the red hood is replaced by the nickname 'Komachi'. Reika's father by calling her 'Komachi', in the manner of Little Red Riding Hood's grandmother who gives her a red hood, transfers sexual attractiveness to his adolescent daughter. Yet Reika is too young to understand the sexual meaning of Komachi's name. She is still emotionally immature and her own sexuality is a source of danger to her. Moreover, she tries to convince her friend Kinu that it is her desire for financial independence that involves her in a *enjo-kōsai* relationship for the sake of her own empowerment. However, she is sad and lost in the search for her own identity.

## 2. Geisha and *danna*

Two other characters in the play *Call Me Komachi* are Satoyuki and Mameyoshi, *geisha* or women practitioners of the classical Japanese arts (dance and music). They are unmarried<sup>67</sup> companions to Japanese men. Nowadays, geishas are usually considered to be exclusive prostitutes, which is a common misconception. Although chatting, joking, pouring alcohol or tea into the man's cup may not seem to be difficult tasks, the profession of geisha is hard work. There is a great deal of training involved, including arts of classical music and dance, the traditional Japanese tea ceremony *chanoyu*, and proper conversation, in order to become a geisha. It is commonly believed that geishas as men's companions should be attractive, witty and glamorous in everything they do. During the 1860s the popularity of geishas increased to the level where they became role models in fashion for the Japanese society. Their sophisticated style of dressing greatly affected the arts, music and literature of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Japan.<sup>68</sup> Satoyuki from the play *Call Me Komachi* recalls that era as a 'great time', when the culture of geishas was less about money and more about art, beauty and elegance. Before her monologue, Satoyuki has been performing for the Komachitek Corporation to celebrate its tenth anniversary. However, it is not the same as in the old days, since it is the performance that the company paid for, not Satoyuki's companionship. With nostalgia Satoyuki recollects the time when geishas were supposed to be able to conduct witty and eloquent conversations. Men paid for their company and professional, state-of-the-art companionship, not for front-row tickets.<sup>69</sup> Satoyuki has put much effort into becoming a geisha, who in her opinion should be a moving piece of art, and not the tourist attraction that she is considered to be. Clients pay for her show, and when she performs they take photos. She is an artist, but she believes that there is no manner and art in what she does any more; it is all about money. Finally, Satoyuki bitterly concludes that she was born a hundred years too late.

In Satoyuki's case, the name 'Komachi' appears in the name of the company that paid for the geisha show. Once again, the name of the poet is used to represent something

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<sup>66</sup> Daniela Moro, 'Evil and Abject Women of the Traditional Japanese Theatre through the Reading of Enchi Fumiko's Literary Works', <http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/moroevilpaper.pdf> (accessed 29.06.2013).

<sup>67</sup> If a geisha gets married, she automatically quits her profession. See Liza C. Dalby, *Byłam gejszą* (Geisha), Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Książka i Wiedza, 1992, p. 6.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., pp. 57–59.

<sup>69</sup> Nieman, *Call Me Komachi*..., p. 19.

negative. Satoyuki criticizes the clients from the Komachitek Corporation who attended her performance. She finds them to be ignoramus without any artistic taste, who are unable to appreciate her skills. In this part of the play, it is difficult to find any direct references to any legends about Ono no Komachi. However, I conclude that the authors of the play used the name 'Komachi' with a pejorative overtone to emphasize the negative image of Satoyuki's clients, and the commonly accepted opinion that geishas are prostitutes.

The second geisha from the second act of the play is named Mameyoshi and lives in 1900. She is reading the text of a *nō* play entitled *Sekidera Komachi*. The play depicts Ono no Komachi at the end of her life, when her beauty has already faded and she is living in great poverty. During the evening of the Tanabata Festival<sup>70</sup>, the abbot of the Sekidera temple<sup>71</sup> visits an old woman in her hut, taking two priests and a child, to talk about poetry. During their conversation, the abbot realizes that he is discussing poetry with the famous Ono no Komachi. Astonished, he invites her to come with them to the Tanabata festival, but she refuses to accept his invitation. Then, a child starts to dance for her, and, inspired by his dance, Ono no Komachi begins to dance herself, and does so until dawn. In the morning, she ponders on the transience of life and her shame over what she has become. Mameyoshi tries to understand why Ono no Komachi became such a ruin of a woman. She wonders how such a 'paragon of beauty' turned into an ugly and lonely beggar. Eventually, she finds out that the passing of time is the reason for Komachi's fall. This point of view is probably related to the marginalization of old women's sexuality, a process which was most likely started in the *Shinsarugakuki* (A Record of New Monkey Music, ca. 1065) by Fujiwara no Akihira (989–1066). This text states that an old woman must deprive herself of sexual desire, take Buddhist vows, and become a nun.<sup>72</sup> An old woman is not an object of men's desire anymore. She can have no expectations of life and love. Thus, the history of the old Ono no Komachi was the source of fear of old age and loneliness in Mameyoshi. Even Mamoru Fukutomi concludes that many girls start relationships with men very early in their lives because they are afraid of getting old and losing their beauty.<sup>73</sup>

The story about Mameyoshi is a love story without a happy-end. Mameyoshi falls in love with her *danna*, a man that financially supports a geisha he is particularly fond of. If he is rich enough, he can rent an apartment or house for his geisha. The geisha and her *danna* can be involved in a sexual relationship.<sup>74</sup> Mameyoshi adores her *danna* because

<sup>70</sup> The Tanabata Festival is one of the *gosekku* festivals (five seasonal festivals), which celebrates the meeting of the deity-lovers Orihime (the star Vega) and Hikoboshi (Altair). According to the legend, the lovers are separated by the Milky Way and they are allowed to meet only once a year on the seventh day of the seventh month. See *Kōjien* [Grand Dictionary of Japanese Language], Iwanami Shoten 1998–2004, electronic dictionary.

<sup>71</sup> The foundation date of the Sekidera Temple is unknown, but it was destroyed in 976 during an earthquake. At the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> century the temple was reconstructed by Minamoto no Makoto (942–1017). It still exists in Ōtsu (Shiga prefecture), but since its reconstruction it has been called Chōanji Temple. See *Kōjien*....

<sup>72</sup> See Kawashima, *Writing Margins: The Textual Construction* ..., p. 148.

<sup>73</sup> 'Slanted Sex Culture Stoking...'

<sup>74</sup> It is said that geishas are paid for their company, not for sex. Dalby concludes that geishas could have sexual intercourse with men they had affairs with. See Liza Dalby, *Geisha and Sex*, [http://www.lizadalby.com/LD/ng\\_geisha\\_sex.html](http://www.lizadalby.com/LD/ng_geisha_sex.html) (accessed 20.10.2013).

she believes he is a man with a great sense of style and sensitivity for art. Moreover, he likes her too. Eventually, Mameyoshi becomes pregnant, and when her *danna* asks her what she would like to do about it, she cannot answer because ‘what she want does not count’.<sup>75</sup> Then, he sends a woman who cooks a special brew for Mameyoshi, after the consumption of which she loses her child and her *danna* never visits her again. The rejected geisha suffers from physical and mental pain. According to some legends, Ono no Komachi also went insane when she lost her beauty and men’s attention. Furthermore, the heroine of the *Tamatsukuri Komachishi sōsuisho* (The Chronicle of the Rise and Fall of Komachi from Tamatsukuri, 12<sup>th</sup> c.)<sup>76</sup>, who is believed to be Ono no Komachi, also loses her child, and living in great poverty causes her insanity. However, there is no evidence that the story about Komachi from *Tamatsukuri Komachishi sōsuisho* is based on the biography of the historical Ono no Komachi. This is therefore one of the first constructs of her image perpetuated in Japanese literature.<sup>77</sup>

Kaori Hamomoto, the co-author of *Call Me Komachi*, argues that teenagers involved in *enjo-kōsai* are reincarnations of geishas<sup>78</sup>, which suggests that she sees a parallel pattern in the female-sponsor interaction in both of those relationships. I do not necessarily agree with her comparison. It is perhaps true that nowadays high school girls, just like geishas in the past, have sponsors who support them financially. However, I think that adolescent females may become engaged in *enjo-kōsai* relationships because they find it an easy and fast method to earn money, and above all it is usually their own choice to engage in a relationship with an older man.<sup>79</sup> On the other hand, geishas work as men’s companions. Spending time with clients, conducting conversations appropriately and entertaining them are the duties of a geisha. Moreover, in the long history of the geisha’s profession, there were cases of girls who were sold to geisha’s houses (*okiya* or *kokataya*) because their parents were not financially stable enough to support them. Chiyo, the heroine of the famous novel *Memoirs of Geisha* by Arthur Golden, was sold to an *okiya* in Kyoto because

<sup>75</sup> Nieman, *Call Me Komachi*..., p. 22.

<sup>76</sup> *Tamatsukuri Komachishi sōsuisho* is a Chinese-style poem with a prose introduction. The authorship was attributed to the monk Kūkai (774–835), the founder of the Shingon School. Nowadays this attribution is heavily questioned and mostly rejected. But there is no doubt that the author could be a Buddhist monk, because the Buddhist influence is obvious. The whole text is permeated by the ideology of the Pure Land (*jōdo*) and the paradigm of Four Sufferings (*shiku*): birth, old age, sickness and death. Chinese influences also can be noted in *Tamatsukuri*..., especially references to Bai Juyi’s (772–846) poem entitled *Qinzhong yin* (Lament of Qin, ca. 810). The oldest manuscript of *Tamatsukuri*... is dated to 1219. The central figure of the text is an old female beggar, who is considered to be Ono no Komachi, but the name ‘Komachi’ is not mentioned in the whole text, only in the title. She tells the story of her life to a wandering monk she met. See Takeshi Tochio (an.), *Tamatsukuri Komachishi sōsuisho. Ono no Komachi monogatari* [The Chronicle of the Rise and Fall of Komachi from Tamatsukuri. The Tale of Ono no Komachi], Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2009, pp. 11–24.

<sup>77</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>78</sup> Maley, ‘Who’s Your Sugar Daddy...’.

<sup>79</sup> Leheny points out that one of the reasons why teenage girls began to involve in *enjo-kōsai* relationships could be material factors, since uniformed schoolgirls in Japan had been seen as sexual objects, they could generally command much higher prices for their companionship than housewives or twenty-something office ladies. See Leheny, *Think Global, Fear Local*..., p. 70.

her father was a poverty-stricken fisherman in a small village on the coast of the Sea of Japan. Geishas were thus sometimes forced into their profession, which is a significant difference between them and the under-aged girls engaging in *enjo-kōsai* relationships.

Finally, the reference to Ono no Komachi in the part about Mameyoshi presents another duality of this female poet's image, since her beauty during her youth is often contrasted with the poverty and ugliness of her old age. In fact, we can see this contrast as a pattern in the representations of a protagonist in the *Tamatsukuri Komachishi sōsuisho*, as well as in the later play *Sekidera Komachi*. In both of those works, Ono no Komachi at first appears as a beautiful and young lady, who is living in splendor and is courted by numerous men. Then, when her beauty passes away and her father and brothers die, she becomes an ageing and poverty-stricken woman living in a crumbling residence, and is rejected by court society. Thus, the protagonists in both the *Tamatsukuri Komachishi sōsuisho* and *Sekidera Komachi* are representations of a fallen woman. These kinds of works are didactic tools utilized to warn women off being amorous and sexually indulgent. Ono no Komachi, as opposed to an 'ideal woman', arrogantly refused to meet with many of her suitors, yet with time she lost her beauty. As she grew older, her reputation became destroyed, the suitors stopped visiting her, and finally she ended her life in solitude. It is clear that Mameyoshi from the *Call Me Komachi* is afraid of losing her beauty and ending her life in the manner of Ono no Komachi.

### ***Enjo-kōsai* – a Japanese phenomenon or not?**

The problem of so-called 'teenage prostitution', sparked by young girls wanting money for fashionable clothes, is unfortunately not exclusive to Japan. Christie Nieman, the co-author of *Call Me Komachi*, admits that although geishas and *enjo-kōsai* are elements of Japanese culture, sexually active young girls also appear in Western culture.<sup>80</sup> This trend has been noted in Poland too. In 2009, the Polish film director Katarzyna Rosłaniec<sup>81</sup> created a movie entitled *Galerianki* (Mall Girls) about junior female high-school students who are searching for sponsors in shopping malls. The movie's main character is a 14-year-old girl named Ala. She has just moved to Warsaw and she is meeting new friends, but she still feels uncomfortable with changes in her life. Very quickly Ala befriends Milena, whose main motto is 'if you have money, you party, you live'. She wears mini-skirts, high white boots and vivid make up. Milena also behaves in a noisy and sexy manner. She and some other girls spend their free time in the shopping malls. Firstly, they look for the clients who look prosperous. Then, they offer sex in exchange for buying clothes, small electronics

<sup>80</sup> Maley, 'Who's Your Sugar Daddy...'

<sup>81</sup> Katarzyna Rosłaniec (born November 23, 1980 in Malbork, Poland) graduated from the Faculty of Economics of University of Gdansk and directing course at Warsaw Film School (Art Vocational College). *Galerianki* was her controversial debut, despite which she won an Individual Award for Directing Debut at the 34<sup>th</sup> Gdynia Film Festival (Sept. 14–19, 2009), which is the biggest Polish film festival. Her second film entitled *Bejbi Blues* (Baby Blues, 2012) is about a 17-year old mother, who had her son because she wanted to, as she considers having a baby to be cool because all celebrities have children. The film has been criticized as a worthless fairytale for adults. See Olga Świącicka, 'Katarzyna Rosłaniec: reżyserka, która nie potrafi dojrzeć' [Katarzyna Rosłaniec: a Female Director who Can't Grow up], NaTemat.pl, January 10, 2013, <http://natemat.pl/46329,katarzyna-rosłaniec-rezyserka-ktora-nie-potrafi-dojrzec> (accessed 20.10.2013).

or money. It appears that this is an easy way to access cash without the involvement of their parents. Milena wants to teach Ala how to be able to live in 'high quality standard'. Soon, Ala starts to have sex with older men for financial gain. A problem occurs when her classmate named Michał falls in love with her. She also likes him, but he does not know what she is doing in the malls. To make things more complicated, Milena does not approve of his feelings for her. Even though she is so young, she believes that love does not exist, which could be considered to be quite shocking. Milena does not care about love and believes that only money and high status are important in life. Unfortunately, a tragic accident has to occur to make Ala understand that she does not want to be a 'mall girl' anymore.

After the premiere of *Galerianki* in 2009, the so-called 'mall girls' became a hot topic in the Polish mass media, and security guards in shopping centers started to chase them out.<sup>82</sup> However, it seems that under-aged girls found another way to earn their pocket money. 'Mall girls' are not the only problem in the grey zone of Polish society. There is a new trend in Poland called *seksling* (sexting), which is a practice of young people (mainly between 13–19 years old<sup>83</sup>) selling nude photos of themselves online. Adolescent females leave messages on website pages, where they offer nude photos for topping up their mobile phones (the cost varies from US\$8 to US\$35). It also seems that not only girls have become involved in *sexting*:

There was a case of two boys, who needed money to upgrade the skills of their characters in a payable on-line game. They registered on a chat room for gay men, where they advertised striptease services in exchange for charging up their accounts in a game.<sup>84</sup>

Professor Elżbieta Michałowska from the Institute of Sociology at University of Lodz deals with the problem of teenage prostitution in Poland.<sup>85</sup> She finds the phenomenon of 'mall girls' very alarming, because she admits that this trend is only 'the tip of the iceberg', as there are other forms of teenage prostitution in Poland.<sup>86</sup> Michałowska considers 'mall girls' to be prostitutes who treat their bodies as a product to sell. For them, sexual intercourse is not connected with emotions.<sup>87</sup> Prof. Michałowska signals two important factors that have likely deeply influenced the development of such trends among Polish youth. Firstly, she blames the mass media and pop culture, which often use sexuality as a tool to gain an audience. Secondly, she points out that due to Catholic-based behavior patterns and a lack

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<sup>82</sup> See 'Nagie zdjęcia za doładowanie telefonu – nowa «moda» nastolatków' [Naked Photos in Exchange for Topping-up Mobile Phone – the Latest Teenagers' 'trend'], *nasygnale.pl*, August 26, 2011, <http://nasygnale.pl/kat,1025343,title,Nagie-zdjecia-za-doladowanie-telefonu-nowa-moda-nastolatkow,wid,13718250,wiadomosc.html> (accessed 29.06.2013).

<sup>83</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>84</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>85</sup> Her major research specialization is social pathology among Polish youth.

<sup>86</sup> Joanna Podgórska, An interview about mall girls with Prof. Elżbieta Michałowska from the Institute of Sociology at University of Lodz, *Polityka.pl*, September 29, 2009, <http://www.polityka.pl/spoleczenstwo/artykuly/302472,1,galerianki-to-wierzcholek-gory-lodowej.read> (accessed 20.10.2013).

<sup>87</sup> Ibidem.

of sex education at schools, sexuality is often a taboo which is not discussed openly. As a result, teenagers educate themselves by watching TV, music videos or surfing the Internet.<sup>88</sup> Although Prof. Michałowska presents her opinion about ‘mall girls’ quite judgmentally, she emphasizes that adults are responsible for this situation, mostly because there are still men who accept sexual offers from teenage girls. Moreover, those under-aged boys and girls usually do not realize that their actions are actually prohibited by Polish law. The consequences of sexting or prostituting could be very serious. If a 15-year-old girl prostitutes herself, she is committing an act of ‘demoralization’ according to Polish law. The girl is subject to the provisions of the Act on Juvenile Delinquency Proceedings, but an adult who takes on her services is not to be blamed.<sup>89</sup> Monika Sajkowska, who is the director of the *Dzieci Nikzyje* (Nobody’s Children) Foundation, argues that the adult should be always punished for his sexual contacts with under-aged boys and girls. Children and teenagers are the ones who are victimized, even though they behave in a provocative manner or offer sexual services in exchange for financial support. Sajkowska admits that the phenomenon of adolescents offering sexual services with adults for money, mobile phones or clothes is shocking. However, she also emphasizes that it is the adult who decides how and whether to accept such offers.<sup>90</sup>

Polish psychologists and teachers suggest that there is a necessity to implement sex education classes not only for children but also for their parents. Unfortunately, parents’ knowledge of their children’s sexuality in Poland is often very fragmentary because there are many factors that may influence and change the teenagers’ awareness, such as easy access to the Internet, TV reality shows, music videos, etc. I personally think that this problem is much more complex, but this subject deserves a separate study conducted by specialists of sociology, sexology and psychology.

Thus, we see that the problem of teenage prostitution is not only a Japanese phenomenon. This trend has been present in many societies all over the world, even though it has different names. In Japan, it is called *enjo-kōsai*, in Poland it is named ‘mall girls’ or ‘sponsoring’, but it may be found in other countries. In May 2013, a film by the French director François Ozon entitled *Jeune & Jolie* (Young & Beautiful) was released. It is a portrait of a 17-year-old girl named Isabelle who works as exclusive call-girl.<sup>91</sup> Another

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<sup>88</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>89</sup> In accordance with the Act on Juvenile Delinquency Proceedings, persons from the age of 13 to 18 years can be in charge of ‘demoralization’. When the person is under 15 years old, an adult is charged with pedophilia. When the person is between the ages of 15 to 18 is accused of harlotry. Then the adult is not charged, because sexual relations with a person over the age of consent are not a crime. If a person is over 18 years old (reach the age of majority), nobody is brought to justice. See *Ustawa z dnia 26 października 1982 r. o postępowaniu w sprawach nieletnich* (Dz.U. 1982 nr 35 poz. 228) [Act on Juvenile Delinquency Proceedings of October 26, 1982 (Journal of Laws from 1982, No. 35, item 228)] <http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU19820350228> (accessed 10.10.2013).

<sup>90</sup> Monika Sajkowska, ‘Dziecko zawsze jest ofiarą’ [The Child Is always a Victim], *Natemat.pl*, October 9, 2013 <http://monikasajkowska.natemat.pl/77557,dziecko-zawsze-jest-ofiara> (accessed 10.10.2013).

<sup>91</sup> After her first sexual experience on holiday, Isabelle starts exploring her sexuality by working as prostitute for rich, older men. The movie attempts to pose questions such as why Isabelle is doing this (a need of excitement? money factors?), but there is no clear answer or moral conclusion.

movie set in France is entitled *Elles* (2011), and concerns the issue of prostitution run by university female students.<sup>92</sup> The trend of sexting has also become a growing problem in the United States and United Kingdom, since it is considered as a common practice among teens.<sup>93</sup> In 2008, the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy in the United States surveyed 653 teens (ages 13–19) and 627 young adults (ages 20–26). Even though 75% of teens and 71% of young adults believe that sending sexually suggestive content ‘can have serious negative consequences’, according to the survey’s results 20% of teens and 33% of young adults have sent or posted nude or semi-nude images of themselves.<sup>94</sup> Holly Baxter from *The Guardian* named sexting a ‘rite of passage of the digital age’, while she describes a new campaign tackling sexting produced by the British National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC).<sup>95</sup> The Swedish TV crime series *Maria Wern* (2008–2011) also dealt with the problem of sexting in episode entitled *Drömmar ur snö* (Dreams from snow, 2011).<sup>96</sup> Literature, films, mass media and governments are trying to combat such practices, but it is a very difficult problem to resolve. Many teenagers do not consider their actions to be improper. While researching about *enjo-kōsai*, I found an article on a Polish website devoted to the problem of compensated dating<sup>97</sup> and some commentaries below, which judged this problem of Japanese society in a very negative manner. I strongly disagree with such judgmental opinions about Japanese society, since teenage prostitution has become a trend in many contemporary societies all over the world, and no matter whether it is named *enjo-kōsai*, ‘mall girls’ or ‘sexting’, it is still a similar practice.

## Conclusions

In my analysis of the play *Call Me Komachi*, I placed the strongest emphasis on presenting and analyzing the constructed representations of the historical figure named Ono no Komachi. I believe that Ono no Komachi is mentioned in the title of a play about *enjo-kōsai* and geisha culture due to the existence of the stereotypes attributed to her.

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<sup>92</sup> The movie tells the story of a journalist for *Elle* magazine called Anne, who is writing an article about female students in France financing their studies from prostitution. Then, Anne starts to interview two girls Charlotte and Alice. While listening to how the girls detail their lifestyles and sexual experiences, Anne realizes how routine her life is.

<sup>93</sup> Holly Baxter, ‘Hollyoaks Sexting Storyline Highlights Dangers for Teenagers’, *The Guardian*, November 18, 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2013/nov/18/hollyoaks-sexting-storyline-dangers-teenagers-nsppc> (accessed 22.03.2014).

<sup>94</sup> *Sex and Tech: Results from a Survey of Teens and Young Adults*, The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, 2008, pp. 1–3.

<sup>95</sup> Baxter, ‘Hollyoaks Sexting Storyline Highlights...’.

<sup>96</sup> At Christmastime, Gotland is struck by tragedy. A high school girl is found dead in the middle of a country road. At first it appears to be a suicide, but soon it turns out that the deceased girl and two of her friends were selling their naked photos on a special website. During the investigation, the detectives find out that the girls had been receiving threatening emails, probably from a website’s client.

<sup>97</sup> David Corso, ‘Enjo Kosai, czyli Kogal – japońskie uczennice’ [Enjo Kosai, a.k.a. Kogal – the Japanese Schoolgirls], eioba.pl, June 25, 2007 <http://www.eioba.pl/a/1125/enjo-kosai-czyli-kogal-japonskie-uczennice> (accessed 29.06.2013).

This stereotype allows, or even forces, the public to comprehend and perpetuate the image of Ono no Komachi as a beautiful lady-in-waiting, who was a seductive *femme fatale* but ended her life as an ugly, insane beggar abandoned by everyone. Some of Ono no Komachi's representations in Japanese culture are quite positive, e.g. a beautiful and talented poet. However, the majority of her constructed images present her in a rather negative light, e.g. a *femme fatale* or harlot. In fact, the usage of the name 'Komachi' in the play's title is an example of that. Specifically, the image of Ono no Komachi in this play is presented in three different manners that are all included in her constructed representations. Firstly, 'Ono no Komachi' is a synonym for a beautiful girl. However, it is emphasized that even the most beautiful woman can become repulsive in the end. Secondly, the name 'Komachi' is used as a brand for girls engaged in *enjo-kōsai* relationships. And finally, the play presents the didactic of Ono no Komachi's image created by medieval legends and *nō* plays. A beautiful young lady is notorious for rejecting lovers, but she is punished for her arrogance and she ends up her life as an ugly and lonely beggar.

Ono no Komachi is a great example of a construct that has undergone numerous processes of legendarization throughout the centuries. Her *femme fatale*-like image became so popular and strong in the medieval era that it survived until contemporary times. Even though the authors of the play *Call Me Komachi* do not want to criticize girls engaged in compensated dating, we may confirm by reading and analyzing the play that it definitely presents quite a negative side of Ono no Komachi. It seems that for the authors of this play, the name 'Komachi' is still an equivalent for a fallen woman or a prostitute, even if a beautiful one.

*Enjo-kōsai*, which is the main topic of the play, is undeniably a very complex and delicate problem of contemporary Japanese society. In this paper, I have attempted to define *enjo-kōsai* without judging it. By analyzing the text of the play, we can see that the name of Ono no Komachi, a poet from the Heian period, is utilized as a label for teenage prostitution in modern Japanese society. Moreover, I demonstrated that 'compensated dating' is not only a Japanese phenomenon, but a trend of numerous contemporary societies, including Poland, where we find practices like 'mall girls' or sexting.



EMIL CIECIELAŁ

## The Confucian Elements in the *Book of Five Rings*

### Abstract

Confucianism arrived in Japan at the beginning of the fifth century A.D. Confucianism influenced the growth of feudalism and the creation of *bushidō*, the code of moral principles and an inspiration for Japanese warriors. Miyamoto Musashi was one of the most famous samurai in Japanese history. He established the Niten Ichi Ryū *kendō* school. In the *Book of Five Rings*, Musashi set down his own principles, in the belief that each of his students should live by them. Some Confucian elements were included in the *Book of Five Rings*.

Confucianism appeared in Japan in 402 AD with the *Analects of Confucius*.<sup>1</sup> Confucianism probably had a strong influence on the development of the *Bushidō*, the unwritten collection of warriors' moral rules.<sup>2</sup> Thus, Confucian ethics soon became the framework for the education of samurai. This article makes an attempt to discern the crucial Confucian elements existing in the *Gorin-no Sho* (The Book of Five Rings), a work written by one of the most renowned Japanese warriors. The principles contained in the *Dokkōdō* (The Way to be Followed Alone) will serve as a guide here. Throughout the article the traditional Hepburn transcription<sup>3</sup> has been applied. The goal of this article is to present the Confucian elements in the *Book of Five Rings*.

Confucianism is a system of teachings started by Confucius, and continued by his students.<sup>4</sup> According to Confucius, each person should live according to the 'Way of Heaven'.<sup>5</sup> This means the procedure of moral norms, such as obedience to parents, kindness, righteousness and loyalty<sup>6</sup>. As Professor Rodney L. Taylor explains: 'The focus of all of Classical Confucianism lay in understanding the Way of *T'ien*, which emphasized the need

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<sup>1</sup> Japanese Confucian Philosophy: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/japanese-confucian/> (accessed 29.06.2013).

<sup>2</sup> John Whitney Hall (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Japan*, Vol. 4, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 92.

<sup>3</sup> James Curtis Hepburn, *A Japanese-English and English-Japanese Dictionary*, Tōkyō: Maruya, 1888.

<sup>4</sup> *Konfucjanizm* [Confucianism], in Władysław Kopaliński, *Słownik wyrazów obcych i zwrotów obcojęzycznych* [Dictionary of Foreign Words and Phrases in Foreign Languages], Warszawa: Muza SA, 2001, p. 272.

<sup>5</sup> Rodney L. Taylor, *Religion of the World. Confucianism*, Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 2003, p. 10.

<sup>6</sup> *Konfucjanizm...*, p. 272.

for moral education for individuals and the establishment of moral rule to bring peace and order to the world'.<sup>7</sup>

Miyamoto Musashi, one of the most famous warriors, was born in 1584. His life remains a mystery to modern scholars, beyond the fact of his existence almost nothing is known.<sup>8</sup> The first important question is the warrior's place of birth. In the Introduction he mentions that he was born in Harima province: 'I am a warrior of Harima province, Shinmen Musashi No Kami Fujiwara No Genshin'.<sup>9</sup> However, most of the researchers think that Musashi was not born in Harima province, proof of this including the samurai monument on Temuki Mountain in Kokura, Kyūshū, founded by Musashi's adopted son Miyamoto Iori (1612–1677).<sup>10</sup> There is an inscription on this monument: 'Musashi Genshin from the Shinmen family, a descendant of the House of Akiyama. He came for the first time to Harima as a thirteen year old boy in order to fight against Arima Kihei...'.<sup>11</sup> It can be assumed that the son of the samurai knew the father's past. Therefore, it is hard to deny that unreliable information was issued there. Why then is such a fact given in the introduction? Some scholars believe that the *Gorin-no Sho* was written by one of Musashi's apprentices, or at least the Introduction to the book was.<sup>12</sup> It seems very probable that the Introduction is not of Musashi's authorship, which would also explain the mistake concerning his place of birth. Nevertheless, it is difficult to establish that the work as a whole was not written by the samurai. However, were it to be true, one would recognise a similarity to the *Analects* of Confucius, which were most probably actually noted down by Confucius' apprentices.<sup>13</sup> Obviously, this conjectural resemblance does not indicate any Confucian element in *Gorin-no Sho*. Hence, Musashi was in all likelihood born in Miyamoto village as Bannosuke.<sup>14</sup> His father, Shinmen Munisai Taketo, was a samurai, regarded with respect by the shōgun Ashikaga Yoshiaki (1537–1597).<sup>15</sup> Musashi never knew his mother, who had died because of postpartum complications.<sup>16</sup>

The samurai's childhood, or, to be more specific, his upbringing, poses another problem for researchers. According to the legend, Dōrin (Dōrimbō) was supposed to be his teacher.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Taylor, *Religion...*, p. 10.

<sup>8</sup> Arkadiusz Izdebski, Witold Nowakowski, 'Życie Musashiego Miyamoto (1584–1645)' [Miyamoto Musashi's Life (1584–1645)], in *Gorin-no Sho. Księga Pięciu Kregów* [The Book of Five Rings], Musashi Miyamoto, Bydgoszcz: Diamond Books, 2010, p. 11.

<sup>9</sup> *Gorin-no Sho: The Book of Five Rings*, [http://www.uvm.edu/~asnider/IDAS\\_2011\\_CD/Teachers/Steve%20Llano's%20Materials/Strategy%20Books/Book%20of%20Five%20Rings%20-%20Musashi.pdf](http://www.uvm.edu/~asnider/IDAS_2011_CD/Teachers/Steve%20Llano's%20Materials/Strategy%20Books/Book%20of%20Five%20Rings%20-%20Musashi.pdf) (accessed 29.06.2013), p. 2.

<sup>10</sup> Izdebski, Nowakowski, 'Życie Musashiego...', p. 12.

<sup>11</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>13</sup> Confucius: <http://asianhistory.about.com/od/ancientchina/p/Confucius.htm> (accessed 29.06.2013).

<sup>14</sup> Jinichi Tokeshi, *Kendo. Podstawy, filozofia i zasady walki* [Kendo. Basics, Philosophy and Rules of Combat], Bydgoszcz: Diamond Books, 2008, p. 241.

<sup>15</sup> G. Cameron Hurst III, 'Samuraj na Wall Street' [Samurai on Wall Street], in *Gorin-no Sho. Księga Pięciu Kregów* [The Book of Five Rings], Musashi Miyamoto, Bydgoszcz: Diamond Books, 2010, p. 113.

<sup>16</sup> Izdebski, Nowakowski, 'Życie Musashiego...', p. 12.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

However, scholars reject this theory, as they do the one in which the monk Takuan was Musashi's master.<sup>18</sup> For some of the researchers, Musashi's father was his master, although he did not die until the year 1607.<sup>19</sup> Had Munisai died earlier, then Bennosuke's uncle must have been teaching him.<sup>20</sup>

During his life, Musashi fought over sixty duels.<sup>21</sup> According to legend he fought his first duel at the age of thirteen. His opponent was the aforementioned Arima Kihei. Musashi naturally won, but it is impossible to establish the authenticity of that duel.<sup>22</sup> It should be added that in the Introduction to the *Book of Five Rings* there is a note concerning that single combat: 'My first duel was when I was thirteen, I struck down a strategist of the Shinto school, one Arima Kihei'.<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately, it is impossible to confirm the authenticity of the duel on the basis of this note alone. As mentioned above, we do not know who the author of the Introduction is. If it was one of Musashi's apprentices this note might be based on legend as well. Of course, one can also assume that even if Musashi himself was the author he may have given unreliable information. It is worth observing that since his early years the samurai attached importance to learning, in this particular case the study of fencing. There is a very important and significant resemblance to Confucius here. It can also be acknowledged that Musashi is not an exception, and the fact that he devoted himself to learning was linked to the deeply rooted Confucian ethics in Japanese culture. In any case, this education made him achieve good results, and in consequence Musashi has been acknowledged as one of the best fencers in the history of Japan. In the introduction to the *Book of Five Rings* the author stresses that he had never failed in a duel.<sup>24</sup>

It should be added that he did go to war, though he always supported the Toyotomi House against the Tokugawa, eventually resulting in him standing on the defeated side. He participated in the battle of Sekigahara in 1600<sup>25</sup> as well as in the Siege of Ōsaka in 1615.<sup>26</sup> Without any doubts, these events shaped his political views, which had a direct influence on his later life.

The fact that Musashi was a *rōnin* is crucial. In the introduction to the *Book of Five Rings* he writes: 'Since then I have lived without following any particular Way. Thus with the virtue of strategy I practice many arts and abilities – all things with no teacher'.<sup>27</sup> In this place another problem appears. At the end of his life, at the age of fifty seven, Musashi became military advisor to the Hosokawa court in Kumamoto.<sup>28</sup> Therefore it can be supposed that he followed his own words, as he states in the aforementioned quotation. He never abandoned the art of war. The only question is his status. Could he, while serving for the House of Hosokawa as the military advisor, be treated as a *rōnin*? It should be observed

<sup>18</sup> Hurst III, 'Samuraj...', p. 118.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 113.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 114.

<sup>21</sup> *Gorin-no Sho...*, p. 3.

<sup>22</sup> Hurst III, 'Samuraj...', p. 114.

<sup>23</sup> *Gorin-no Sho...*, p. 3.

<sup>24</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>25</sup> Hurst III, 'Samuraj...', pp. 114–115.

<sup>26</sup> Izdebski, Nowakowski, 'Życie Musashiego...', p. 16.

<sup>27</sup> *Gorin-no Sho...*, p. 3.

<sup>28</sup> Hurst III, 'Samuraj...', p. 115.

that even if the Introduction was written by one of Musashi's apprentices they must have known whether their master had been a *rōnin* or not. Hence, it can be assumed that at the end of his life the sword master had found a lord for himself, and as a result was no longer a masterless samurai. Such a hypothesis does not fit the passing reference in the Introduction. In this case it should be treated as a mistake made subconsciously. One may also assume that Musashi remained a *rōnin* for his entire life. This issue is undoubtedly important, although it is not the main topic of this paper, but it may serve as an inspiration for further research.

Miyamoto Musashi earned his reputation for the most part as a founder of a martial arts school, the Niten Ichi Ryū school of *kendō*.<sup>29</sup> Teaching became very important for him; in addition, when he finished the endless duels of the earlier stage of his life, he took interest in art and self-improvement.<sup>30</sup> At the end of his life he wrote three compositions: *Hyōhō Sanju Go* (*Thirty-Five Instructions on Strategy*, 1641), the abovementioned *Gorin-no Sho* (*The Book of Five Rings*, 1965) and *Dokugyodo* (*The Way to Be Followed Alone*). Musashi died in 1645.<sup>31</sup>

The *Book of Five Rings* is written in extremely simple language<sup>32</sup>, and the readership should not have any problems understanding the content of it. Naturally, one may bear in mind that any note written down by the author can be interpreted in many ways – on one hand, as the literal reference to the situation presented by the author, and on the other, as a general observation on life, and not necessarily that of warriors alone. Nevertheless, a reader who is able to discover different interpretations of the given pieces will be able to cherish a far richer reading and comprehension of the piece. It is worth noting that understanding the hidden points is not difficult. Additionally, any person can interpret the pieces in a different way, with the only exception to be made for the literal content.

In the *Book of Five Rings*, the samurai particularly wanted to include rules important for the young warriors. He neither eschewed philosophical reflections nor elements of the Confucian ethics. One observes that Musashi himself states in the Introduction that he is not going to use them as a basis: 'To write this book, I did not use the law of Buddha or the teachings of Confucius'.<sup>33</sup> It has to be highlighted that the author does not refer to Confucian ethics explicitly. Nonetheless, such elements are often mentioned in this particular work, which is probably caused by the samurai's upbringing. As already mentioned, his childhood was mysterious, much as his entire life was. Most probably, he obtained a similar education to that of other warriors. It means that apart from learning practical skills he must have acquired some various theories, including Confucian ethics. In addition, he was supposed to learn the rules of *bushidō*, though he did not relate to them in the *Book of Five Rings*. One should remember that in this period of Japanese history there was no distinction between practice and theory, education was uniform. It was not possible to practice without knowing the theory, and vice versa. Other famous warriors have made similar remarks. For instance, the author of *Heihō Okugisho* (*The Secret of High Strategy*) wrote:

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<sup>29</sup> Tokeshi, *Kendo*..., p. 99.

<sup>30</sup> Hurst III, 'Samuraj...', p. 115.

<sup>31</sup> Izdebski, Nowakowski, 'Życie Musashiego...', p. 17.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>33</sup> *Gorin-no Sho*..., p. 3.

It is said that there are three things important in the art of war. First, the sight to let you observe the opponent. Second, the mind so as to value him. Third, the body to let you fight against him. People want to split it into three parts, but I tell them: it is always the mind that is first, then goes the body. Although you look at your opponent through your eyes, you observe him with your mind, and the body is obedient to one's thoughts.<sup>34</sup>

The above quotation is crucial for this work as it shows both the urge to learn and its manners of educating. Musashi is no exception here; for him exercising one's mind and body are equally important, but not as much as for the author of *Heihō Okugisho* who reckons that the body is fully obedient to the human mind. That explains why the theory is so vital. The aforementioned, legendary Yamamoto Kanasuke (1501–1561?) believes that one wins battles and wars due to theory, rather than military and physical might.<sup>35</sup>

Even Confucius himself recommended mental exercises: "Learning without thought is labour lost; thought without learning is perilous".<sup>36</sup> The foregoing dictum shows an observable similarity between the samurai, in particular, Yamamoto Kanasuke, and Confucius. The author of *Gorin-no Sho* will also be no exception here.

The fact that Musashi concentrates mostly on physical aspects does not necessarily mean that he rejects the theoretical ones, otherwise writing the *Book of Five Rings* would have been pointless.

Returning to the Confucian elements themselves, it is very probable that Musashi's upbringing had a subconscious influence on him putting those elements into the *Book*. Generally speaking, Confucian ethics has a great impact on the author's background and his outlook on life, regardless of his intentions, suggesting that he might have included the Confucian elements in *The Book of Five Rings* unconsciously. Most warriors drew on the tradition<sup>37</sup>, and if Confucian ethics was inculcated in it, they would follow it as well. However, the note in the Introduction to *Gorin-no Sho* is, to say the least, problematic. Still, there is an alternative possibility. As mentioned above, some scholars believe that the Introduction was written not by Musashi, but by one of his students. It can even be assumed that the Introduction was prepared by Iori, his adopted son. Nevertheless, even if Musashi had not written that he would draw on Confucian ethics, one can presume that he himself did so, and one of his followers provided such information in the Introduction for reasons unknown.

The first element worth concentrating upon is Musashi's aforesaid attitude towards learning. For samurai this was of vital importance. *Bushidō* contained very detailed instructions on what the education of a young samurai should look like. The book also explains why education is so significant for samurai:

<sup>34</sup> Kanasuke Yamamoto, *Tajemnice strategii. Heihō Okugisho* [The Secret of High Strategy. Heihō Okugisho], Bydgoszcz: Diamond Books, 2008, p. 90.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>36</sup> *The Analects of Confucius*, <http://old-site.clsp.jhu.edu/~yisu/files/cnfnl10u.pdf> (accessed 29.06.2013) p. 8.

<sup>37</sup> Munenori Yagyū, *Heihō Kadensho. Księga przekazów rodzinnych o sztuce wojny* [The Life-Giving Sword: Secret Teachings from the House of the Shogun], Bydgoszcz: Diamond Books, 2002, p. 65.

Bearing in mind the fact that the samurai's position within the society is higher than the three other groups and they have to administer duties, it is essential for them to be well-educated and have broad general knowledge in many aspects of life'.<sup>38</sup>

Education was therefore their basis. Every self-respecting samurai had to be skilled. The only exception was the war period when there was no time for proper learning. Daidōji Yūzan Taira-no Shigesuke (1639–1730), a famous Japanese strategist, claims that during wartime there were many illiterate warriors.<sup>39</sup> This was caused by the emphasis during that time on pure military knowledge. However, what should be stressed here is the fact that even during wartime education was important for the samurai families. Daidōji Yūzan Taira-no Shigesuke also argues that their illiteracy was a result of educational mistakes, not the war itself.<sup>40</sup> Confucius assigned importance to learning also.<sup>41</sup> Musashi's attitude was almost the same; broadening one's mind was definitely his priority. It can thus be said that the need of learning bears the closest resemblance in the *Book of Five Rings* to a point of Confucian ethics. Evidently, Musashi's priority was to advise internalizing military knowledge. The period in which the sword master lived had an influence on him. In his work he wrote:

'It is said the warrior's is the twofold Way of pen and sword, and he should have a taste for both Ways. Even if a man has no natural ability he can be a warrior by sticking assiduously to both divisions of the Way'.<sup>42</sup>

It is clear that the warrior must concentrate on the practical exercises, but at the same time, this does not exclude the contemplation of theory. Musashi, in agreement with the *Bushidō* rules mentioned earlier, favoured samurai in the social hierarchy as well. A warrior could not miss training sessions. We can observe that Musashi accused others of misconceiving the role of theory as totally unnecessary. The aforementioned uniformity of education should be now considered. It seems that there were people who believed that practice cannot exist without theory and the reverse. It is very unlikely that Musashi's accusation is unjustified. Unfortunately, the author does not specify who the recipient of it is; he even highlights his sole responsibility for such a hypothesis. Still, it is hard to state whether his remark has no true foundations, therefore one can assume that his views must have been based on something.

Although there is a great similarity to Confucius here, there is a clearly stated difference, too. The author of the *Book of Five Rings*, much as Daidōji Yūzan Taira-no Shigesuke, focuses mostly on the military education, which was often exclusively dedicated to warriors. Naturally, Miyamoto Musashi attaches greater importance to that education. Confucius did not distinguish military knowledge, for him general education was more important<sup>43</sup> and should not be decomposed into autonomous domains. However, it does not mean that

<sup>38</sup> Yūzan Daidōji, *Wprowadzenie do Bushidō. Budō Shoshinshū* [The Beginner's Book of Bushido], Bydgoszcz: Diamond Books, 2009, p. 15.

<sup>39</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>41</sup> *The Analects of Confucius*, p. 72.

<sup>42</sup> *Gorin-no Sho...*, p. 3.

<sup>43</sup> *The Analects of Confucius*, p. 72.

he does not appreciate the value of the art of war. In fact, the situation is contrary, for Confucius every discipline seems to be significant and serious.

For Musashi education was so important that he kept repeating about it almost all the time in his *Book of Five Rings*. He might have believed that but for education nobody would have achieved anything. Thus, most of his ideas end in commands: 'If you want to learn this Way, deeply consider the things written in this book one at a time. You must do sufficient research.<sup>44</sup> (...) These are things you must learn thoroughly.<sup>45</sup> (...) You must research this well.<sup>46</sup> (...) You must understand the application of this method'.<sup>47</sup>

One should add that the above-mentioned excerpts concern not only mental exercises but physical ones as well. The samurai's devotion to education is again noticeable. It is very probable that the author knew that without broadening one's mind it was impossible to achieve anything. Another aspect should be taken into consideration here, namely discipline. This is clearly another aspect that connects the swordmaster with Confucius, though in the case of the second philosopher the word 'obedience' should be used. The Chinese even believed that full submission to one's parents is crucial.<sup>48</sup> This does not imply that obedience towards the teacher was unnecessary as the situation was completely different. Musashi's reasoning was the same. Discipline helps an individual to develop oneself, strong will is obviously indispensable, as the foregoing quotation proves. Discipline may also mean a natural craving for self-improvement.

Musashi stressed that every warrior should 'become acquainted with every art'<sup>49</sup> and every human being should 'know the Ways of professions'.<sup>50</sup> In these pieces of advice one can clearly recognise the dictation to deepen knowledge. It must be stressed, however, that for Musashi only the samurai could deal with the art of war, so that warriors' priority was to gain, both military and, concerning other aspects, skills. The author does pay attention to other people, though. According to his reasoning every person is supposed to acquire knowledge. As a result, it is possible to attain perfection or perfect harmony. This should be also treated as a feature similar to Confucius' philosophy. As mentioned before, the old master did advocate studying without splitting it into separate disciplines. Generally speaking, one must learn everything.

The social division is another very important Confucian element in the *Book of Five Rings*. Musashi stayed in agreement with *bushidō* as well as with the Confucian ethics which stated that every person has its own place within the society. One can claim that it was conditioned by an individual's birth or even by their destiny. This is distinguishable in the aforementioned quotation. Musashi observes how high the position occupied by the samurai is in Japanese society. All in all, they were on the top of the social ladder.<sup>51</sup> Clearly, any change in this hierarchy would be like a disaster for the author. Theoretically, this

<sup>44</sup> *Gorin-no Sho*..., p. 5.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>48</sup> *The Analects of Confucius*, p. 20.

<sup>49</sup> *Gorin-no Sho*..., p. 8.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>51</sup> Conrad Totman, *Historia Japonii* [A History of Japan], Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2009, p. 113.

would ruin the contemporary social order. Musashi is no different from other samurai here. Even Daidōji Yūzan Taira-no Shigesuke was able to discern how important the binding social order was. Samurai were on the top, and nothing should disturb this situation.<sup>52</sup> Additionally, every social group had their own duties, so no-one can say that samurai as the leaders had no obligations. For many, they had the greatest number of duties. Eventually, apart from the administrative position they occupied, they had to fight.<sup>53</sup> They were expected to be ready to sacrifice their lives at any moment. Musashi in the *Book of Five Rings* constantly repeats that. Master Confucius also believes that every citizen should have their own obligations and perform some kind of function.<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, if everybody does what they are expected to do, and, more importantly, stay in accordance with their social status, peace among people will come and the country would develop quickly.<sup>55</sup> Hence, the order in the country can be regarded as harmony. It is worth analysing what might happen if something disturbed the existing social order or what the consequences of that would be. In the end, the state known to Confucius, Musashi or to other samurai no longer exists, no matter if one has China or Japan in mind. Those considerations are not the topic of this paper, although they present new research possibilities. It should also be considered whether the order prevalent in the Middle Kingdom or the land of the Rising Sun at that time was, according to Musashi, good, viewing chances for development. The following issues will be discussed in the forthcoming sections of this paper.

Now, we should concentrate on a matter that has already been mentioned many times, namely harmony. What was it specifically? Did Confucius and Musashi perceive it in a similar way? Those questions require a little analysis. Were one to suggest that master Confucius recommends harmony in every aspect of life, more precisely, he reckons that it leads to all kinds of development.<sup>56</sup> In the *Book of Five Rings* Musashi turns his attention to this problem as well. He acknowledges that the rhythm should be responsible for showing the path a human must follow: 'Timing is important in dancing and pipe or string music, for they are in rhythm only if timing is good. Timing and rhythm are also involved in the military arts, shooting bows and guns, and riding horses. In all skills and abilities there is timing'.<sup>57</sup>

Clearly, like Confucius, Musashi thinks that harmony or rhythm (timing) or order, all being instances of the same aspect, should not be distorted. It has to be highlighted that he talks mostly about warriors, but not exclusively. As he himself says, the description applies to other people, too. That relates to many other aspects, for instance, the aforementioned distortion of order in the country. In this particular case, Musashi is most probably thinking of human conduct. Apparently, the warrior is the key figure, but the passing reference shows its link to other social groups. After all, every human is guided by some kind of rhythm, either deliberately or not. Distorting this 'rhythm' may lead to serious, yet very often irreversible changes. For example, a warrior who unexpectedly decides to

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<sup>52</sup> Daidōji, *Wprowadzenie do...*, p. 15.

<sup>53</sup> *Bushido: The Soul of Japan*, <http://wordlist.narod.ru/bushido.pdf> (accessed 29.06.2013), p. 49.

<sup>54</sup> *The Analects of Confucius*, p. 14.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 104.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>57</sup> *Gorin-no Sho...*, p. 7.

stop practising the art of war, no matter if one thinks of the theory or practice, will soon become weak, and his skills will deteriorate. The same applies to a farmer who chooses not to cultivate. It is impossible for the soil to bring forth crops. This is how the distortion of the rhythm manifests. One should also consider the awareness of harmony. Both Confucius and Musashi points out how important harmony and rhythm are. Since every person is expected to explore the heart of the matter, it automatically denotes the awareness of its existence. Without any doubt, an unaware entity can perturb its life more easily when compared to a fully conscious individual. Thus, Confucius and Musashi both recommend two things: keeping order and the very awareness of its existence. The aspect of harmony in other contexts should also be considered. For instance, harmony is extremely important in family life, in the hearth and home specifically. The life of every family is guided by the given rhythm. The distortion might cause many unpleasant results. Similarly, harmony is necessary in the social life, not to mention other concerns. From the very beginning Confucius states that harmony is indispensable in every aspect. Musashi makes general remarks, too. He literally highlights that no matter who the person is and what he does in his life, it is the rhythm that is important. Hence, it is true to claim that both Confucius and Musashi were fully aware of the presence of this kind of order in their lives. They themselves had to follow it, thereby recommending harmony to their apprentices, and in the case of Masashi, to his readers as well.

This relation, or the attitude towards others, deserves a separate mention. Among many things, one should concentrate primarily on respect. This is one of the most significant similarities. Master Confucius said “I will not be afflicted at men’s not knowing me; I will be afflicted that I do not know men”.<sup>58</sup> Evidently, for Confucian ethics relations with other people are vital. It seems obvious to state that in order to achieve the level of harmony in a country, there has to be harmony among citizens. In the *Book of Five Rings* Musashi also stressed the need for such respect: “(...) people are always under the impression that the enemy is strong, and so tend to become cautious”.<sup>59</sup> For Musashi, respect towards one’s opponent is as important as the respect towards the art of war. The lack of it would lead to ignorance resulting in loss. Respect, then, is another Confucian element in the *Book of Five Rings*. It should be borne in mind, however, that Musashi’s respect has a different facet when compared to Confucius’ idea who recommended respecting others, regardless of their situation, whereas Musashi talks about combat exclusively. All in all, Musashi was a samurai and his work was a military-philosophical treatise. That is the reason why the following difference exists. One may also want to consider the meaning of this respect for Confucius and Musashi. The fragments mentioned above deal with the advice to respect others only, but do Confucius and Musashi advocate self-respect? This issue shall be now analysed. The Chinese philosopher states “Let his words be sincere and truthful, and his actions honourable and careful”.<sup>60</sup> Once again, one can see the dictates calling for respect. In this particular case, it is worth concentrating on a different issue, though. Confucius demands that people be reliable. This very advice is a clear indication to show self-respect towards oneself. It is impossible to be loyal to other people if a person does not respect

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<sup>58</sup> *The Analects of Confucius*, p. 5.

<sup>59</sup> *Gorin-no Sho...*, p. 20.

<sup>60</sup> *The Analects of Confucius*, p. 96.

their own dignity. In most cases, an individual unable to respect himself is incapable of admiring others, therefore the issue of loyalty no longer exist. Musashi does not relate to loyalty at all. It is possible that this is the outcome of him being, at least for most of his life, a *ronin*. He does not state verbatim whether a person should respect oneself. Most probably, he thought that this was the way people should behave. This can be deduced from all his pieces of advice, even the ones concerning discipline. A human who does not respect himself usually does not work well in any field, let alone maintaining discipline. Consequently, it is to be stated that both Confucius and Musashi recommend showing respect not only to other people but also towards oneself.

The advice to be temperate in every aspect except study<sup>61</sup> is another Confucian element present in the *Book of Five Rings* though they are literally expounded in *Dokkōdō* (The Way to Be Followed Alone): “Be detached from desire your whole life. (...) Do not pursue the taste of good food”.<sup>62</sup> Apparently, the samurai also insists on rejecting pleasure instead of useful things. In the case of Musashi, what he bears in mind is the deep care for maintaining decent physical condition, concordant to the military Way. If the samurai paid too much attention to mundane dreams, seeking their own comfort, their skills would deteriorate. Undoubtedly, education was of the utmost importance, therefore no samurai could forget about exercising restraint. In addition, Musashi orders “do nothing which is of no use”.<sup>63</sup> An aloof person does not do such things. Simultaneously, the samurai suggests “Distinguish between gain and loss in worldly matters”.<sup>64</sup> This is a feature of a temperate individual as well. Furthermore, these people are supposed to behave justly. This is the samurai’s precept, to ‘develop intuitive judgement and understanding for everything’.<sup>65</sup> On the basis of the following extracts, one can observe a great similarity between the samurai and the old master. On the other hand, there is another aspect to be considered; Musashi was a samurai and he fought about sixty duels during his life. Was it possible for a warrior to be temperate? Could a warrior let himself be aloof? Most probably the answer is no, as his life depended upon it. During the duel it was relatively easy to be composed, whereas during battle it was barely possible, and in the turmoil of battle the task would seem insurmountable. It must be added, however, that the behaviour of Japanese warriors was different from the European ones. Due to those differences it is justifiable to claim that samurai could be restrained. Is this reasoning correct? Such a hypothesis opens new research possibilities. The warriors’ behaviour may be the subject of further analyses for scholars. Even Musashi did not necessarily have to be reserved, the proof of it being the number of duels and the way he won them. Nobody can question his determination, but was he temperate? According to the legends describing him, he was brutal, direct and crude.<sup>66</sup> Thus, it should be taken into consideration whether Musashi could have recommended restraint at all. The abovementioned features of the character have little to

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>62</sup> *Dōkkodō* [独行道; The Way to Be Followed Alone]: <http://martinjd.tetradyn.com/mgt-work-ethic-philosophy/Dokkodo.pdf> (accessed 29.06.2013).

<sup>63</sup> *Gorin-no Sho...*, p. 8.

<sup>64</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>65</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>66</sup> Hurst III, ‘Samuraj...’, pp. 119–120.

do with restraint. Obviously, any person may have their own views on this matter. There are many possibilities concerning this problem, but unfortunately there are not enough sources to provide an answer to the question.

What will be now analysed is the internal situation in the country. As mentioned before, maintaining order leads to prosperity. The question is: were Confucius and Musashi pleased with the condition of the country at that time? Was it developing, in their personal opinion? The answer to the following questions may somehow distort the idea of harmony. Master Confucius believed that the omnipresent evil exists due to the failure to observe the customs.<sup>67</sup> More specifically, he disliked the Middle Kingdom's condition. He was born in Lu county (now Shandong province). He had to flee from there when the rebellion started, and when he returned he became a political figure.<sup>68</sup> What is crucial here is that during his life he often had a chance to observe the poor, let alone the fact that he also experienced poverty.<sup>69</sup> This all may have allowed him to create his own vision of the world. He thought that the then ruling order was far from being perfect. It is the lack of respect towards the tradition that causes corruption. The direct outcome of this is worth discussing. According to Confucius, it might have resulted in bad treatment of the subjects. It is what could be defined as one of the most fundamental criteria that suggest the bad state of a given country. In the *Analects* there is a short note that concerns this issue:

If the people be led by laws, and uniformity sought to be given them by punishments, they will try to avoid the punishment, but have no sense of shame. If they be led by virtue, and uniformity sought to be given them by the rules of propriety, they will have the sense of shame, and moreover will become good.<sup>70</sup>

As mentioned above, discipline was very important for Confucius. It is worth considering how, according to the philosopher, this discipline should be introduced. Talking about punishments is forbidden. Since the sage used to observe people, he often had a chance to look at the boys during the punishment dispensing. This must have had the biggest influence on his attitude towards discipline. It is clear that customs and traditions were vital. Obeying or rather remembering them leads to development. However, if one forgets about these things and does not adhere to them, the country will be affected in some way. A country where people neglect their culture and traditions is on a direct path to decline, either physical or moral. Musashi also believed that Japan was in a bad condition. Bearing in mind that he participated in a war against the House of Tokugawa, the later *shōgunate*, their assumption of power was a disaster for Musashi. Many other warriors did not think in the same way, though. For example Yagyū Munenori (1571–1646), who participated in the same war but represented the house of Tokugawa, did not complain about the state of the country. He became *daimyō* and taught fencing to Tokugawa Hidetada (1579–1632) the later *shōgun*.<sup>71</sup>

Hence, the way one perceived the situation in the country depended upon the individual's personal state. It is obvious that a person who is not well-off would criticise the current

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<sup>67</sup> *The Analects of Confucius*, p. 113.

<sup>68</sup> Tadeusz Żbikowski, *Konfucjusz* [Confucius], Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza, 1960, p. 83.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79.

<sup>70</sup> *The Analects of Confucius*, p. 5.

<sup>71</sup> Tokeshi, *Kendo...*, p. 217.

condition of the country. Nevertheless, no one can claim that such people exaggerate, as they may be right as well. In the end, their position is related to the country. Musashi should not be blamed for his complaints concerning his own country at that time. He even provides a clear explanation of his attitude. According to him, the bad state Japan was in was triggered by the loss of national awareness: 'If we look at the world we see arts for sale. Men use equipment to sell their own selves'.<sup>72</sup> This shows that Musashi both blames and explains the loss of national awareness by people's pursuit of money collecting or even amassing great fortunes. People who abandoned art and tradition for the sake of money were being affected by depravity. According to the author of *Gorin-no Sho*, humans themselves became objects. Without any doubt, it must have been difficult for a man who used to behave according to his honour. What should be added now is the fact that the samurai sees here the biggest threat to the art of war. Naturally, he could have always exaggerated the problem. It is impossible to reach any consensus on this matter. Some researchers would agree with the samurai, whereas some would not. All in all, one can claim that the above mentioned quotation highlights how Musashi was similar to Confucius, but not the Confucian elements in the *Book of Five Rings*. Eventually, both the sage and the samurai reckoned that the situation in their countries was not good. Confucius did not praise excessive gains, either: 'The mind of the superior man is conversant with righteousness; the mind of the mean man is conversant with gain'.<sup>73</sup> It seems apparent for Confucius that the person who aims at his own profits is inferior. The Chinese master and the swordmaster both think that people should follow the path that guarantees the development of their country. Still, it is possible to observe the trace of Confucian ethics, ingrained in the precept to respect tradition. Both Confucius and Musashi assume that respecting culture and tradition helps attain prosperity. The samurai, which is fairly understandable, paid more attention to military issues, but that was due to his profession.

Confucius, in mentioning this tradition, had in mind the sacral rites as well.<sup>74</sup> He supported paying homage to the deceased and to Heaven. The worldly life should be determined by the divine plan.<sup>75</sup> But what in fact is this divine plan? Confucius suggests that every person must at least try to comprehend it: 'Heaven. I do not grumble against men. My studies lie low, and my penetration rises high. But there is Heaven; that knows me!<sup>76</sup> On the basis of the above quotation it seems that Confucius' 'divine plan' means exactly the same thing as the sense of life. The person who is able to grasp and follow it will retain harmony in their life. The aforementioned distortion of rhythm, regardless of the aspect (governmental or personal), is caused by a lack of understanding of this divine plan. There is another interesting aspect to this problem; the person who flouts the divine plan, destroying the harmony in one's life, does it only to oneself. In such a case, there is only one person affected by it; ultimately his or her family or friends may suffer, whereas people who do not follow the divine plan when it comes to their state of life are ruining the whole country. In consequence, all people suffer, although most of them did not participate in wrong activities.

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<sup>72</sup> Miyamoto, *Gorin-no Sho*..., p. 4.

<sup>73</sup> *The Analects of Confucius*, p. 19.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 129.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92.

The person who discovers the aims of a particular country will be able to follow the right path. The same goes with any human life. In the *Book of Five Rings* there is only one reference to the sacred, in the Introduction: 'I have climbed Mount Iwato of Higo in Kyushu to pay homage to Heaven, pray to Kwannon, and kneel before Buddha'.<sup>77</sup> Taking care of the rites was also very important for Musashi. However, they are slightly different. The *Book of Five Rings* does not contain any pieces of information concerning the ancestor cult. The samurai obviously praises Heaven, but his praise remains unmotivated. It seems that Musashi also wanted to comprehend God's will. In his work he advocates: 'Perceive those things which cannot be seen'.<sup>78</sup> This bears a great resemblance to Confucius's understanding of the divine plan. It is not fully confirmed, though, and so such a suggestion should be treated only as a hypothesis. Generally speaking, the rite itself is the biggest similarity. Additionally, praising Heaven is an instance of the ancestor cult. Samurai could glorify them in this way, or by means of Shintō rites. The place where he mentions those things is also problematic. As has been mentioned many times before, the Introduction may have been written by somebody else. That would mean Musashi made absolutely no reference to sacred rites in the *Book of Five Rings*. All the same, he makes a direct mention in *Dokkōdō*: 'Respect Buddha and the gods without counting on their help'.<sup>79</sup> Clearly, Musashi recommends participation in religious rites. He does not determine what they should look like, but, in this case, it does not matter. The aforementioned note requires analysis. Not only does the samurai recommend but also insists on praising the acts of God. At the same time, he advises us not to rely on them. It seems that he believed in people taking care of their own lives; they need to study hard to achieve something. Indolence coupled with waiting for divine forces to intervene leads to nothing. This may be why Musashi does not suggest people's decisions should be based solely upon the acts of God. Naturally, not every person has to agree with such a thesis. This is another example of a note that has more than just one interpretation.

The divine plan deserves another paragraph. It thus authenticates the deeper meaning, that there is a huge similarity between Confucius and Musashi. Having read *Gorin-no Sho* one can safely claim that the samurai tried to understand the sense of life all the time. This is mostly recognisable in the Introduction<sup>80</sup>, but if that was written by Musashi a serious problem would appear. Eventually, the very advice to experience and understand what remains uncovered indicates the necessity to discover the sense.<sup>81</sup> Confucius and Musashi therefore both believe in praising supreme forces, even if their motivations were different. It is extremely likely that they were both looking for the sense of life. One can but debate whether they managed to find it.

To sum up, there are many elements of the Confucian ethics in the *Book of Five Rings*. It should be analysed why they were put there anyway. Musashi declared he would not refer to Confucian ethics, which suggests that incorporating them within the work could be caused by his upbringing. That is, if he himself was the author of the Introduction, the

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<sup>77</sup> *Gorin-no Sho*..., p. 2.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>79</sup> *Dōkkōdō*...

<sup>80</sup> *Gorin-no Sho*..., pp. 2–3.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

samurai might have included them subconsciously. However, we can find many more such elements within the *Book of Five Rings*; this article aims to present only the most significant ones. Naturally, some researchers are welcome to claim that there are absolutely no elements of Confucian ethics in *Gorin-no Sho*. Nevertheless, the assumptions made throughout this paper state that the elements of Confucianism can really be found in the book, regardless of whether the author included them deliberately or not. Many aspects give the impression of how similar the samurai was to Confucius. It is also interesting to analyse what those elements meant to the samurai. This is the reason why it is justifiable to stress that perhaps for Musashi the Confucian elements were so ingrained in Japanese culture that he was unable to distinguish them as separate entities. There may be a huge difference in the perception of the Confucian elements. Musashi may have understood them in a way that differs wholly from that of the modern scholars.

MALGORZATA CITKO

# Ancient Japanese Poetry in Early Medieval Poetic Discourse – Appropriation of the *Man'yōshū* in Selected Poems of Princess Shikishi<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

The paper analyzes several poems by the Princess Shikishi (1149–1200) from the viewpoint of *Man'yōshū* appropriation. Despite relative scarcity of allusions to *Man'yōshū*, some features in her appropriation style are found in the poetry of other contemporary poets, e.g. frequent appropriation of volumes X–XI and well-known *Man'yōshū* lines, utilization of secondary sources rather than *Man'yōshū* manuscripts, etc. This demonstrates complexity of channels through which *Man'yōshū* was appropriated. Simultaneously, there are features of her *Man'yōshū* appropriation that distinguished her from other contemporary poets, which evidences that Princess Shikishi was not only a participant in but also a significant contributor to early medieval poetic discourse.

The poetry of Princess Shikishi (1149–1200) has been well researched in both Japanese and Anglophone academia.<sup>2</sup> There are, however, some aspects of her poetry that have attracted less attention in the field of Japanese literary studies, e.g. the appropriation of Chinese or ancient Japanese poetry. The Chinese intertext in this early medieval<sup>3</sup> female

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<sup>1</sup> This article is based on research conducted in National Institute of Japanese Literature and at Waseda University in Tokyo in 2012–2014 thanks to Japan Foundation Japanese Studies Fellowship program and University of Hawai'i Center for Japanese Studies Graduate Fellowship. I would like to thank those academic institutions and sponsors for access to resources and financial support during the process of researching and writing.

<sup>2</sup> There are three annotations of Princess Shikishi's poems: 1) Gō Oda, *Shikishi Naishinnō zenkachūshaku* [All Poems by Princess Shikishi Annotated], Ōsaka: Izumi Shoin, 1995; 2) Hitoshi Nishiki, *Shikishi Naishinnō zenkashū* [Collection of All Poems by Princess Shikishi], Tōkyō: Ōfūsha, 2001; 3) Yōko Okuno, *Shikishi Naishinnōshū zenshaku* [Complete Annotation of Princess Shikishi's Collection], Tōkyō: Kazama Shobō, 2001. There are also about 300 scholarly papers in Japanese on the subject of Princess Shikishi's poetry and life. Moreover, her poems have been translated into English – Hiroaki Sato, *String of Beads: Complete Poems of Princess Shikishi*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1993.

<sup>3</sup> As opposed to traditional Japanese historiography, which marks the medieval period as starting in 1185 (beginning of Kamakura shogunate), Robert Huey argued that the medieval era in Japanese poetry began during Emperor Horikawa's (1078–1007) reign, specifically in mid-1080s.

poet's *waka* (Japanese court poetry) has already received some scholarship by Nishiki Hitoshi, Oda Gō, Yoshizaki Keiko and Akahane Shuku, even though the Chinese intertext is usually considered to reflect a different type of discourse in Japan than vernacular literature. However, the appropriation of ancient Japanese poetry, especially the poetry of the first collection of Japanese poetry, *Man'yōshū* [Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves, c. 759–785], in Princess Shikishi's poems has so far only been examined by Hirai Keiko.<sup>4</sup> Thus, the subject of this article is the appropriation of *Man'yōshū* in Princess Shikishi's poetry, as well as the character and significance of such appropriation.

*Man'yōshū* perhaps does not constitute the most significant part of the medieval poetic discourse, but it is an important part of it. *Man'yōshū*'s poetry was utilized in the process of reconsidering Japanese poetic past and the renewal of *waka* tradition, which were trends that marked the compilation era of the eighth *chokusen wakashū* [Imperial Collection of Japanese Poetry], *Shinkokin wakashū* [New Collection of Japanese Poems from Ancient and Modern Times, 1205].<sup>5</sup> I assume that the appropriation of *Man'yōshū* poetry in works of Princess Shikishi, who was a very respected female poet of her time, must therefore be a reflection of early medieval Japanese poetic discourse. The question arises as to what features of such discourse's manifestation may be found in *Man'yōshū*'s appropriation into the poetry of Princess Shikishi. Moreover, we should consider how Princess Shikishi participated in and contributed to this poetic discourse. Did she follow the guidance of her poetry master, Fujiwara Shunzei (1114–1204)<sup>6</sup> of Mikohidari house, or did she perhaps study *Man'yōshū* on her own and become inspired by its ancient poetics and vocabulary? Are we able to determine whether Princess Shikishi utilized any of *Man'yōshū* manuscripts circulated in the early medieval era, or whether she rather came across the ancient poems in secondary sources? What, then, are the major features of her appropriation of *Man'yōshū* poetry, and do they generally speak for the early medieval *waka*?

In order to address those questions, I will provide some information on Princess Shikishi's life that will give us an idea of the background of her poetic education, and determine some features of her poetic style. This section allows the reader to understand what kind of poetry Princess Shikishi composed and what her poems were likely intended to represent. Subsequently, I will take into consideration some features of *Man'yōshū*'s

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See Robert N. Huey, 'The Medievalization of Poetic Practice', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 50, No. 2, December 1990, pp. 651–668.

<sup>4</sup> Keiko Hirai, 'Shikishi Naishinnō ni okeru *Man'yō sesshū*' [Appropriation of 'Man'yōshū' in Poems of Princess Shikishi], in Akahane Shuku (ed.), *Akahane Shuku sensei taishoku kinen ronbunshū* [Collected Papers for Professor Shuku Akahane's Retirement], Okayama: Akahane Shuku Sensei Taishoku Kinen no Kai, 2005, pp. 185–195.

<sup>5</sup> *Shinkokin wakashū* was ordered in 1201 by Retired Emperor Go-Toba (1180–1239) and completed in 1205 by Fujiwara Teika (1162–1241), Fujiwara Ari'ie (1155–1216), Fujiwara Ietaka (1158–1237), priest Jakuren (?–1202), Minamoto Michitomo (1171–1237), and Asukai Masatsune (1170–1221). See Tamotsu Ariyoshi, *Waka bungaku jiten* [Dictionary of Japanese Court Poetry], Tōkyō: Ōfūsha, 1982, pp. 346–348.

<sup>6</sup> Fujiwara Shunzei (1114–1204) was a poet, critic, and arbiter of *waka*. He compiled the seventh imperial anthology of classical Japanese poetry, *Senzai wakashū* [Collection of Thousand Years]. He was also a father of Fujiwara Teika, with whom he established the most powerful family of poets and scholars of *waka* – Mikohidari. See Ariyoshi, *Waka bungaku jiten*..., pp. 312–313.

reception that had built up by the early medieval era, and determine some features of this collection's image during that era. This section deals with the issues regarding *Man'yōshū*'s reception, to which Princess Shikishi must have been exposed. Special attention is paid to a poetic treatise entitled *Korai fūteishō* [Poetic Styles of Past and Present, 1197] created by Fujiwara Shunzei, since it is believed to have been dedicated to Princess Shikishi, and contains nearly two hundred *Man'yōshū* poems.<sup>7</sup> Finally, in the last section I present the features of Princess Shikishi's appropriation of *Man'yōshū* based on an analysis of four of her poems.

### 1. Methodological Considerations

In my analysis of the appropriation of *Man'yōshū* in Princess Shikishi's poetry, I will use a few key concepts from Western literary theory. However, these concepts are not the core of my study but simply the tools and vehicles, sometimes revised and reconsidered, that will hopefully enable me to present the results of my research comprehensively.

Considering the notion of 'historicity of texts', coined by the New Historicist Louis Montrose<sup>8</sup>, which informs us that reception of any literary work in the following centuries is affected by social, political and cultural processes of those eras<sup>9</sup>, we become aware of the significance of 'reception'. The notion of reception has been applied in the area of Japanese literary studies by Joshua Mostow, who argued that poetry's "production and reception are constituted by specific historical forces of which we ourselves are a result and part", thus emphasizing the historical nature of poetry and implying that any text is not "the self-same over time".<sup>10</sup> Even though I generally agree with those definitions and interpretations of reception, I would like to revise the understanding of this concept and distinguish between 'reception' (*kyōju*) and 'appropriation' (*sesshu*). I define 'reception' as an activity of perception of a literary work, characteristic for a given historical period, society, or group, which 'receives' (perceives or sees) various literary works, and processes them in a manner that suits best their worldly views, religious and political ideals and needs. Thus, the given objects of 'reception' activity are subject to change, transformation, reconfiguration, reconsideration, etc., according to the standards of a given society that receives them. I understand 'reception', which usually occurs in the form of readership, literary criticism (*karon*) and exchanges of views, as a comparatively passive activity in comparison to 'appropriation', which I define as the process of an aware and active engagement or usage of given works in newly created literature. 'Reception' and 'appropriation' are thus inter-related concepts, but they are not identical activities.

Another crucial concept for this article is intertextuality, as developed first by the Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin (1895–1975) and then expanded upon by the

<sup>7</sup> Ariyoshi, *Waka bungaku jiten*..., p. 235.

<sup>8</sup> Louis Montrose is a specialist in Renaissance poetics, English Renaissance theatre and Elizabeth I (1533–1603).

<sup>9</sup> For more about New Historicism and the notion of 'historicity of texts', see Peter Barry, *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002, pp. 172–191.

<sup>10</sup> Joshua Mostow, *Pictures of the Heart: The Hyakunin issu in Word and Image*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996, pp. 1–11.

Bulgarian-French philosopher and literary critic Julia Kristeva. The latter claims that “a text cannot exist as a hermetic or self-sufficient whole, and so does not function as a closed system”<sup>11</sup>, since writers are first of all readers of other texts that influence them during their activity of writing. Both Kristeva and Bakhtin argue that even discursive practices themselves are intertextual, since they also influence the texts. Based on this definition of intertextuality, we may conclude that authors and readers ought to accept and recognize the inevitable intertextuality of their activities of writing, reading and participating in discourse.

The concept of intertextuality leads us to another notion crucial for this article – that of ‘discourse’, which was defined by the French philosopher and historicist Michel Foucault (1926–1984), as “systems of thoughts composed of ideas, attitudes, courses of action, beliefs and practices that systematically construct the subjects and the worlds of which they speak”.<sup>12</sup> Even though this notion was first developed in social sciences, and was originally applied to the theory of political science, thanks to Foucault’s concept of ‘power/knowledge’ it provided literary studies with a tool that enables scholars to reconsider numerous allegedly fixed notions about literature. The notion of ‘discourse’, defined by Foucault as simply ‘knowledge’, is particularly useful with regard to Japanese medieval poetry, since the existence of a poetic discourse has been brought up as one of the characteristics of early medieval poetic world.<sup>13</sup> In this article, the notion of discourse becomes a vehicle that allows me to tie up phenomena of ‘reception’ and ‘appropriation’ in a broader context of poetic activity during the medieval era. Simultaneously, poetic discourse helps me to demonstrate that despite the existence of various poetic circles and schools, it was shared by many, if not all, poets of the early medieval era. Differences in *Man’yōshū*’s reception and appropriation, as well as similarities, may be found only in the manner the poetic discourse is interpreted and reconsidered in various poets’ poetic criticism and poetry.

The results of this study prove that *Man’yōshū* was a significant part of the medieval poetic discourse, in which Princess Shikishi was a participant. Moreover, we see that even though there are some features of Princess Shikishi’s appropriation of *Man’yōshū*, which distinguished her as a *waka* poet, she participated in the early medieval *Man’yōshū* discourse in a manner similar to other contemporary poets.

## 2. Some remarks on Princess Shikishi’s life and poetry

Princess Shikishi was the third daughter of Emperor Go-Shirakawa (1127–1192); she was thus a *naishinnō* (princess of blood). The year of her birth has been a matter of scholarly dispute, but since Murai Shunji argued for 1149<sup>14</sup>, his interpretation has become

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<sup>11</sup> Michael Worton and Judith Still, *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices*, Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 1990, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> Iara Lessa, ‘Discursive Struggles within Social Welfare: Restaging Teen Motherhood’, *British Journal of Social Work*, Vol. 36, No. 2, February 2006, pp. 283–298.

<sup>13</sup> David T. Bialock, ‘Voice, Text, and the Question of Poetic Borrowing in Late Classical Japanese Poetry’, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 54, No. 1, June 1994, p. 195.

<sup>14</sup> Shunji Murai, ‘Shikishi Naishinnō shūhen no hitobito’ [People around Princess Shikishi], *Chūkyō Daigaku Kyōyō Ronsō Ronsō*, Vol. 40, No. 4, April 2002, p. 824.

the standard in the area of Japanese literary studies. It is believed that at the age of 9 or 10, Princess Shikishi was sent to serve as a *sai'in* (high priestess)<sup>15</sup> at *Kamo Jinja*<sup>16</sup> in Kyoto and continued her service for about ten years until 1169 when she resigned, likely due to an illness. Then, probably during the 1190s, she took tonsure, became a Buddhist nun and acquired the name Shōnyohō.<sup>17</sup> Unfortunately, not much is known about her life after she retired from the *sai'in* post but it may be confirmed in *Meigetsuki* [Diary of the Bright Moon, 1180–1235] by Fujiwara Teika (1162–1241)<sup>18</sup> and *Minamoto Ienaga nikki* [Diary of Minamoto Ienaga, 1211–1221] by a courtier named Minamoto Ienaga (c. 1173–1234) that she dwelled in numerous residences and did not settle down in one place for a long time. She died at the beginning of 1201, having lived in seclusion and solitude for most of her life.<sup>19</sup>

The extant corpus of Princess Shikishi's poetry consists of about 400 poems, even though the exact number of her poems has been a matter of dispute among Japanese literature scholars. Yamasaki Keiko<sup>20</sup> and Okuno Yōko<sup>21</sup> argued for a figure of 400 poems, while Oda Gō provided a number of 407 poems<sup>22</sup> and Nishiki Hitoshi counted 416.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, Kunishima Akie estimated that Princess Shikishi had presumably composed about 2600 poems during her lifetime.<sup>24</sup> The majority of her extant poems are composed in three *hyakushu* sequences consisting of a hundred pieces of *tanka* (short poem), a form adopted during the reign of Emperor Horikawa (1079–1107).<sup>25</sup> Satō Hiroaki argued that the rest of Shikishi's poems were taken from similar sequences, which have not survived.<sup>26</sup> The creation dates of those three *hyakushu* sequences, commonly referred to as the A sequence, B sequence, and C sequence, have been an object of dispute. Kunishima argued that the A sequence must have been composed about 1169, that is soon after

<sup>15</sup> *Sai'in* was a female relative to the emperor who served as a high priestess at Kamo Shrines in Kyoto.

<sup>16</sup> *Kamo Jinja* [Kamo Shrines] are two closely associated Shinto shrines in Kyoto – *Kamigamo Jinja* and *Shimogamo Jinja*.

<sup>17</sup> Sato, *String of Beads*..., p. 5.

<sup>18</sup> Fujiwara Teika (1162–1241) was a *waka* poet, critic, and scholar. He was one of six compilers of the eighth imperial collection, *Shinkokinshū* and sole compiler of the ninth, *Shinchokusen wakashū* [New Imperial Collection, 1235]. See Ariyoshi, *Waka bungaku jiten*..., pp. 459–461.

<sup>19</sup> Mieko Imamura, 'Teika to Shikishi Naishinnō – *Meigetsuki* o chūshin' [Teika and Princess Shikishi – Focusing on *Meigetsuki*], *Bungaku*, Vol. 6, No. 4, October 1995, pp. 81–83.

<sup>20</sup> Keiko Yamasaki, 'Shikishi Naishinnōshū no kenkyū: hyakushu uta no seiritsu jiki o megutte' [Study on Princess Shikishi's Collection: about the Creation Time of Hundred-poem Sequences], *Kokubungakukō*, Vol. 77, No. 3, March 1978, p. 11.

<sup>21</sup> Okuno, *Shikishi Naishinnōshū zenshaku*..., pp. 3–9.

<sup>22</sup> Oda, *Shikishi Naishinnō zenkachūshaku*..., p. 3.

<sup>23</sup> Nishiki, *Shikishi Naishinnō zenakashū*..., p. 124.

<sup>24</sup> Ayao Yasuda (ed.), *Fujiwara Teika kenkyū* [Research on Fujiwara Teika], Tōkyō: Shibundō, 1975, p. 253.

<sup>25</sup> Emperor Horikawa (1079–1107) was the 73<sup>rd</sup> emperor of Japan according to the traditional order of succession; reigned 1086–1107. He was deeply interested in *waka*. His *Horikawa hyakushu* [One Hundred Poems for Emperor Horikawa] is considered to be one of the most important poetic events of the era. See Ariyoshi, *Waka bungaku jiten*..., p. 577.

<sup>26</sup> Sato, *String of Beads*..., p. 16.

Princess Shikishi retired from the post of *sai'in*, since one of her poems from this sequence included in *Shinkokinshū* is signed as *Zensai'in no gohyakushu* [Hundred-poem Sequence by the Former *Sai'in*].<sup>27</sup> Other scholars claimed that it was created much later, about 1194. Yamasaki, however, believes that this sequence was composed in 1188 because none of the poems from the A sequence are included in *Senzai wakashū* [Collection of Thousand Years, 1183]<sup>28</sup>, compiled by Fujiwara Shunzei, the renowned *waka* poet and critic of the early medieval era, and Princess Shikishi's poetry tutor. Yamasaki argued that it is unlikely that the A sequence had not attracted Shunzei's attention, especially since nine of her later poems are included in this imperial collection.<sup>29</sup> The B sequence is considered to have been composed between 1187–1194<sup>30</sup>, although Yamasaki argued that it was created closer to 1194.<sup>31</sup> The C sequence was composed in 1200 at the order of Retired Emperor Go-Toba (1180–1239).<sup>32</sup>

Despite the limited size of her extant poetic corpus, reception of Princess Shikishi's poetry by her contemporaries is characterized above all by a high evaluation of her poetic talent and ability. Forty-nine of her poems are included in *Shinkokinshū*, which is the fifth greatest number of *waka* by one author in the said collection, and the greatest amount of poems by a female poet. In the entry from the fifth day of the ninth month of the second year of Shōji era (1200) in *Meigetsuki*, Fujiwara Teika described Princess Shikishi's C sequence in the following manner: "all of the pieces are divine"<sup>33</sup>, which indicates that he had a great deal of respect and admiration for her poetic ability. The C sequence was especially well received in the subsequent periods, the proof of which is the fact that seventy *tanka* were selected for inclusion in the imperial anthologies, *Shinkokinshū* containing 25 of them. Moreover, Retired Emperor Go-Toba also evaluated Shikishi's poetry highly in his poetic treatise *Go-Toba-in gokuden* [Secret Teachings of Retired Emperor Go-Toba, 1208–1212].

When we come to more recent times, among the outstanding poets are the Former Imperial Virgin of Ōimikado, the late Nakanomikado Regent and the Former Archbishop Yoshimizu. The Imperial Virgin composed in a very polished and ingenious style.<sup>34</sup>

In Go-Toba's poetic treatise, Princess Shikishi, referred to as "the former imperial virgin of Ōimikado", appears next to such valued poets of the era as Kujō Yoshitsune (1169–1206) – a patron to Mikohidari poetic school – referred to as "Nakanomikado regent", and Jien

<sup>27</sup> Yamasaki, 'Shikishi Naishinnōshū no kenkyū...', pp. 11–12.

<sup>28</sup> *Senzai wakashū* is the seventh imperial anthology of Japanese poetry compiled by Fujiwara Shunzei at the order of Emperor Go-Shirakawa. See Ariyoshi, *Waka bungaku jiten...*, pp. 377–378.

<sup>29</sup> Yamasaki, 'Shikishi Naishinnōshū no kenkyū...', pp. 12–13.

<sup>30</sup> Sato, *String of Beads...*, p. 17.

<sup>31</sup> Yamasaki, 'Shikishi Naishinnōshū no kenkyū...', p. 11.

<sup>32</sup> Go-Toba ordered this sequence from many other distinguished poets of that era. The event was named *Shōji ninen in shodo hyakushu* [Retired Emperor's First Hundred Poem Sequence of the Second Year of Shōji Era] and was one of the sources of poems for *Shinkokinshū*. See Ariyoshi, *Waka bungaku jiten...*, p. 321.

<sup>33</sup> Yasuda, *Fujiwara Teika kenkyū...*, p. 259.

<sup>34</sup> Robert H. Brower, 'Ex-Emperor Go-Toba's Secret Teachings: Go-Toba-in no Gokuden', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 32, 1972, p. 36.

(1155–1225) – one of *Shinkokinshū*'s compilers – referred to as “former archbishop Yoshimizu”. Furthermore, Go-Toba described her poetry with the expression *momimomi*, which though difficult to define<sup>35</sup>, was also used to estimate Teika's poem, which is surely indicative of a high evaluation of Princess Shikishi's poetic style.

Despite the fact that Princess Shikishi seemed to stand out in the evaluation of her male counterparts among a handful of well-respected women poets of her age, her life is frequently perceived as one full of sacrifices, seclusion and ceaseless solitude. This reception of Princess Shikishi's character was surely based not only on her biography but also on the image created by a number of factors, e.g. conventional *waka* poetics<sup>36</sup>, Princess Shikishi as a poet herself, the people surrounding her, and a later process of medievalization, which mythicized, idealized and legendarized the figures of many Japanese poets.<sup>37</sup> The large number of her poems included in *Shinkokinshū* – 49, and Retired Emperor Go-Toba and Fujiwara Teika's high evaluation of her poetry are evidence that in her own age Princess Shikishi was perceived mostly as a great poet, and not necessarily as the “lonely, waiting woman”.<sup>38</sup> We may thus assume that she was a semi-professional poet highly valued for her poetic abilities by her contemporaries, which suggests that she was able to compose poetry according to the already established poetic conventions of her time, and not necessarily derived poetic inspirations from her personal life. Simultaneously, she might have participated in the process of creating her own image of a recluse through traditional poetics that have been misinterpreted as an image of the waiting woman, which I have recently examined in another publication.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> “Elegant beauty conveyed by a highly wrought poetic conception and complex poetic texture-not a spontaneous or impromptu style”. See Brower, “Ex-Emperor Go-Toba's Secret Teachings...”, p. 57.

<sup>36</sup> Gotō Shōko pointed out that by looking at Princess Shikishi's love poetry without taking into consideration the fact that she was a woman, and focusing on the long history of love poetry, we are able to read her poems from the contemporary perspective. Gotō emphasized that Shikishi's love poems are often composed in a male voice, which excludes the possibility of autobiographical setting. See Shōko Gotō, ‘Joryū ni yoru otoko uta – Shikishi Naishinnō uta e no ichishiten’ [Male Poems by Female Poets – One Approach to Poems by Princess Shikishi], in *Waka to wa nani ka* [What Is *waka*?], Kubukihara Rei (ed.), Tōkyō: Yūseidō, 1996, pp. 322–323.

<sup>37</sup> Based on Susan Matisoff's research on Semimaru's (early Heian Period) legend, one observes that in the medieval era people learned about ‘high’ aristocratic culture through ‘low’ literature and drama. Legends about earlier poets developed with time, and while some facts about them remain true, much information is added to attract attention of the medieval and later audiences. See Susan Matisoff, *The Legend of Semimaru. Blind Musician of Japan*, Boston: Cheng & Tsui Company, 2006, pp. XI–XIX. The image of Princess Shikishi was also medievalized, largely due to her image in a *nō* play attributed to Komparu Zenchiku (1405–1471), *Teika Kazura*. In this play, she is presented as a madwoman, who had once been in love with Fujiwara Teika, but cannot detach herself from the world and love.

<sup>38</sup> It has also been suggested that due to Princess Shikishi's high social status as a member of the imperial family, she was unlikely to be perceived as a woman, but rather as an imperial persona. Shikishi and Teika maintained a relatively close relationship caused by their passion for *waka*, but their supposed love affair are not confirmed by historical sources. See Imamura, ‘Teika to Shikishi Naishinnō...’, p. 76.

<sup>39</sup> Małgorzata Citko, ‘Elements of ‘possibly Chinese’ Origin in Selected Poems by Princess Shikishi (1149–1201)’, *Analecta Nipponica*, Vol. 2, 2012, pp. 21–56.

### 3. Some features of *Man'yōshū*'s reception in the early medieval era

*Man'yōshū* has been annotated, studied and translated by many generations of scholars around the world.<sup>40</sup> This collection is an important subject matter for the field of *waka* studies, since it lies at the source of Japanese culture and literary history, and it has always aroused much interest and controversy among Japanologists. However, despite centuries of research on this poetic collection, it is difficult to conclude that we 'know' *Man'yōshū*, since the reception of many subsequent eras has undoubtedly transformed the shape and character of this poetic collection.

Reception of *Man'yōshū*'s poetry already had quite a long history prior to the early medieval era. In fact, *Man'yōshū* became an object of scholarship quite early, since in Heian Period (8–12<sup>th</sup> century) there had already been a shift from Western Old Japanese (WOJ) language of Asuka (538–710) and Nara Periods (710–784) to Middle Japanese, also known as Classical Japanese. This language change was the reason why in Heian Period poets were already unable to read *man'yōgana* script<sup>41</sup> used in *Man'yōshū*, or fully understand poems written in WOJ. The inaccessibility of *Man'yōshū*'s poetry was possibly the direct reason why numerous attempts were made to annotate this collection and make it more accessible to the contemporary poets. If we were to point to a moment in the history of Japanese literature when *Man'yōshū* started to be subject to the reception phenomenon that had a significant impact for later generations of scholars and poets, it was mid-10<sup>th</sup> century, when the first *Man'yōshū* glossing project was officially commissioned. In 951 Emperor Murakami (926–967) appointed five scholars of *Nashitsubo* (Pear Pavilion)<sup>42</sup> to compile the second imperial collection, *Gosen wakashū* [Later Collection of Japanese Poetry, 951], and simultaneously add readings to *Man'yōshū*.<sup>43</sup> The effects of their work on *Man'yōshū* are commonly known as *koten* (old glossing), but none of *Man'yōshū* manuscripts containing this glossing have survived.

There was one more glossing project in the history of the reception of *Man'yōshū*'s poetry prior to Kamakura Period (1185–1333). The second glossing project, the effects of which are commonly named *jiten* (subsequent glossing), was probably initiated by Fujiwara Michinaga (966–1028), who was the most powerful politician in 11<sup>th</sup>-century Japan, and conducted by Fujiwara Atsutaka (?–1120), who compiled *Ruijū koshū* [Classified Collection of Old Poems,

<sup>40</sup> E.g. Orikuchi Shinobu (1887–1953), Sasaki Nobutsuna (1872–1963), Nakanishi Susumu in Japan, Ian Hideo Levy and Alexander Vovin in the United States of America, René Sieffert (1923–2004) in France, Frederick Victor Dickins (1838–1915) in Great Britain, Karl Florenz (1865–1939) in Germany, Anna Gluskina (1904–1994) in Russia, Wiesław Kotański (1915–2005) in Poland, etc.

<sup>41</sup> *Man'yōgana* is a term describing the use of Chinese characters to write Japanese phonographically. This system of writing was named after their extensive use in *Man'yōshū*. See Bjarke Frellesvig, *A History of the Japanese Language*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 14.

<sup>42</sup> Those five scholars were Kiyowara Motosuke (908–990), Ki no Tokibumi (922–996), Ōnakatomi Yoshinobu (921–991), Minamoto Shitagō (911–983), and Sakanoue Mochiki (late 10<sup>th</sup> century). See Ariyoshi, *Waka bungaku jiten...*, p. 498.

<sup>43</sup> Not all *Man'yōshū* poems were annotated at that time, but most likely 4100 poems, most of which were *tanka*. See Alexander Vovin, *Man'yōshū. Book 15. A New English Translation Containing the Original Text, kana Transliteration, Romanization, Glossing and Commentary*, Wilts: Global Oriental, 2009, p. 13.

before 1120] – a manuscript that classifies *Man'yōshū* poems not by volumes but by Chinese categories *rui* – and annotated it with his own *jiten*<sup>44</sup>, the leader of Rokujō poetic school Fujiwara Kiyosuke (1104–1177), a renowned Japanese poet, scholar and tutor Ōe Masafusa (1041–1111), another renowned *waka* poet and scholar Fujiwara Mototoshi (1060–1142), and other scholars of 11<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>45</sup> *Jiten* is especially significant for the early medieval era, since the majority of *Man'yōshū* manuscripts and secondary sources containing *Man'yōshū* poems utilized by early medieval poets, including Princess Shikishi, likely reflected the second glossing.

There are obviously other aspects of *Man'yōshū*'s reception. It has been emphasized that some of the underestimated poetic collections and treatises, e.g. a private poetic collection in two volumes probably compiled by Sugawara Michizane (845–903), *Shinsen man'yōshū* [A New Selection of the Ten Thousand Leaves Collection, 893], and the first extant ancient work of Japanese poetry criticism by Fujiwara Hamanari (724–790), *Kakyō hyōshiki* [A Formulary for Verse Based on the Canons of Poetry, 772], as well as *kanajo* (kana preface) to the first imperial collection *Kokin wakashū* [Collection of Japanese Poems from Ancient and Modern Times, c. 920], were crucial for *Man'yōshū*'s reception.<sup>46</sup> However, I believe that other examples of poetry criticism, private poetic collections and handbooks, as well as poetic events were equally significant in the early medieval reception and appropriation of *Man'yōshū*, which becomes clear in the analysis of Princess Shikishi's poems further on. Thus, works like *Kakinomoto Hitomaro kashū* [The Private Collection of Kakinomoto Hitomaro, before 759], *Kokinwaka rokujō* [Six Quires of Ancient and Modern Japanese Poetry, c. 980s] which was used by generations of poets and imperial anthologies' compilers as a source of older poems, *Ise monogatari* [The Tales of Ise, mid-10<sup>th</sup> century], the first great novel in world literature *Genji monogatari* [The Tale of Genji, c. 1008], a poetic treatise by Fujiwara Kintō (966–1041) *Shinsen zuinō* [Newly Selected Poetic Essentials, 1004–1012], a poetic treatise by Minamoto Toshiyori (1060–1142) *Toshiyori zuinō* [Toshiyori's Essentials, 1111–1115], the famous poetic event organized by Emperor Horikawa *Horikawa hyakushu* [One Hundred Poems for Emperor Horikawa, 1105–1106], the first extant poetic treatise by Fujiwara Kiyosuke *Ōgishō* [Secret Teachings, 1124–1144] and another of Kiyosuke's treatises *Fukurozōshi* [Ordinary Book, 1157], as well as Shunzei's *Korai fūteishō* provided a space for the emergence of poetic discourse, thanks to which certain ideas could be exchanged and circulated. Moreover, all those works contributed to the creation of a network of channels for transmitting *Man'yōshū* poetry in the medieval and later eras, which affected subsequent phases of this collection's reception and appropriation phenomena. Thanks to the existence of this network and many later texts containing *Man'yōshū* poetry, we realize that what is believed to be a '*Man'yōshū* poem' in the contemporary era according to *Nishihonganji-bon*<sup>47</sup> *Man'yōshū* manuscript, in the early medieval era may not have been considered to be a '*Man'yōshū* poem' but a poem from a later collection.

<sup>44</sup> Yōko Shiroasaki, *Man'yōshū no hensan to kyōju no kenkyū* [Study of *Man'yōshū*'s Compilation and Reception], Tōkyō: Ōfūsha, 2004, pp. 333–350.

<sup>45</sup> Vovin, *Man'yōshū. Book 15...*, p. 13.

<sup>46</sup> Fusae Ekida, *A Reception History of the Man'yōshū*, Ph.D. dissertation, Seattle: University of Washington, 2009.

<sup>47</sup> *Nishi Honganji-bon* is the earliest extant complete *Man'yōshū* manuscript that includes all twenty volumes and 4516 poems. It dates from late Kamakura Period (1185–1333). See Nobutsuna Sasaki, *Man'yōshū no kenkyū. Man'yōshū koshahon no kenkyū* [Research about *Man'yōshū* and Its Old Manuscripts], Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 1944, pp. 206–260.

Furthermore, contrary to the modern era in which *Man'yōshū* officially gained a status of a celebrated 'national anthology' during the process of building the modern nation-state after Meiji Restoration in 1868<sup>48</sup>, in the early medieval era *Man'yōshū* was perceived as an ancient, distant and rather obscure, yet intriguing and admirable collection, to which allusions should be made either very carefully or should not be made at all. In fact, such a reception is notable in the *kana* preface to *Kokinshū*, *Shinsen zuinō* and *Toshiyori zuinō*. Even though *Horikawa hyakushū* (1105–1106) was certainly a significant step towards encouraging poets to allude to *Man'yōshū* poetry<sup>49</sup>, it was only with the poetry criticism of Fujiwara Kiyosuke (specifically his last poetic handbook *Waka shogakushō* [Elementary Poetry, 1169])<sup>50</sup>, and of Fujiwara Shunzei (specifically his *Korai fūteishō*)<sup>51</sup> that *Man'yōshū* became a collection to which poets started making references more frequently. Despite that, in the early medieval era *Man'yōshū* was undeniably not perceived in isolation or out of context. It was highly valued and always presented as a part of a bigger concept of Japanese antiquity, e.g. in Shunzei's *Korai fūteishō*, which appreciated the processes of evolution and natural progression of Japanese poetic styles, at the very beginning of which we find *Man'yōshū*.<sup>52</sup>

Furthermore, we should keep in mind that the early medieval era was the time when knowledge about *Man'yōshū* became contested, since numerous poetic circles and schools had emerged, and poetry became intertwined in court politics.<sup>53</sup> The study of this collection has long been believed rather exclusive to Rokujō poetic school, whose influence flourished during *insei*<sup>54</sup> period (1087–1192).<sup>55</sup> However, based on Fujiwara Shunzei's poetry criticism, it is clear that *Man'yōshū* was also an object of interest to Mikohidari school's poets, who are believed to have mainly focused on Heian Period masterpieces, and who have been considered rivals to Rokujō school in Japan for many centuries. The construct of the 'Rokujō-Mikohidari rivalry', however, is only a stereotype that 'eclipses the more fundamental impact they left as an aristocratic family unit on the cultural and intellectual histories of Japan'.<sup>56</sup> The notion of the 'Rokujō-Mikohidari rivalry' finds no evidence in the early medieval reception of *Man'yōshū*, in which we rather observe an evolution of Japanese poetry criticism manifested

<sup>48</sup> Ekida, *A Reception History of the Man'yōshū*..., p. 4.

<sup>49</sup> Ariyoshi, *Waka bungaku jiten*..., pp. 577–578.

<sup>50</sup> Nobutsuna Sasaki (ed.), *Waka shogakushō* [Elementary Poetry], in *Nihon kagaku taikei 2* [Compendium of Japanese Poetry Criticism], Tōkyō: Kazama Shobō, 1956 p. 238.

<sup>51</sup> Yasuaki Watanabe, "Korai fūteishō" [Poetic Styles of Past and Present], in Yasuaki Watanabe, Kazuhiko Kobayashi and Hajime Yamamoto (eds.), *Karon kagaku shūsei 7* [Collection of Poetry Criticism], Tōkyō: Miyai Shoten, 2006, pp. 88–89.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., pp. 29–30.

<sup>53</sup> Significant changes were taking place in the years preceding *Shinkokinshū*'s compilation, e.g. rise of *uta'awase* (poetry contests) and, related to it, professionalization and politicization of poetic practice. See Huey, "The Medievalization of Poetic Practice"..., pp. 651–668.

<sup>54</sup> *Insei* period (1087–1192) refers to a time in Japanese history when political control was restored to the imperial house from Fujiwara regents, but was exercised primarily by retired emperors rather than by titular rulers and official bureaucracy. See *Nipponica*...

<sup>55</sup> Muneo Inoue, *Kamakura jidai kajinden no kenkyū* [Research on Biographies of Poets from Kamakura Period], Tōkyō: Kazama Shobō, 1997, pp. 3–10.

<sup>56</sup> Saeko Shibayama, *Ōe no Masafusa and the Convergence of the "ways": The Twilight of Early Chinese Literary Studies and the Rise of waka Studies in the Long Twelfth Century in Japan*, Ph.D. dissertation, New York: Columbia University, 2012, p. 344.

by numerous poets who, by participating in and interpreting the early medieval *Man'yōshū* discourse differently, attempted to push its boundaries.

It should be emphasized that even though it was not yet in the exclusive manner of 'secret teachings' (*denju*) of Muromachi Period (1336–1573), strongly related to *iemoto* system,<sup>57</sup> Rokujō and Mikohidari poetic schools, as well as poets of other circles, possessed some level of knowledge about *Man'yōshū*. Various poets transmitted this knowledge, both orally and in writing, within their families and to their patrons from both the imperial court and shogunate. Knowledge of literary texts became a kind of capital, which brought them political and material benefits and support. This may sound similar to the Foucauldian concept of 'power/knowledge', in which it is argued that power and knowledge are inter-related, and therefore every human relationship is a negotiation of power.<sup>58</sup> Even though the 'power/knowledge' concept was not created based on literary studies, it applies astonishingly well to the poetic world of early medieval Japan. In that era, in order to gain patronage for their poetic activity, that is to become receptors of power, poets started to participate in activities involving poetry criticism, e.g. writing poetic treatises and judging poetry contests (*uta'awase*), which would demonstrate their extensive knowledge of Japanese literature. It was thus not the secrecy of one's literary knowledge, but rather its skilful public demonstration and distribution that provided poetic schools with valuable imperial and shogunal patronage. An example of such symbiosis of patronage in the exchange of poetic knowledge is the close relationships of Princess Shikishi and her brother Prince Shukaku with Fujiwara Shunzei and the adopted son of Fujiwara Kiyosuke – Kenshō (c. 1130–c. 1210) – who created numerous poetic treatises for their imperial-blood patrons.<sup>59</sup> Those poets clearly attempted to participate in the poetic discourse differently in order to gain power through knowledge. However, it would be an overstatement to conclude that only Fujiwara Shunzei and his *Korai fūteishō*, allegedly dedicated to Princess Shikishi, had affected her style of appropriating *Man'yōshū* poetry. We observe that out of 41 *tanka* in which she alluded to *Man'yōshū*, only 12 overlap with *Korai fūteishō* (Table 1). Princess Shikishi must have thus utilized other sources, which becomes clear in the analysis of her poems further on, even though it is undeniable that *Korai fūteishō* constructed the canon of Japanese poetry up until the 1200s, and was a widely recognized and validated treatise by contemporary and later generations of *waka* poets and scholars.<sup>60</sup> *Korai fūteishō* is a significant document for a number of reasons. First of all, it drew an analogy between *waka*

<sup>57</sup> *Iemoto* is a term used in traditional Japanese arts to refer to either the founder of a school or current head of the school, who is usually a direct descendant of the founder. The *iemoto* of each school inherits secret traditions and prized art objects of the school from the previous *iemoto*. See *Encyclopedia of Japan*, in *Japan Knowledge*, Tōkyō: Net Advance, 2012.

<sup>58</sup> Michel Foucault, 'Two lectures', in Colin Gordon (ed.), *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977*, New York: Pantheon, 1980, pp. 78–108.

<sup>59</sup> Fujiwara Shunzei dedicated his private poetic collection, *Chōshū eisō* [Weeds Composed for Long Autumns, 1178] to Shukaku (1150–1202) and his *Korai fūteishō* to Princess Shikishi. Kenshō also dedicated his *Man'yōshū jidai nanji* [Problematic Matters of the *Man'yōshū* Era, 1168–1183], which focused on issues related to *Man'yōshū*'s compilation, to Prince Shukaku. See Ariyoshi, *Waka bungaku jiten*..., pp. 444–445, 600–601.

<sup>60</sup> Karolina Szebla-Morinaga, *Tajemna głębia (yūgen) w poezji japońskiej* [Mysterious Beauty in Japanese Poetry], Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2012, p. 76.

Table 1. Appropriation of *Man'yōshū* in poetry of Princess Shikishi vs. inclusion of *Man'yōshū* poems in secondary sources (until 1200s)

| Princess Shikishi  | Kokinwaka<br>rokujō<br>976-982 | Toshiyori<br>zuinō<br>1111-1115 | Kigoshō<br>1099-1188 | Ōgishō<br>1124-1144 | Waka<br>domōshō<br>1145-1153 | Waka<br>ichijishō<br>1153 | Fukuro<br>zōshi<br>1157 | Godaishu<br>utamakura<br>bef. 1165 | Wakashō<br>gakushō<br>1169 | Shūchu<br>shō<br>1186 | Kopyaku<br>Chinjo<br>1193 | Korai<br>futeishō<br>1197 | Other   |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| <i>Man'yōshū</i> 1 |                                |                                 |                      |                     |                              |                           |                         |                                    |                            |                       |                           |                           |   |
| No. 10             | ○                              |                                 |                      |                     |                              |                           |                         | ○                                  |                            |                       |                           |                           |   |
| No. 34             | ○                              | ○                               |                      | ○                   |                              |                           |                         |                                    |                            | ○                     |                           | ○                         | Kakyō hyōshiki,<br>Shinkokinshū                                 |
| No. 40             | ○                              |                                 |                      |                     |                              |                           |                         | ○                                  |                            |                       |                           |                           | Hitomaroshū,<br>Shūishū   |
| No. 57             |                                |                                 |                      |                     |                              |                           |                         | ○                                  |                            | ○                     |                           |                           |   |
| No. 66             |                                |                                 |                      |                     |                              |                           |                         | ○                                  |                            |                       |                           | ○                         |   |
| <i>Man'yōshū</i> 3 |                                |                                 |                      |                     |                              |                           |                         |                                    |                            |                       |                           |                           |   |
| No. 282            |                                |                                 |                      |                     |                              |                           |                         | ○                                  |                            | ○                     |                           |                           |   |
| No. 351            | ○                              |                                 |                      | ○                   |                              |                           |                         |                                    |                            | ○                     |                           | ○                         | Shūishū,<br>Kin'yōshū*,<br>Wakan rōeishū**,<br>Genji monogatari |
| No. 428            | ○                              |                                 | ○                    | ○                   |                              | ○                         |                         | ○                                  |                            | ○                     |                           |                           | Kojiki***,<br>Hitomaroshū                                       |

\* *Kin'yō wakashū* [Collection of Golden Leaves, 1124-1127] is the fifth imperial collection ordered by Emperor Shirakawa and compiled by Minamoto Toshiyori. See Ariyoshi, *Waka bungaku jiten...*, pp. 159-160.

\*\* *Wakan rōeishū* [Collection of Japanese and Chinese Poems for Singing, ca. 1013-1018] is a collection compiled by Fujiwara Kintō. It consists of about 800 poems, which are parts of Chinese poems written by the Chinese (mostly the Tang poetry), *kanshi* – Chinese poetry composed by the Japanese, and *waka*. See Ariyoshi, *Waka bungaku jiten...*, p. 715.

\*\*\* *Kojiki* [Records of Ancient Matters, 712] is the oldest extant chronicle in Japan. It was created by Ō no Yasumaro (mid-7<sup>th</sup> century) at the request of Empress Genmei (660-721). See *Nipponica...*

Table 1. Appropriation of *Man'yōshū* in poetry of Princess Shikishi vs. inclusion of *Man'yōshū* poems in secondary sources (until 1200s)

| Princess Shikishi  | <i>Kokinwaka</i><br>976–982<br><i>rokujū</i> | <i>Toshiyori</i><br>1111–1115<br><i>zuihō</i> | <i>Kigoshō</i><br>1099–1188 | <i>Ōgishō</i><br>1124–1144 | <i>Waka domōshō</i><br>1145–1153 | <i>Waka ichijishō</i><br>1153 | <i>Fukuro zōshi</i><br>1157 | <i>Godaishū</i><br>bef. 1165<br><i>utamakura</i> | <i>Wakashō gakashō</i><br>1169 | <i>Shūchū shō</i><br>1186 | <i>Koppyakū Chinjō</i><br>1193 | <i>Korai Jūteishō</i><br>1197 | Other  |
|--------------------|--|---|-----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| <i>Man'yōshū</i> 4 |  |   |                             |                            |                                  |                               |                             |  |                                |                           |                                |                               |  |
| No. 445            | ○  |   |                             |                            |                                  |                               |                             |  |                                |                           |                                |                               | <i>Yakamochishū*</i>   |
| No. 502            | ○  |   | ○                           |                            |                                  |                               |                             |  |                                |                           |                                | ○                             | <i>Hitomaro shū,</i><br><i>Shinkokinshū</i>  |
| No. 583            | ○  |   |                             |                            |                                  |                               |                             |  |                                |                           |                                |                               |  |
| No. 661            | ○  |   |                             |                            |                                  |                               |                             |  |                                |                           |                                |                               |  |
| No. 667            | ○  |   |                             |                            |                                  |                               |                             |  |                                |                           |                                |                               |  |
| No. 675            | ○  |   | ○                           |                            | ○                                |                               |                             |  |                                | ○                         |                                |                               |  |
| <i>Man'yōshū</i> 6 |  |   |                             |                            |                                  |                               |                             |  |                                |                           |                                |                               |  |
| No. 919            | ○  | ○   |                             | ○                          |                                  |                               |                             | ○  |                                | ○                         | ○                              | ○                             | <i>Akahitoshū**</i> ,<br><i>Kana'o,</i><br><i>Wakan rōeishū,</i><br><i>Kin'yōshū</i> |
| <i>Man'yōshū</i> 7 |  |   |                             |                            |                                  |                               |                             |  |                                |                           |                                |                               |  |
| No. 1188           | ○  |   |                             |                            |                                  | ○                             |                             | ○  |                                |                           |                                |                               |  |
| No. 1361           | ○  |   |                             |                            | ○                                |                               |                             | ○  | ○                              |                           |                                |                               |  |

\* *Yakamochishū* [Collection of Yakamochi, ca. 785] is a private collection of about 320 poems attributed to the famous *Man'yōshū* poet and compiler, Ōtomo Yakamochi (718–785). See Ariyoshi, *Waka bungaku jiten*..., p. 654.

\*\* *Akahitoshū* [Collection of Akahito, ca. 740] is a private collection of about 360 poems attributed to a famous *Man'yōshū* poet, Yamabe Akahito (early 8<sup>th</sup> century). See Ariyoshi, *Waka bungaku jiten*..., pp. 3–4.

Table 1. Appropriation of *Man'yōshū* in poetry of Princess Shikishi vs. inclusion of *Man'yōshū* poems in secondary sources (until 1200s)

| Princess Shikishi   | <i>Kokinwaka</i><br><i>rokujō</i><br>976–982 | <i>Toshitoryi</i><br><i>zuinō</i><br>1111–1115 | <i>Kigoshō</i><br>1099–1188 | <i>Ōgishō</i><br>1124–1144 | <i>Waka</i><br><i>dōmōshō</i><br>1145–1153 | <i>Waka</i><br><i>ichijishō</i><br>1153 | <i>Fukuro</i><br><i>zōshi</i><br>1157 | <i>Godaishu</i><br><i>utamakura</i><br>bef. 1165 | <i>Wakashō</i><br><i>gakushō</i><br>1169 | <i>Shūchu</i><br><i>shō</i><br>1186 | <i>Koppayaku</i><br><i>Chinjo</i><br>1193 | <i>Korai</i><br><i>futeishō</i><br>1197 | Other  |
|---------------------|--|--|-----------------------------|----------------------------|--|---|---------------------------------------|--|--|-------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| <i>Man'yōshū</i> 8  |  |  |                             |                            |  |   |                                       |  |  |                                     |   |   |  |
| No. 1418            | ○  | ○  | ○                           |                            | ○  |   |                                       |  |  | ○                                   |   | ○                                       | <i>Wakan rōeishū</i> ,<br><i>Genji monogatari</i> ,<br><i>Shinkokinshū</i> |
| No. 1500            | ○  |  |                             |                            | ○  |   | ○                                     |  |  |                                     | ○   | ○                                       |  |
| <i>Man'yōshū</i> 10 |  |  |                             |                            |  |   |                                       |  |  |                                     |   |   |  |
| No. 1897            | ○  | ○  | ○                           | ○                          | ○  |   |                                       |  |  | ○                                   | ○   | ○                                       |  |
| No. 1983            | ○  |  |                             |                            | ○  |   |                                       |  |  |                                     | ○   |   | <i>Akahitoshū</i> ,<br><i>Hitomaroshū</i> ,<br><i>Shūishū</i>              |
| No. 1994            | ○  |  |                             |                            |  |   |                                       |  |  |                                     | ○   |   | <i>Akahitoshū</i> ,<br><i>Hitomaroshū</i> ,<br><i>Shinkokinshū</i>         |
| No. 2125            |  |  | ○                           |                            |  |   |                                       | ○  |  |                                     |   |   |  |
| No. 2270            | ○  |  |                             |                            |  |   |                                       |  |  |                                     |   |   | <i>Hitomaroshū</i> ,   |
| No. 2319            | ○  |  |                             |                            |  |   |                                       | ○  |  |                                     |   |   | <i>Hitomaroshū</i> ,<br><i>Yakamochishū</i>                                |
| No. 2331            | ○  |  |                             |                            |  |   |                                       | ○  | ○  |                                     |   |   | <i>Hitomaroshū</i> ,<br><i>Yakamochishū</i> ,<br><i>Shinkokinshū</i>       |

Table 1. Appropriation of *Man'yōshū* in poetry of Princess Shikishi vs. inclusion of *Man'yōshū* poems in secondary sources (until 1200s)

| Princess<br>Shikishi | <i>Kokinwaka</i><br>rokujū<br>976–982 | <i>Toshiyori</i><br>zuinō<br>1111–1115 | <i>Kigoshō</i><br>1099–1188 | <i>Ōgishō</i><br>1124–1144 | <i>Waka</i><br><i>domoshō</i><br>1145–1153 | <i>Waka</i><br><i>ichijishō</i><br>1153 | <i>Fukuro</i><br><i>zōshi</i><br>1157 | <i>Godaijū</i><br><i>utamakura</i><br>bef. 1165 | <i>Wakasho</i><br><i>gakushō</i><br>1169 | <i>Shūchū</i><br><i>shō</i><br>1186 | <i>Koppyakū</i><br><i>Chinjō</i><br>1193 | <i>Korai</i><br><i>jūteishō</i><br>1197 | Other   |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|----------------------------|--|---|---------------------------------------|---|--|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| <i>Man'yōshū</i> 11  |                                       |  |                             |                            |  |   |                                       |   |  |                                     |  |   |   |
| No. 2453             |                                       |  |                             |                            |  |   |                                       | ○   |  |                                     |  |   | <i>Hitomaro</i> shū,<br><i>Shūishū</i>                            |
| No. 2538             | ○                                     |  | ○                           |                            | ○  |   |                                       |   |  |                                     |  | ○                                       | <i>Hitomaro</i> shū,  |
| No. 2707             | ○                                     |  | ○                           |                            | ○  |   |                                       | ○   |  | ○                                   |  | ○                                       | <i>Shūishū</i>  |
| No. 2753             | ○                                     |  |                             |                            |  |   |                                       | ○   |  |                                     |  | ○                                       | <i>Hitomaro</i> shū,<br><i>Shūishū</i> ,<br><i>Ise monogatari</i> |
| No. 2763             | ○                                     |  | ○                           |                            | ○  |   |                                       | ○   |  |                                     |  |   |   |
| <i>Man'yōshū</i> 12  |                                       |  |                             |                            |  |   |                                       |   |  |                                     |  |   |   |
| No. 2862             |                                       |  |                             |                            |  |   |                                       |   |  | ○                                   |  |   | <i>Hitomaro</i> shū,  |
| No. 3002             | ○                                     |  |                             |                            |  |   |                                       |   |  | ○                                   |  |   | <i>Hitomaro</i> shū,<br><i>Shūishū</i>                            |
| No. 3025             |                                       |  | ○                           |                            | ○  |   |                                       |   |  | ○                                   |  | ○                                       |   |
| No. 3047             |                                       |  |                             |                            |  |   |                                       |   |  |                                     |  |   |   |
| No. 3065             |                                       |  |                             |                            | ○  |   |                                       | ○   |  | ○                                   |  |   |   |
| No. 3081             |                                       |  |                             |                            |  |   |                                       |   |  |                                     |  |   |   |
| No. 3201             |                                       |  |                             |                            |  |   |                                       | ○   |  |                                     |  |   |   |

Table 1. Appropriation of *Man'yōshū* in poetry of Princess Shikishi vs. inclusion of *Man'yōshū* poems in secondary sources (until 1200s)

| Princess<br>Shikishi | <i>Kokinwaka</i><br><i>rokujō</i><br>976–982 | <i>Toshitoryi</i><br><i>zuinō</i><br>1111–1115 | <i>Kigoshō</i><br>1099–1188 | <i>Ōgishō</i><br>1124–1144 | <i>Waka</i><br><i>dōmōshō</i><br>1145–1153 | <i>Waka</i><br><i>ichijishō</i><br>1153 | <i>Fukuro</i><br><i>zōshi</i><br>1157 | <i>Godai-shū</i><br><i>utamakura</i><br>bef. 1165 | <i>Wakashō</i><br><i>gakushō</i><br>1169 | <i>Shūchu</i><br><i>shō</i><br>1186 | <i>Koppyakū</i><br><i>Chinjo</i><br>1193 | <i>Korai</i><br><i>futeishō</i><br>1197 | Other |
|----------------------|--|--|-----------------------------|----------------------------|--|---|---------------------------------------|---|--|-------------------------------------|--|---|-------|
| <i>Man'yōshū</i> 14  |  |  |                             |                            |  |   |                                       |   |  |                                     |  |   |       |
| No. 3400             | ○  |  |                             |                            |  |   |                                       | ○   |  |                                     |  |   |       |
| <i>Man'yōshū</i> 16  |  |  |                             |                            |  |   |                                       |   |  |                                     |  |   |       |
| No. 3851             | ○  | ○  | ○                           | ○                          |  |   |                                       |   |  |                                     |  |   |       |
| <i>Man'yōshū</i> 17  |  |  |                             |                            |  |   |                                       |   |  |                                     |  |   |       |
| No. 3899             | ○  |  |                             |                            |  |   |                                       | ○   |  |                                     |  |   |       |

and *tendai*<sup>61</sup> Buddhism, by saying that they are both philosophical and artistic paths (*michi*) having a sense of continuity.<sup>62</sup> This comparison proves that *Korai fūteishō* had a clear agenda and ideology behind it, which none of the earlier examples of poetry criticism seemed to have. Shunzei's broad and sophisticated reception of poetry must have been different from that of other and earlier *waka* scholars.<sup>63</sup> Thus, we should perhaps perceive *Korai fūteishō* as Shunzei's call for a novel approach towards *waka* in general, as well as his reconsideration of the poetic discourse, by which Princess Shikishi might have been affected. In fact, I believe that it was exactly due to this kind of poetry criticism of Rokujō and Mikohidari schools, as well as some earlier works containing a significant number of poems believed to come from *Man'yōshū* and due to the appropriative practice of *honkadōri* (allusive variation)<sup>64</sup>, that more extensive knowledge of *Man'yōshū* became more and more desirable in the era of *Shinkokinshū*'s compilation, which generally sought poetic innovation among others through the renewal of poetic tradition.

Thus, the reception of *Man'yōshū*'s poetry in the early medieval era should be perceived and understood in a broad context of attaining the art of *waka* composition, and participation in and contribution to poetic discourse. Such participation and contribution, if sufficiently diversified poet by poet, may be interpreted as the manifestation of a quite politically charged, Foucauldian attempt to gain power through knowledge. Since Princess Shikishi happened to live in the early medieval era, I assume that she participated in and contributed to the same *Man'yōshū* discourse as her contemporary poets.

#### 4. Appropriation of *Man'yōshū* in selected poems by Princess Shikishi

As emphasized above, appropriation of *Man'yōshū* poetry in Princess Shikishi's works has unfortunately not been treated to a great deal of scholarship yet. However, the sole scholarly paper dealing with this subject, by Hirai Keiko, makes several important remarks; for example, that Princess Shikishi's poetry did not necessarily focus on allusions to *Man'yōshū*, and that the references to this collection were simply a part of the process of her education in the art of *waka*. Hirai also emphasized that Princess Shikishi probably followed Fujiwara Shunzei's guidance and style in regard to *Man'yōshū* poems' appropriation<sup>65</sup>, which seems reasonable because she studied *waka* under Shunzei's supervision. Also, based on my own research, Princess Shikishi drew on the same *Man'yōshū* poetic examples as Shunzei seven times. On the other hand, her poems alluding to *Man'yōshū* possess characteristics notable in many other contemporary poets' work, and they in fact prove that Princess Shikishi was an active member of the early medieval *Man'yōshū* discourse, who was aware of not only the existence of *Man'yōshū*'s manuscripts but above all of the secondary sources containing *Man'yōshū* poetry as well as other poets' work alluding to this collection.

Thus, based on an analysis of Table 1, we see that of about 400 extant poems by Princess Shikishi, 41 contain allusions to *Man'yōshū*. The majority of her poems refer to

<sup>61</sup> *Tendai* was a Buddhist school founded in Japan in 806 by Saichō (767–822). It was one of the dominant schools in Heian Period (794–1185). See *Encyclopedia of Japan*...

<sup>62</sup> Watanabe, "Korai fūteishō"..., p. 30.

<sup>63</sup> Shibayama, *Ōe no Masafusa and the Convergence of the "ways"*..., p. 373.

<sup>64</sup> *Honkadōri* (allusive variation) is a practice of borrowing lines from earlier poems and reconfiguring them in one's own work.

<sup>65</sup> Hirai, "Shikishi Naishinnō ni okeru *Man'yō* sesshu"..., p. 186.

volumes X–XI of *Man'yōshū*, which are the volumes brought up most frequently in poetic treatises and referred to in the poetry of the early medieval era. Moreover, almost all of *Man'yōshū* poems appropriated in the work of Princess Shikishi are included in numerous secondary sources, e.g. *Kokinwaka rokujō*: 30 poems, *Godaishū utamakura* [Poetic Landmarks in Collections of Five Eras, before 1165] by Fujiwara Norikane (1107–1165): 20, *Shūchūshō* [Sleeve Notes, 1186] by Kenshō: 14, *Hitomaroshū*: 13, *Korai fūteishō*: 12, *Kigoshō* [Notes on Poetic Words, 1099–1118] by Fujiwara Nakazane (1075–1133), etc. This suggests that instead of studying any of *Man'yōshū* manuscripts, Princess Shikishi might rather have utilized the secondary sources.

In fact, one of Princess Shikishi's poems alluding to *Man'yōshū* is a clear evidence of the significance of secondary sources in her appropriation practices. This is *tanka* No. 478 from a “contest on paper” *Sanbyaku rokujūban uta'awase* [Poetry Contest in Three Hundred and Sixty Rounds, 1200] organized probably by Kujō Yoshitsune:

|   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| <i>nanifagata</i>                           | When I row my boat            |
| <i><u>asibe wo sasite</u></i>               | Toward the reeds on the shore |
| <i>kogiyukeba</i>                           | Into the Naniwa Bay,          |
| <i>uraganasikaru</i>                        | The single voice of a crane   |
| <i><u>tadu</u> no fitokowe<sup>66</sup></i> | Sounds lonesome.              |

The poem quoted above clearly contains elements of ancient Japanese poetics. *Nanifagata* (Naniwa Bay) is a frequent *utamakura* (poetic place name) signifying a shore in the ancient Setsu Province (eastern part of Hyōgo Prefecture and the northern part of Ōsaka Prefecture).<sup>67</sup> *Tadu* (crane) on the other hand, is an image frequently incorporated by ancient poets in their compositions about long travels along the coast, and it is a metaphor for the loneliness of the traveler. Thus, the voice of the crane is a symbol of the traveler's longing for their beloved.<sup>68</sup>

We observe that Princess Shikishi's poem is composed from the viewpoint of a lonely traveler, who is reminded about his/her solitude by the voice of a crane. In fact, as noted by two out of three annotators of Princess Shikishi's poems<sup>69</sup>, her *tanka* undeniably refers to the following *Man'yōshū* poem from volume VI: 919 by the renowned poet Yamabe Akahito (early 8th century), in which we find a similar expression of loneliness during a solitary trip:

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<sup>66</sup> I decided not to transcribe but to transliterate the poems based on the Heian Japanese system codified by John R. Bentley. This transliteration exposes consonant repetitions that the Hepburn system obscures, and thus reveals phonological features of Classical Japanese. This system is not applied to Japanese names and titles of poetry collections, since their transcriptions in the Hepburn system are widely acknowledged in academia. The originals of all poems are from *Shinpen kokka taikan* [New Collection of Japanese Poems], CD-ROM, Tōkyō: Kadokawa Shoten, 2003.

<sup>67</sup> See *Utakotoba utamakura daijiten* [Great Dictionary of Japanese Vocabulary and Poetic Place Names] *Nihon bungaku web toshokan* [Online Library of Japanese Literature], Tōkyō: Kadokawa Gakugei Shuppan, 2001.

<sup>68</sup> Haruo Shirane, *Japan and the Culture of the Four Seasons: Nature, Literature, and the Arts*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2012, p. 138.

<sup>69</sup> Oda, *Shikishi Naishinnō zenkachūshaku*..., p. 544, Nishiki, *Shikishi Naishinnō zenkashū*..., p. 121.

*waka no ura ni*  
*sifo miti kureba*  
*kata wo nami*  
*asibe wo sasite*  
*tadu* nakiwataru

When the tide overflows  
 In the Waka Bay<sup>70</sup>,  
 It covers the shore  
 And cranes fly off crying  
 To the reeds on the other shore.

Even though this *Man'yōshū* poem is an obvious reference for Princess Shikishi's *tanka*, it is only through the analysis of the secondary sources containing *Man'yōshū* poems (Table 1), that we are able to note that Princess Shikishi might have borrowed this poem from *Toshiyori zuinō*, where it appears containing a significant textual variant – *nanifagata*<sup>71</sup>:

*nanifagata*  
*sifo miti kureba*  
*kata wo nami*  
*asibe wo sasite*  
*tadu* nakiwataru

When the tide overflows  
 In the Naniwa Bay,  
 It covers the shore  
 And cranes fly off crying  
 To the reeds on the other shore.

Simultaneously, we should not exclude another possibility, namely that the vocabulary of this *Man'yōshū* poem was channeled via the poetry of Princess Shikishi's contemporary poets. In fact, it turns out that this *Man'yōshū* poem was quite a popular reference in the early medieval era. Numerous poets, such as Fujiwara Kinzane (1053–1107), Fujiwara Shunzei, Fujiwara Teika, Minamoto Ienaga (1170?–1234), Fujiwara Ietaka (1158–1237), etc. used similar vocabulary in their own poetic compositions. We even find the expressions *nanifagata/nanifae* (the Naniwa Bay) together with *asibe wo sasite* (reeds on the shore) in poems by two poets contemporary to Princess Shikishi, Shun'e (1113–1191?) and Retired Emperor Juntoku (1197–1242).<sup>72</sup>

*tadu* no wiru  
*asibe wo sasite*  
*nanifagata*  
*muko no ura made*  
*kasumi sinikeri*

The Bay of Naniwa,  
 Where the cranes rest  
 On the reedy shore,  
 Became veiled in haze  
 All the way to the Muko Bay<sup>73</sup>.

*nanifae* ya  
*tamino no sima ni*

Is it the Bay of Naniwa,  
 Where on the Isle of Tamino<sup>74</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Waka Bay (*waka no ura*) is an *utamakura* (poetic place name) for Kii Province (currently Wakayama Prefecture and the southern part of Mie Prefecture). At the end of Heian Period it started to symbolize the art and path of *waka*. See *Utakotoba utamakura daijiten*...

<sup>71</sup> In all extant *Man'yōshū* manuscripts from the early medieval era and all of the other secondary sources, this *Man'yōshū* poem appears containing *waka no ura ni* in the first line.

<sup>72</sup> Shun'e and Juntoku's poems are included in *Rin'yō wakashū* [Collection of Forest Leaves, 1178]: 29, and in *Shikin wakashū* [Collection of Forbidden Verses, ca 1220]: 271, respectively.

<sup>73</sup> Muko (*muko*) is an *utamakura* for Setsu Province. Muko was one of the most important harbors in ancient Japan, which appears in *Man'yōshū* in a love context. See *Utakotoba utamakura daijiten*...

<sup>74</sup> Isle of Tamino (*tamino no shima*) is an *utamakura* for Setsu Province but its current location is unknown. It appears in *waka* together with the image of cranes. See *Utakotoba utamakura daijiten*...

*naku **tadu** no*  
***asibe wo sasite***  
*yado mo tazunen*

Crying cranes  
 Seek lodging  
 On the reedy shore?

The poems quoted above clearly appropriate the same *Man'yōshū* poem. They perhaps do not emphasize the feeling of solitude as much as Princess Shikishi's poem does, and they reflect the content of *Man'yōshū* poem more faithfully. However, they are evidences for the existence of early medieval *Man'yōshū* discourse, which at times caused poets to allude to *Man'yōshū* poems in a similar manner.

We may assume that Princess Shikishi might have been aware of both *Toshiyori zuinō* version of this *Man'yōshū* poem and Shun'e's *tanka*, while Juntoku was likely inspired by the same *Man'yōshū* vocabulary later on. The fact that multiple poems appropriated this *Man'yōshū* poem and simultaneously contained *nanifagata/nanifae* proves that it was likely through the secondary sources, such as *Toshiyori zuinō*, and not through any of *Man'yōshū* manuscripts directly, that *Man'yōshū*'s poetry was channeled in the early medieval era. Moreover, it seems that early medieval poets were mutually aware of their own appropriations of *Man'yōshū* poetry. They borrowed not only from the *honka* (original poem) but also from each other's compositions, which is notable in Shikishi's poem quoted above, since it additionally contains vocabulary found in a poem by yet another early medieval poet, Fujiwara Ietaka.<sup>75</sup>

The second example of Princess Shikishi's appropriation of a *Man'yōshū* poem, above all, reflects a borrowing from contemporary poets rather than utilizing *Man'yōshū* manuscripts, or even secondary sources containing *Man'yōshū* poetry. The poem is included in *Shikishi Naishinnōshū* [Collection of Poems by Princess Shikishi, 1201]: 350:

*tadunureba*  
*soko to mo iezu*  
*narinikeri*  
*tanomishi nobe no*  
***mozu no kusaguki***

When I sought them,  
 I still could not  
 Catch their sight  
 – The shrikes-sitting grass stalks  
 In the field that I relied on.

The poem quoted above contains only one element of natural imagery, *mozu no kusaguki* (shrikes-sitting grass stalks)<sup>76</sup>, which in ancient Japanese poetry is a symbol of inability to meet with a beloved person. This image originates in a legend about a man who, during one of his trips to the countryside, met a lady with whom he fell in love. When the man met the

<sup>75</sup> This refers to a line *tazu no kowe* (voice of a crane) that may be found only in poems by Shikishi and Ietaka. Ietaka's poem is included in *Gyokuginshū* [Collection of Jeweled Poems, 1245]: 85:

|                                |                           |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>shifo mite fa</i>           | The current overflows     |
| <i>asibe wo sasite</i>         | And even the voices       |
| <i>yuku <b>tadu no</b></i>     | Of the cranes             |
| <i><b>kowe</b> mo katabuku</i> | Headed to the reedy shore |
| <i>ariake no tuki</i>          | Sink in the dawning moon. |

<sup>76</sup> *Mozu no kusaguki*, or *kayaguki*, is an expression meaning 'the invisibility of a shrike diving into grasses'. It was not appropriated in Japanese poetry until late Heian Period, when poets such as Fujiwara Akisue (1055–1123) and Minamoto Toshiyori incorporated it for the first time in their own poems. See *Utakotoba utamakura daijiten*...

lady in the open field, he asked her about the location of her house. The lady explained that a grass stalk, on which a shrike was sitting, points to her house's direction. The man was forced to return to the imperial court but he promised to visit the lady again. When the man came back to the same field the next year, he was unable to locate her house because the grass was crushed and veiled in haze, and there were no shrikes around.<sup>77</sup>

Princess Shikishi's poem is thus clearly composed from the point of view of a man who cannot find the direction to his beloved woman's house because there are no 'shrikes-sitting grass stalks' in the field. Since this poetic expression appears in *Man'yōshū* only once, Princess Shikishi's *tanka* clearly appropriated the following poem from volume X: 1897 by an anonymous author:<sup>78</sup>

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <i>faru sareba</i>             | Even if the shrikes-sitting grass stalks |
| <b><u>mozu no kusaguki</u></b> | Are out of my sight                      |
| <i>miezu to mo</i>             | When the spring arrives,                 |
| <i>ware fa miyaramu</i>        | I will keep looking                      |
| <i>kimi ga atari wo</i>        | To the direction of your neighborhood.   |

Princess Shikishi's *tanka* obviously appropriated this *Man'yōshū* poem, as well as the whole legend related to it. However, we observe that even though this *Man'yōshū* poem was included in numerous secondary sources (Table 1), they do not reflect any textual variants that would enable us to determine a clear channel of appropriation. Thus, we cannot assume that the channel of appropriation was through any other sources than *Man'yōshū* manuscripts. On the other hand, we see that other poetic expressions from Princess Shikishi's poem that do not appear in the original *Man'yōshū* poem – *tanomekosi nobe* (a field always relied on) and *tanomisi nobe* (a field to rely on) – may be found in poems by Fujiwara Shunzei and by one of *Shinkokinshū*'s compilers Minamoto Michitomo (1171–1227).<sup>79</sup>

|                                       |                                   |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b><u>tanomekosi</u></b>              | Summer in bloom                   |
| <b><u>nobe</u></b> <i>no mitisiba</i> | – Grassy roadside in the field    |
| <i>natu fukasi</i>                    | I always relied on.               |
| <i>iduku naruran</i>                  | Where are those                   |
| <b><u>mozu no kusaguki</u></b>        | Shrikes-sitting grass stalks?     |
| <i>samidare fa</i>                    | The water overflows               |
| <b><u>tanomisi nobe</u></b> <i>ni</i> | The field that I relied on        |
| <i>midu koete</i>                     | During the early summer rains.    |
| <i>ika ni tadunemu</i>                | How then will I find              |
| <b><u>mozu no kusaguki</u></b>        | The shrikes-sitting grass stalks? |

<sup>77</sup> For the full version of the legend, see Nobutsuna Sasaki (ed.), *Ōgishō* [Secret Teachings], in *Nihon kagaku taikei I* [Compendium of Japanese Poetry Criticism], Tōkyō: Kazama Shobō, 1957, p. 403.

<sup>78</sup> Oda, *Shikishi Naishinnō zenkachūshaku*..., pp. 496–497, Nishiki, *Shikishi Naishinnō zenkashū*..., p. 105, Okuno, *Shikishi Naishinnōshū zenshaku*..., pp. 342–344.

<sup>79</sup> Shunzei and Michitomo's poems are included in *Senzaishū*: 795, and in round 433 of *Sengohyakuban uta'awase* [Poetry Contest in one Thousand Five Hundred Rounds, 1203], respectively.

It is clear that all the poetic compositions quoted above appropriated the same *Man'yōshū* poem, since they utilize not only similar imagery and vocabulary but they also depict the same kind of confusion and disappointment caused by the change in the natural environment, which prevented the man from finding the path to his beloved lady's house. Thus, it is indisputable that the channel of appropriation of this *Man'yōshū* poem in Princess Shikishi's *tanka* must have been through the poetry of her contemporary poets. It seems that it was most likely Shunzei's poem that was the main source for Princess Shikishi, Michitomo and the other poets' *tanka*. However, the appropriation of similar *Man'yōshū* vocabulary in poems by other early medieval poets, such as Fujiwara Teika, Fujiwara Takanobu (1142–1205), Fujiwara Ietaka, etc., proves the existence and significance of early medieval *Man'yōshū* discourse, in which Princess Shikishi clearly participated and to which she contributed.

The third example of Princess Shikishi's appropriation of *Man'yōshū* poetry demonstrates that she must have been simultaneously aware of secondary sources containing *Man'yōshū* poetry and other poets' compositions alluding to the same *Man'yōshū* poems. It is thus clear that she was an active member of the early medieval discourse on *Man'yōshū*. Simultaneously, based on the poetic example included in *Shikishi Naishinnōshū*: 284, we observe some features of Princess Shikishi's allusions to *Man'yōshū* that distinguished her among her contemporary poets:

*ofomiyabito*  
*okitu kosima no*  
*fama bisasi*  
*fisasiku narinu*  
*namidi fedatete*

The courtiers –  
 Separated for as long as  
 The hut-roofs on the islet-shore  
 Far off in the sea  
 Are drawn apart by the wave-trails.

The poem quoted above contains an expression characteristic of *Man'yōshū* poetry, *ofomiyabito* (courtiers).<sup>80</sup> It is also full of vocabulary symbolizing the lovers' separation, e.g. *fedatu* (to divide, to separate), *fisasi* (long period of time). Princess Shikishi's *tanka* thus describes a situation in which a couple is drawn apart by the adversities of life, which is illustrated by a metaphor of hut-roofs separated by the waves preventing their visual contact. Her poem indisputably appropriates vocabulary from the following *Man'yōshū* poem from volume XI: 2753 by an anonymous author:

*nami no ma yu*  
*miyuru kosima no*  
*famafisagi*  
*fisasiku narinu*  
*kimi ni afazu site*

For as long as it takes  
 The beach-catalpa on the islet  
 To come into view between the waves  
 – This is for how long  
 I have not met with you.

Even though the appropriation of *Man'yōshū* vocabulary seems obvious in this case, it must be emphasized that this *Man'yōshū* poem was included in numerous secondary sources (Table 1), among others in *Ise monogatari*, which is believed by all three annotators of Princess Shikishi's poems to be the main channel of appropriation.<sup>81</sup> One of the reasons

<sup>80</sup> *Utakotoba utamakura daijiten...*

<sup>81</sup> Oda, *Shikishi Naishinnō zenkachūshaku...*, pp. 407–408, Okuno, *Shikishi Naishinnōshū zenshaku...*, pp. 521–522.

for such unanimous assessment may be the fact that in episode 116 of the *Ise monogatari*<sup>82</sup>, *famafisagi* (beach-catalpa), notable in the original *Man'yōshū* poem, is replaced by *fama bisasi* (hut-roofs on the shore), which is also a textual variant evident in Princess Shikishi's *tanka*. However, based on my research, the same alternation may also be observed in *Godaishū utamakura*. Thus, there are at least two possible channels for the appropriation of this *Man'yōshū* poem, even though *Ise monogatari* is considered to have been one of the most frequently read works in the early medieval era.<sup>83</sup>

In the analysis of this poem by Princess Shikishi it is difficult to overlook, besides the significance of secondary sources, the expression *okitu* (offshore) that overlaps with the work of some of her contemporary poets, e.g. Fujiwara Mototoshi, Kujō Yoshitsune and the third shogun of Kamakura government Minamoto Sanetomo (1192–1219).<sup>84</sup>

*kimi to ifeba*  
*nado mimafosiki*  
*namima* *naru*  
*okitu kosima no*  
*famafisagi* *kana*

For what reason do you  
 Desire me to catch a glimpse  
 Of the beach-catalpa  
 Between the waves  
 On the islet far off in the sea?

*nagamekosi*  
*okitu namima no*  
*famafisagi*  
*fisasiku* *misenu*  
*farugasumi kana*

I looked out,  
 And between the waves in the offing  
 I saw the beach-catalpa  
 That for long has not shown  
 A sign of the spring haze.

*okitu nami*  
*utide no fama no*  
*famafisagi*  
*siworete nomi ya*  
*tosi no fenuran*

Waves in the offing  
 And the beach-catalpa  
 Of the Uchide Shore<sup>85</sup>  
 – Do they simply wither  
 With the passage of time?

All three poems quoted above clearly appropriate the same *Man'yōshū* poem as Princess Shikishi's *tanka*. However, they do not approach the source of their inspiration identically. While Mototoshi's *tanka* is perhaps the most faithful to the love theme of *Man'yōshū* poem, Yoshitsune's *tanka* clearly deepened the level of its interpretation by changing the subject from love to spring. Sanetomo's poem, on the other hand, strays a little away from the original love theme, since it is composed in a manner that allows a more philosophical interpretation of life as a concept related to transience.

<sup>82</sup> For more about episode 116 of *Ise monogatari*, see Joshua Mostow and Royall Tyler, *The Ise Stories. Ise monogatari*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, p. 234.

<sup>83</sup> Haruo Shirane (ed.), *Traditional Japanese Literature: An Anthology, Beginnings to 1600*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2007, p. 497.

<sup>84</sup> Fujiwara Mototoshi, Kujō Yoshitsune and Minamoto Sanetomo's poems are included in *Mototoshishū* [Poetic Collection of Mototoshi, c. 1142]: 190, in *Shingū senka'awase* [Poetry Contest of the Imperial Collections' Poems Held in Shingū Shrine, 1201] in round 2, and in *Kinkai wakashū* [Collection of Golden Flakes, c. 1219]: 490, respectively.

<sup>85</sup> Uchide Shore (*utide no fama*) is an *utamakura* for Ōmi Province (currently Shiga Prefecture) near Biwa lake. See *Utakotoba utamakura daijiten*...

It is thus obvious that the channel of appropriation must have in this case been more complex than in the previously analyzed poems by Princess Shikishi. We see that secondary sources, presumably *Ise monogatari* or *Godaishū utamakura*, played as significant a role in her appropriation of *Man'yōshū* as did the poetry of other early medieval poets, which suggests the importance of the early medieval *Man'yōshū* discourse. Simultaneously, we cannot rule out the fact that Princess Shikishi usually seemed to borrow long lines from individual *Man'yōshū* poems, which were often not anyhow adjusted for the needs of the newly composed poem, in this case *kosima no fama bisasi fisasiku narinu*. The majority of early medieval poets, on the other hand, usually appropriated short lines, sometimes modifying the order of words according to the needs of their poetic vision, in this case *kosima no famafisagi*, *famafisagi fisasiku* or *famafisagi nami no ma ni*. I believe that appropriating relatively long lines quite faithfully is one of the features distinguishing Princess Shikishi's appropriation of the *Man'yōshū* poetry among other contemporary poets.

In fact, a similar feature of borrowing long lines from *Man'yōshū* is notable in the last poem by Princess Shikishi to be analyzed in this article. However, this poetic example, included in a poetic event organized to collect poems for *Shinkokinshū* – *Shōji ninen in shodo hyakushu* [Retired Emperor's First Hundred Poem Sequence of the Second Year of Shōji Era, 1200]: 281, also proves that Princess Shikishi was not only aware of the early medieval discourse on *Man'yōshū*, but also that her poems reflect a touch of poetic innovation and individuality:

|                                |                                    |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <i>wa ga sode fa</i>           | Will my sleeves dry                |
| <i>kari ni mo fime ya</i>      | Even for a brief moment,           |
| <i><u>kurenawi no</u></i>      | While the evening dew              |
| <i><u>asafa no nora ni</u></i> | Is falling upon the crimson        |
| <i>kakaru yufugiri</i>         | In the Asaha Field <sup>86</sup> ? |

The poem quoted above is clearly on the subject of love, since it contains imagery and vocabulary typical of love poetry in *Man'yōshū*, e.g. *kurenawi no* (crimson), which is a *makurakotoba* (pillow word)<sup>87</sup>, and *asafa*, which puns on the various meanings of *asa* (shallow, light). I also assume that this poem is composed in the voice of the 'waiting woman', which is an archetype of idealized woman in both Chinese and Japanese ancient poetry.<sup>88</sup> Moreover, there are two kinds of confusion implied in this poem: 1) a confusion between the color of the autumn evening dew and the color of the fields, both of which are red<sup>89</sup>, and 2) a confusion between the evening dew and the speaker's tears, both of

<sup>86</sup> Asaha Field (*asafa no nora*) is an *utamakura* for Musashi Province (currently Tōkyō, Saitama and Kanagawa Prefectures). See *Utakotoba utamakura daijiten*...

<sup>87</sup> *Makurakotoba* (pillow word) is a five-syllable figure modifying the following word, e.g. *fisakata no* (eternal and strong) that precedes and modifies words like *tsuki* (moon), *sora* (sky), *ame* (rain), etc. It is a poetic device characteristic of *Man'yōshū*.

<sup>88</sup> Citko, "Elements of 'possibly Chinese' Origin"..., pp. 21–56.

<sup>89</sup> Red is a significant color in ancient Japanese love poetry. It symbolizes human feelings visible to the outside world, and it also refers to woman's eyes reddened from ceaseless crying and sorrow. See Małgorzata Citko, "Patterns of Illicit Passions: Imagery and Poetic Techniques in Love Poetry of Princess Shikishi", in *Looking at Language and the World: Past, Present, and Future*, Honolulu: College of Language, Linguistics, and Literature, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, 2010, p. 128.

which wet the waiting woman's sleeves.<sup>90</sup> Thus, Princess Shikishi's *tanka* evidently appropriates vocabulary from the following *Man'yōshū* poem from volume XI: 2763 by an anonymous poet:

|                         |                                      |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <u>kurenawi no</u>      | Even for as briefly as a break       |
| <u>asafa no nora ni</u> | Between cutting the bundles of grass |
| <i>karukaya no</i>      | In the Asaha Field                   |
| <i>tuka no afida mo</i> | Filled with crimsons,                |
| <i>a wo wasurasu na</i> | – Do not forget me...                |

Although the appropriation of this *Man'yōshū* poem by Princess Shikishi is unquestionable, we observe that the poem was included in a few secondary sources (Table 1). Moreover, it was widely alluded to in many poems by other contemporary poets, such as Fujiwara Kiyosuke, Fujiwara Teika, Fujiwara Norimune (1171–1233), Emperor Juntoku, Sai'onji Saneuji (1194–1269), etc. It was thus clearly a part of the early medieval poetic discourse. However, we find significant similarities between Princess Shikishi and two other poets' manner of appropriation of this *Man'yōshū* poem's vocabulary, e.g. *kakaru yufutuyu* (falling evening haze) notable in a poem by Teika's oldest son Fujiwara Mitsuie (1184–?), and *sode* (sleeves) evident in a poem by Fujiwara Ietaka:<sup>91</sup>

|                                  |                              |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>fuku kaze mo</i>              | Why do not I see the color   |
| <i>iro ya fa mienu</i>           | Of the breezing wind,        |
| <u>kurenawi no</u>               | While the evening haze       |
| <u>asafa no nora ni</u>          | Is falling upon the crimsons |
| <u>kakaru yufutuyu</u>           | In the Asaha Field?          |
| <br>                             |                              |
| <u>kurenawi no</u>               | Do not blame                 |
| <u>asafa no nora no</u>          | My sleeves that I lay        |
| <i>tuyu no ue ni</i>             | Upon the dew                 |
| <i>wa ga siku <u>sode</u> zo</i> | Fallen on the crimsons       |
| <i>fito na togame so</i>         | In the Asaha Field.          |

Both poems undeniably allude to the same *Man'yōshū* poem as Princess Shikishi's *tanka*. Moreover, they appropriate the theme of love, even though it is more obvious in Ietaka's poem, considered by all the annotators of Princess Shikishi's poems as one of the top references for her own composition<sup>92</sup> due to the imagery of sleeves and tears (*namida*). It is, however, difficult to determine which poem was inspired by which. Simultaneously, I believe that Mitsuie's poem has more in common with Princess Shikishi's poem in terms of

<sup>90</sup> According to traditional Japanese poetics, courtiers' sleeves never dry out, since they are conventionally always involved in some sort of relationship that eventually brings around pain and long-term separation. See Iwona Kordzińska-Nawrocka, *Japońska miłość dworska* [Japanese Court Love], Warszawa 2005, p. 143.

<sup>91</sup> Mitsuie and Ietaka's poems are included in *Kenryaku san'nen hachigatsu nanoka dairi uta 'awase* [Poetry Contest in Imperial Palace Held on the Seventh Day of the Eighth Month in the Third Year of the Kenryaku Era, 1213]: 26, and in *Gyokuginshū*: 2697, respectively.

<sup>92</sup> Oda, *Shikishi Naishinnō zenkachūshaku*..., pp. 400–401, Okuno, *Shikishi Naishinnōshū zenshaku*..., pp. 510–512, Nishiki, *Shikishi Naishinnō zenkashū*..., p. 85.

structure, since they are both composed in a form of a question. Moreover, the last three lines in Mitsuie and Princess Shikishi's poems are almost identical (with an exception of *kiri* [dew]), which is a fact difficult to ignore. However, Mitsuie's poem was composed later than Princess Shikishi's *tanka*, so we may assume that Mitsuie appropriated this *Man'yōshū* poem through her poetry.

Thus, it is obvious that the existence of the early medieval *Man'yōshū* discourse, which urged numerous poets of the era to appropriate the same *Man'yōshū* vocabulary, also greatly affected Princess Shikishi's appropriation of this collection's poetics. Moreover, it is undeniable that poetic compositions by contemporary poets, alluding to the same *Man'yōshū* poem, were the most significant channel of appropriation in this case. Simultaneously, we observe that there is something unusual in Princess Shikishi's utilization of the *Man'yōshū* line. Not only did she borrow a very long line from the original poem, which I already claimed as one of the features distinguishing her style of *Man'yōshū* poetry appropriation, but she introduced an additional autumn image, *kiri* (autumn dew). The dew fits the rest of the imagery of her poem much better than *tsuyu* (spring haze), which was utilized in the majority of the other poets' *tanka* drawing on this *Man'yōshū* poem. We may assume that this change of vocabulary was intentional, and that such attention to details and slight modifications made by Princess Shikishi are manifestations of her poetic talent and quest for innovation in *waka*, in order to perfect her poetic compositions.

## Conclusions

Even though this article deals with only four primary poetic examples authored by Princess Shikishi, we may conclude that her style of appropriating *Man'yōshū* poetry reflects some significant features that are likely shared by other early medieval poets. First of all, we realize that Princess Shikishi was undeniably an active member of the early medieval *Man'yōshū* discourse, in which she participated and contributed to. Her allusions to *Man'yōshū* poetry prove that she utilized secondary sources, e.g. *Toshiyori zuinō* and *Ise monogatari*, rather than any of the extant *Man'yōshū* manuscripts. We may even conclude that in some cases Princess Shikishi did not intend to appropriate *Man'yōshū* poetry itself, but poems from other literary works, which proves that poems nowadays considered to be "*Man'yōshū* poems" may not have been perceived as such in the early medieval era. On the other hand, Princess Shikishi must have been aware of other contemporary poets' compositions appropriating similar vocabulary and themes, since in some cases she was clearly inspired by the work of her contemporary poets. However, the channels of appropriation of *Man'yōshū* vocabulary in her own poems were not only limited to Fujiwara Shunzei who was her poetry tutor. Simultaneously, we see that she also inspired other poets to allude to the same *Man'yōshū* poems, which subsequently evidences the overwhelming significance of poetic discourse in the early medieval poetic practice.

The appropriation of *Man'yōshū*'s poetry in the works of Princess Shikishi undeniably reflects also some features of her individual poetic style. Her poetry tends to contain relatively long lines borrowed from *Man'yōshū*, in comparison to other contemporary poets' work. Moreover, Princess Shikishi did not follow the early medieval *Man'yōshū* discourse without careful consideration. The last of her poems analyzed above proves that she did not blindly imitate such discourse, even though the majority of her poems appropriating

*Man'yōshū* contain a love theme, which is also a feature notable in the work of some other early medieval poets. In fact, Princess Shikishi was not afraid to alter and modify the poetic lines and expressions that she borrowed from *Man'yōshū* or from other poets' *tanka*. Her undeniable creativity in the art of *waka*, which may be understood as an alternative interpretation of the early medieval discourse on *Man'yōshū*, is thus a significant feature distinguishing her among her contemporaries.

Finally, it should be noted that although the majority of other early medieval lower-ranking poets surely attempted to gain power through knowledge by offering their poetic services to a number of patrons, Princess Shikishi represented the patron's side of such a relationship. She did, however, possess an undeniable poetic talent, and perhaps due to the fact that she was not forced to adjust herself poetically to anybody, she had also no fear of innovation. Such a mixture of Princess Shikishi's high social status, that provided her with a certain degree of freedom of expression in *waka*, and her evident poetic ability, created an excellent poet, whose work was as highly appreciated during her lifetime as it still is in the contemporary era.



VERONICA GASPAR

## History of a Cultural Conquest: The Piano in Japan

### Abstract

Any short review of the penetration of European music into Japan and its enthusiastic appropriation calls for a different approach to the controversial question of acculturation. The rapid growth in the piano's popularity in Japan, together with the implicit musical revolution, could also occasion a parallel with the similar process of acculturation which occurred in Eastern Europe (for instance the Romanian Principalities). Musical Westernization (including the institutional and educational reform) might, in contradicting the traditional local musical concepts, mirror a different perspective on intercultural communication and contemporary cultural education.

### Introduction

In the following essay, the piano represents not just the musical instrument exclusively designed for the Western music, but is also a symbol of that part of European culture which has an incontestable potential to be assimilated and appropriated in spite of conflicting structural differences. Both in Japan and some south-eastern European countries, it seemed logical that the local (monodic) musical traditions would reject a harmonic instrument. Instead, the Western music paradoxically became one of the main triggers for Europeanization. European music, namely the style embodied in the piano from the beginning of the Meiji era (albeit preceded by the organ in the first European cultural contacts in the 16<sup>th</sup> century) became dominant especially in Japan, as illustrated by the huge number of Western-style amateurs or professional musicians, the music industry and the number of students and musicians in Europe or North America. As far as music is concerned, the usual allegations on acculturation are at least disputable, recalling Béla Bartók's intuitions on cultural meetings and customary frontiers differing from linguistic or geographical ones.<sup>1</sup> In addition to a brief revaluation of issues of Europeanization, the interesting encounter between European music and the Japanese people, whether followed throughout their recent history or compared with similar processes in Eastern Europe, can shed light on a fundamental feature of the Japanese: the cult of learning.

### Europeanization

In the most commonly accepted interpretation today, the concept of 'Europeanization' barely covers the psycho-sociological impact or the subjacent mutations in the cultural

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<sup>1</sup> Bence Szabolcsi, *Béla Bartók Weg und Werk. Schriften und Briefe* [Béla Bartók Way and Work. Writings and Letters], München: Bärenreiter, 1972.

behavior of the ‘conquered’ lands. In the last century, this term acquired three principal usages: the classical connotation with aggressive colonization, the assimilation with the recent cultural policies of the European Union, and finally the old-fashioned concept equating Europeanization with the idea of progress.

In the first place we ought to mention the frequently used idea stating that Europeanization was the forcible imposition of the European style – a concept predominantly championed by Communist ideology, but disseminated around the free world too. The European inclination for self-denial and the fear of Eurocentrism which began in art towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was reinforced throughout the twentieth from the avant-garde’s manifestos in a number of important sociological works.<sup>2</sup> Upton Close stated in 1925: “It [i.e. the Eastern culture] has maintained a remarkable resistance to the aggressive Western culture which a half century ago invaded its very heart to attack it”.<sup>3</sup> Even if the hypothesis of an aggressive cultural colonization, despite its persistence, appears scarcely sustainable, the logical fragility of such an allegation did not prevent its stubborn persistence.

Besides, the European opening to other cultures during the 19<sup>th</sup> century went in both directions. Ever since then, borrowings from non-European art forms have become much more than just an exotic fashion; the cultural export was compensated by a corresponding import. The enthusiastic reception by the Japanese for European art, and the interest of European artists of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in non-European forms and aesthetics guide us toward the working assumption that these encounters in art were desired and sought after. The presence of the Europeans and some of their foreign customs, behaviors etc. were probably felt as disturbing, but European art forms were not. Any possible reluctance did not apply to culture, especially to music. Persuasion or authoritarian methods to introduce the foreign styles, if any, were not imposed by the Europeans themselves, but seemingly by the local authorities, eager to become compliant with the new partners, and not related to the nature of the art itself.<sup>4</sup> Obviously, one cannot easily imagine that at that very historic moment the cultural behavior of the Europeans was similar to that of the *conquistadors* in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, or that they could have employed those special means of ‘persuasion’ employed by Peter the Great to convince the Russian nobility to adopt Western-style fashions and manners...

Another perspective on Europeanization is equating it with ‘EU-ropeanization’.<sup>5</sup> We can discern the influences of our own time in these approaches, rather targeting the current newcomers to the EU. The interpretation of historical facts in the light of contemporary preoccupations was already noted by Benedetto Croce in 1955.<sup>6</sup> Several research papers have

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<sup>2</sup> R.W. Cox, ‘Civilizations and the Twenty-first Century: Some Theoretical Considerations’, *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol. 1, 2001, pp. 108–109.

<sup>3</sup> U. Close, ‘Europeanization and the Ancient Culture in Pacific Asia’, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 122, *The Far East*, Nov., 1925, p. 174.

<sup>4</sup> Even the most obtuse Europhobe could never imagine a conditioning of export by wearing a top hat or authorizing a free passage if one played a Beethoven symphony...

<sup>5</sup> Andreas Faludi, ‘The Europeanization of Planning and the Role of ESPON’, 2012, [www.ucd.ie](http://www.ucd.ie) (accessed 27.06.2013), p. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Benedetto Croce, *History as the Story of Liberty*, London: George Allen and Unwin Limited, 1955, quoted in R.W. Cox, ‘Civilizations and the Twenty-First Century: Some Theoretical Considerations’, *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol. 1, 2001, p. 105: “The practical requirements which

aimed to outline ‘the difference between Europeanization and European integration’.<sup>7</sup> “In its most explicit form Europeanization is conceptualised as the process of downloading European Union (EU) regulations and institutional structures to the domestic level”.<sup>8</sup> In most contemporary writing ‘Europeanization’ means European civilization. The cultural implications are eschewed with finesse and deflected toward technicalities and institutional relations. The five definitions of Europeanization identified by Johan P. Olsen<sup>9</sup> do not satisfactorily encompass the cultural ‘face’ of the process. No organization can control a whole sociocultural process, even if we refer to one largely driven by the political authorities, as was the case in Japanese society during the Meiji Era. The adoption of European culture was a process that cannot be separated from the natural evolution of the society, even if the role of the authorities was noticeable. In traditionalist Japan, the adoption of new music was stimulated by popular preference.

Finally, we should also mention the old empirical perception, nowadays repudiated by both the political and scientific worlds, but still persistent: the perception that associates Europeanization with the idea of progress. The prestige of European culture, more than conceited self-evaluation, is proved by the concrete behavior of an impressive number of Asians. European universities crowded with Japanese and Korean students, and the numerous European-style art events in the Asian cities, as reflected in sociological surveys or in direct confessions, confirming the level of this attraction.<sup>10</sup>

In conclusion: even if some parts of European civilization were probably seen as inconvenient or shocking in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Asia, European culture, namely the musical culture, did not need any pressure to conquer Japanese society. On the contrary, music was the main enticement that facilitated a positive response to other less attractive aspects of European civilization. One might consider that the meeting of Europe with the Far East was more or less forced, only if the concept of culture is expanded to include those elements which traditionally defined civilization. But even starting from this standpoint, one cannot suppose any constraint to the art forms so ardently adopted.

The fact that European music was not just adopted quickly, but became even more popular than Japan’s own traditional music raises the question put by Mamoru Watanabe: ‘Why do the Japanese like European music?’.<sup>11</sup> The answer to this question is not simple; it might be

underlie every historical judgment give to all history the character of ‘contemporary history’ because, however remote in time the events there recounted may seem to be, the history in reality refers to present needs and present situations wherein those events vibrate”.

<sup>7</sup> K. Howell, ‘Developing Conceptualisations of Europeanization: Synthesising Methodological Approaches’, *Queen’s Papers on Europeanization*, No. 3, 2004, <http://www.qub.ac.uk/> (accessed 27.06.2013), p. 11.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>9</sup> Johan P. Olsen, ((i) enlargement; (ii) European-level institutionalization; (iii) the export of European institutions to the wider world; (iv) the strengthening of the European ‘project’ as a political ambition; and (v) the domestic impact of European level institutions). ‘The Many Faces of Europeanization’, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 5, 2002, p. 923.

<sup>10</sup> Self-evaluation has become an attention-grabbing element in current ethno-musicological analyses (see Speranța Rădulescu in *Chats about Gypsy Music*, Bucharest: Paideia, 2004, pp. 17 and following).

<sup>11</sup> M. Watanabe, ‘Why Do the Japanese Like European Music?’, *International Social Science Journal*, Vol. 34, No. 4, 1982, pp. 657–665.

sketched out from an overall picture covering history, social psychology, the emic perspective, synchronic comparison, and last but not least, the peculiarities of European music which proved to be the only musical style to resist a specific ritual context. We should recall that at about the same time, the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, all kinds of Western music conquered a large number of countries all over the world, no matter what the characteristics of the local tradition.<sup>12</sup> The theory of the pressing donor and the resistant recipient appears hackneyed, considering that European music was given a positive reception in so many different countries.

### Synchronic comparison

When comparing the Western acculturation in Japan to the similar processes occurring in about the same period in Eastern Europe, we must take some important differences between European and Asian cultural styles into account. The main traditional difference between Western and Eastern cultural styles, although not reducible to a scheme, might be defined by the ratio between preservation and renewal. The Oriental pattern allows for a simultaneous coexistence of different cultures, keeping each tradition unmingled, while in Europe the dominant pattern is evolutionary: successively, a dominant culture-style is totally, or at least mainly, replaced by a new one.<sup>13</sup>

Romanian musical culture was structured according to the Oriental pattern. Several unmixed cultural identities cohabited: Romanian folklore, handed down together with foreign lay forms through many centuries; and Church music, derived from the Byzantine tradition, which was also unmingled since the 7<sup>th</sup> century. The Western musical style was already present in the Romanian territories in the Catholic Churches (from the 14<sup>th</sup> century in Wallachia and Moldova, and even earlier in Transylvania), yet it did not exert any influence beyond that, being enclosed in its specific ritual milieu and coexisting separately with the other musical styles until the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The connection between the European musical culture and the Romanian tradition burst out in a spectacular way, in less than two generations, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The penetration of this new music was not as sudden as in Japan, yet it became dominant in about the same period as the Meiji Restoration. Western music became all-powerful in the cities, literally sweeping aside a whole secular tradition which had resisted other attempts at influence. The novelty of this acculturation resides as well in its speed as in the force of the change. The change was not just a new art form, but an important part of the Western cultural style, including its specific cultural behavior inclined to renewal and replacement. Such a phenomenon occurred in Japan too, but to a lesser extent; the strong influences on civil life and musical education did not interfere with the traditional rituals. One cannot

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<sup>12</sup> The spread and increased popularity of Western-style music in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Eastern Europe (Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia), South America (Brazil), Japan etc., has been widely acknowledged and can be found in any music history text book. Specific references concerning Romania: Cosma, Octavian Lazăr, *Epoca Enesciană. Gîndirea Muzicală 1898–1920* [The Enescu Epoch; Musical Thinking 1898–1920], Vol. VI, 1984 in *Hronicul muzicii românești* [Chronicle of Romanian Music], București: Ed. Muzicală, 1973–1988.

<sup>13</sup> Veronica Gaspar, 'Zeitliche Gesichtspunkte in einer besonderen Kulturbegegnung: die westliche Musik in den rumänischen Länder' [A Temporal Prospect on a Special Cultural Encounter: The Western Music in the Romanian Countries] in *Geschehnisse der Deutsch-Rumänischen Akademies 2008 Tagung*, Mainz: Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur Mainz, p. 6.

imagine in Japan the slightest change in a Buddhist ceremony justified by aesthetic reasons, as happened in Romania with important parts of the Orthodox Church ceremonial.

The appropriation of Western music as if it was their own music<sup>14</sup> occurred in both Romania and Japan. “Of course, we Japanese know that Western culture is not home-grown, but it is a fact that seldom enters our minds because we have become so accustomed to it.[...] Our feeling about Western culture is that it is not the culture of the West, that is to say of a specific geographical region, but a culture that has today attained world standing and must be studied and assimilated if we are to keep up with the times. For the Japanese, it possesses supra-regional and universal significance”.<sup>15</sup>

At the beginning of the 20th century Western music became dominant in Romania and, even more so than in Japan, its influence went as far as the annihilation of the traditional music in the collective conscience<sup>16</sup>. The feeling of recovering not just a place but a time through Western art was equally common to both Eastern Europe (e.g. Romania) and Eastern Asia (e.g. Japan). Watanabe came to a similar conclusion: ‘We can now even rephrase the question and ask: ‘Why do the Japanese prefer European music to their own traditional music?’ The only possible answer is: ‘Because European music is more relevant to present-day life in Japan, which is not all that different from the Western lifestyle’.<sup>17</sup>

It might be also relevant that the piano had become an emblem of the social status as an added value in young girls’ dowries. “It had always been the custom in Japan for young women to learn the tea ceremony, *ikebana* or to play the *koto* before getting married. After the war, this custom, which was observed throughout the country, was extended (mostly) to the piano, the violin and even the harp”.<sup>18</sup> We should note that in Japan the *koto* had played this dowry function in the past, while in Romania the girls’ educational acquisitions had only become real assets after Europeanization.

At the beginning of the 20th century the Western music had taken over musical education and most public concerts in Japan. The same process had occurred earlier in Romania, where public music (ceremonial, military) and a significant part of the Orthodox Church service had been Westernized. The fiddlers’ bands had adapted their tunes to the novel harmonization and, in the cities, even such important customs as Christmas celebrations underwent radical change. For instance the Christmas carols (*colinde*<sup>19</sup>) were largely replaced by so-called ‘star songs’ influenced by (or modified according to) Western music. The fir tree, omnipresent in almost all houses after 1900 as a Christmas symbol, had been traditionally employed for the death ritual (especially for the death of a young person) symbolizing both the cutting of the life and permanence of the after-life; a ritual far from any connection with the Advent or the Mysteries of Joy.

Apart from the political implications, singling post-war Japan out from other musical receivers, the struggle for a national musical culture sooner or later became a major

<sup>14</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>15</sup> Watanabe, ‘Why Do the Japanese Like...’, p. 659.

<sup>16</sup> Gaspar, ‘Zeitliche Gesichtspunkte...’, p. 8.

<sup>17</sup> Watanabe, ‘Why Do the Japanese Like...’, p. 662.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 161.

<sup>19</sup> *Colinde* are an old musical Romanian tradition, performed since prior to Christianity, mostly around the winter solstice.

preoccupation for local musicians. The Western style was preferred by all the public and threatened to interfere with and even replace the indigenous musical traditions, as was the case in the Eastern Europe at the beginning of the century. “The perseverance and the passionate enthusiasm with which the Japanese have been studying music [...] have led many Westerners to the mistaken assumption that the Japanese have lost the true feeling for their own music”.<sup>20</sup>

The risk of losing their own traditions was greater for Romania, just because the pressure towards European culture was coming spontaneously from the public, to a more or less organized degree. In Japan it was the very social and institutional organizations which were the leading factors in slowing down the processes of contamination and replacement. An organized system like the Meiji government, besides its Westward opening, also sought to preserve the ancient Shintō and samurai culture from the ‘soulless’ modernity of the West.<sup>21</sup> This did not result from any will to totally replace the traditional Japanese music with that of Europe. “The intent of the ruling establishments during the period of Meiji was to create a new national Japanese music through the combination of European and domestic culture”.<sup>22</sup>

In Japan, as in Romania and seemingly other places too, voices were raised in concern at the threat to which traditional music was being exposed because of the increasing public preference for Western music. The 1924–1925 *Japan Yearbook* claimed that “Music in Japan exists in two distinct forms, one of them Japanese music handed down from old Japan, and the other Western music [...]. Until about ten years ago these two often appeared side by side on the same concert program, but of late they have become separated. There are therefore two sorts of music lovers... Generally speaking, students and other young men prefer Western music”.<sup>23</sup>

In Romania the concern about the loss of tradition had already started earlier, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, from the civil society: cultural personalities and musicians. In Japan public voices against the Europeanization of music were set up in the Shōwa era mostly due to political reasons. The Japanese musicians’ standpoint became significant only after the Second World War, namely in 1953 with the ‘Goat Group’ (Hikaru Hayashi, Michio Mamiya and Yūzō Toyama)<sup>24</sup> and the ‘Group of three men’ (Toshirō Mayuzumi, Yasushi Akutagawa and Ikuma Dan).<sup>25</sup> The sensitive issue of recent history, together with the ‘cultural chauvinism’<sup>26</sup> of the pre-war and war years, created a dilemma for Japanese

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<sup>20</sup> Eta Harich-Schneider, *European Musician in Japan*, [www.libweb.hawaii.edu](http://www.libweb.hawaii.edu) (accessed 15.02.2013), p. 419.

<sup>21</sup> Ricardo Duchesne, ‘The Uniqueness of the European Civilization’, *Studies in Critical Social Sciences*, Vol. 28, Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands, 2011, p. 237.

<sup>22</sup> J. Vičar, ‘European Classical Music in Today’s World’, *Acta Universitatis Palackianae Olomucensis – Aesthetica*, No. 19, 2000, p. 170.

<sup>23</sup> Christina DeCiantis Davison, *The ‘Patron Saint of Music’: Beethoven’s Image and Music in Japan’s Adoption of Western Classical Music and Practices*, partial completion of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree at the School of Musicology, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2009, p. 8.

<sup>24</sup> J.A. Herd, ‘The Neonationalist Movement: Origins of Japanese Contemporary Music’, *Perspectives of New Music*, Vol. 27, No. 2, Summer 1989, p. 120.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134 and following.

musicians after 1945. They were keen to develop an original creation and not to compile just a hybrid imitation of Western style, while nevertheless remaining free of any political connotation: "Should post-war composers identify with pre-war nationalism, with all its political implications, or should they strive for autonomy and develop entirely new styles with no links to the Japanese past?"<sup>27</sup> During this time, the general public continued to buy pianos and to listen to European music, no matter what the official standpoint was.<sup>28</sup>

It is worth mentioning an additional grievance against the public's propensity for Western music; the dissatisfaction shared by most 20<sup>th</sup>-century composers, be they Japanese or Romanian. That particular Western music which conquered the broader public was not that of the present time, but the music of the past European tradition: the classical-romantic style of the 18<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Thus, the musicians' struggle concerned not just the space of a tradition, but the music of the present time. Paradoxically, if at the common level the Western music was perceived as a mark of modernity, for the musicians it appeared quite the opposite. In other words: the spatial conflict of 'piano versus *koto* (or dulcimer, *kobuz* etc.)' turns into the temporal antagonism 'piano versus electronic music'. From this standpoint, the promotion of traditional folklore in the musical creation was no longer a nationalist issue, but a way of finding a professional identity.<sup>29</sup> The time difference between the Romanian and the Japanese composers' reaction is due to the Romanians' more rapid adaptation to the new musical languages existent in modern Europe. The musical reform, ironically born at the same time as the broadening of the classic-romantic style, was perceived (and at the common level still is) as more distant from the average audience than any domestic musical traditions. The old European musical style, which may well be called 'the acculturation style', became burdensome not so much for the national traditions as for 20<sup>th</sup>-century professional musicians.

### History of a special affinity

The Japanese capacity for cultural absorption did not start with the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Europeanization. Along the centuries, foreign artistic influences were appropriated and absorbed into the domestic cultural heritage. Ever since the Heian period the Japanese borrowed instruments, styles, genres from Chinese and Korean music. They have appropriated genres, artefacts or tools every time they came into contact with other cultures. In the past the Japanese discovered the Chinese *guzheng*, from which they created their national music instrument, the *koto*. Some traditional musical genres were also adaptations from foreign culture that succeeded in bolstering the Japanese cultural heritage, like the *komagaku* and *tōgaku* court musics, or even the *shōmyō* chant.

The first contacts with European music took place in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when Jesuits from Portugal arrived in Japan and began their Christian mission. Initially the Jesuits had been

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<sup>26</sup> Ury Eppstein, 'School Songs before and after the War: From *Children Tank Soldiers* to *Everyone a Good Child*,' in *Monumenta Nipponica*, 1987, quoted in *The 'Patron Saint of Music'...*, p. 32.

<sup>27</sup> Herd, 'The Neonationalist Movement...', p. 133.

<sup>28</sup> Professor Taneda Naoyuki related that during the war one could find at least a piano in every quarter of Japanese cities, in spite of the nationalist politics.

<sup>29</sup> Actually, most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century's musical creations draw on themes, instruments, rhythms etc. from different musical cultures, not necessarily those from the composer's own country.

skeptical about the reception of European cult music within such a different musical tradition. They soon realized that not only this music was not rejected, but it was even a significant element of attraction to the foreign religion. The consequence was the import of musical instruments and scores from Europe and the adaptation of some traditional Japanese instruments.<sup>30</sup> “The music used in worship would probably have been mostly motets and mass movements, and the viola, *rebec*, trumpet, *charamela* (shawm), lute and even the organ played by Westerners enjoyed widespread popular use after being introduced by missionaries”.<sup>31</sup> In 1556 books of *cantus planus* (plain chant) were brought into Japan. A year later the first choir was mentioned. From around 1560 onwards there were reports of violas and keyboard instruments, which are not specifically described but could be clavichords, cembalos or virginals. Music schools were created in the mission centers to teach performance, singing, religious dramas and even secular European songs.

European-Japanese contact in these times was unidirectional, from Europe to Japan, with one single recorded exception. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, four young Christianized Japanese traveled in Europe (1582–1590) in order to know European musical life better and to be presented to the Pope, but also to testify in Europe about Christianity in Japan and the accomplishments of the Jesuit mission in the Far East. At the initiative of *visitor* (inspector) Alessandro Valignano, the young Japanese of prominent families, Don Manchio Itō and Don Miguel Seizaemon, attended by Don Martinho Hara and Don Julião Nakaura, left Nagasaki in 1582 and arrived in Portugal in 1584.<sup>32</sup> By any standards their journey had been remarkable. During their travels in Europe the four young men had audiences and more or less formal meetings with the most powerful European nobles such as King Philip II and two Popes, Gregory XIII (who welcomed the young men with ‘pomp and public honor’) and Sixtus V. They were received by many of the most important political, ecclesiastical and social figures in the places they visited. The account of this voyage was written in a book *De Missione*, 34 dialogues translated into Latin and intended to be a textbook for the Jesuits’ colleges and seminaries in Asia. The destinies of the young men and of the book are described by Eta Harich-Schneider in 1973 and particularly by Derek Massarella in 2012.<sup>33</sup> During the promotional tours made after their return in Japan, they presented some technological ‘miracles’ brought from Europe such as the astrolabe, the terrestrial globe, and others: among them, there were musical instruments in the place of honor as well.

Surprisingly, it was not only the stringed instruments, which resembled certain Japanese instruments, which won popularity, but also keyboard instruments such as organs. It was

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<sup>30</sup> The double-reed *shawm* (which still exists today), an adaptation of the *rebec* lute into the *kokyū*, etc. Harmonic instruments such as bamboo organs were destroyed with the suppression of Christianity at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>31</sup> Luciana Galliano, *Yōgaku: Japanese Music in the Twentieth Century*, Lanham, MA: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2002, p. 28, quoted by Christina DeCiantis Davison, *The ‘Patron Saint of Music...’*, p. 13.

<sup>32</sup> Machio’s younger brother Jeronimo Itō was an accomplished keyboard player. It seems that he had even performed for the feared Shōgun Oda Nobunaga.

<sup>33</sup> E. Harich-Schneider, ‘Renaissance Europe through Japanese Eyes: Record of a Strange Triumphant Journey’, *Early Music*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1973, pp. 19–26, and D. Massarella (ed.), ‘Japanese Travellers in Sixteenth-Century Europe: A Dialogue Concerning the Mission of the Japanese Ambassadors to the Roman Curia (1590)’, *The Journal of the Hakuyō Society*, Vol. 25, Third Series (presented in public conference in February 2013).

no coincidence that during the Christians' persecutions in the 17<sup>th</sup> century this was the type of musical instrument chosen for destruction, and not those which were relatively similar to Japanese instruments (such as the shawm, for instance, which is still used today). The Tokugawa shōguns, in their intention to protect the Japanese cultural identity from dissolution under Western influence, deemed this particular type of religion and its associated art to be more dangerous than other foreign influences. The severity and radicalism of the measures testify to how seriously this threat was perceived, proving at the same time the alarming popularity of Western culture among the people. Therefore the shōguns' intransigence seemed rather European-like; namely to cut off any trace of 'heresy' instead of tolerating it in Asiatic style, as had formerly been done with other foreign cultural influences.

After two centuries of isolation, the Meiji period again brought a European cultural dowry. This time there were two capital differences: the 19<sup>th</sup>-century symbolic equivalents of the astrolabe and lute were no more conditioned by the Christian cross, and the people's increasing interest was not only sustained, but also stimulated by domestic cultural, political, educational and administrative personalities eager to assimilate and fructify the cultural seeds of Europe. Among them music was less reluctantly received. The piano rapidly became the symbol of the deep restructuring of the Japanese people's collective mentality, as happened in Eastern Europe. The difference in the roles of the piano in Asia and Europe would be confirmed by the musical evolution to come: first and last the frequency of the piano's use in Eastern Europe illustrated the psycho-social ideal of a European status, while in Japan it was mainly the ferment for a musical culture to be learned, and for the sake of which other European aspects could be accepted too. An important member of the Meiji educational research team, Shūji Izawa, declared the piano was "the highest and best musical instrument of the world".<sup>34</sup> Soon Japanese society considered it a 'good habit' to own a piano rather than a car. This instrument became a symbol of Western orientation, and naturally children learned to play the European piano repertoire.<sup>35</sup> Actually, the piano did not annihilate the Japanese soul, but became a representative part of it for the entire century.

The economic and industrial consequences of this cultural acquirement were not slow in coming. Starting from 1900, the Yamaha factory became the world's leading piano manufacturer, and in 1927, Koichi Kawai founded the Kawai Musical Instrument Research Laboratory. The production of pianos in Japan mainly involved not big, expensive instruments meant for philharmonic stages, but small, cheap specimens to be used by everyone and which could find a place in any dwelling. Soon, Japanese piano brands came to conquer the whole world, including Europe. A sustained demand for instruction in Western music and the numerous Euro-Japanese musical hybrids zealously created by the composers of the time attest to a general 'thirst' for this novel art form, born from curiosity, desire of knowledge and enchantment. "The thirst for knowledge, which in any case had been a characteristic feature of our people from time immemorial, now assumed an existential significance. The importation of European culture was seen not merely as a way of enriching the life of the community, but as a necessity for the survival of that community as a

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<sup>34</sup> Vičar, 'European Classical Music...', p. 171.

<sup>35</sup> Ibidem.

nation”.<sup>36</sup> The innate Japanese cultural openness made them one of the most, if not the most ready for musical assimilation in the world.

Another anti-European campaign began in the pre-war and wartime Shōwa era. It was directed toward ideology and principles, and not necessarily against the concrete musical (or technical) expression. At least as far as music was concerned, the novelty of anti-Europeanism was less popular. “Despite this open rejection of Western influence, the thriving market of Western-style performance, musical education, and composition continued to flourish throughout the Second World War, and Beethoven’s work remained a cornerstone of Japanese musical life”.<sup>37</sup> Witnesses from the war years report that the piano was still an omnipresent accessory in people’s lives. Despite the shortcomings due to the war, the people continued to find resources for instruments and music lessons.

After the war, the Japanese involved in European classical music began to export their talents. Together with thousands of young Japanese studying in European music schools, many accomplished artists made their careers on European and American concert stages. There were even times when the majority of the students in universities such as the *Hochschule der Künste* in Berlin or the Music Academy in Graz were Japanese and Korean. Besides, these countries have provided a significant ratio of prize-winners at international performance competitions. Japan is also an important partner in the theoretical debates, and is also one of the leading voices in musical pedagogy (e.g. the Suzuki Method<sup>38</sup>). It is thus clear that music has become one of the fields where the Japanese have tried hard to beat the Europeans with their own weapons, together with science, technology and other less acknowledged fields<sup>39</sup>.

In the 1990s, a decrease in the Japanese public’s interest in European classical music has been remarked on. The reason can hardly be found in economic causes (recession, saturation of the market etc.), nor can it be just the result of an intentional campaign aiming at promoting national Japanese music (ethnic or contemporary).<sup>40</sup> As was already noted, the anti-European campaign promoted during nationalist rule did not discourage the Japanese from buying pianos, taking lessons and assiduously attending concerts. As for contemporary creativity, in Japan just as everywhere else, most of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century musical language only has a limited audience of initiates.

The decrease in classical music is a global phenomenon, in our opinion, due to the raising of a less educated audience. The classical compositions are less popular in other countries too, especially in Eastern Europe. We cannot ignore the strong demarcation line splitting global contemporary society according to the degree of education. The audience for classical music (as well as for books, art movies or museums) needs a specific education,

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<sup>36</sup> Watanabe, ‘Why Do the Japanese Like...’, p. 659.

<sup>37</sup> DeCiantis Davison, *The ‘Patron Saint of Music’...*, p. 32.

<sup>38</sup> Shin’ichi Suzuki (1898–1998), violinist and pedagogue, was the creator of a method for musical initiation called *sainō kyōiku* (talent education) addressed to children aged between 3–5 years, based on his theories about language acquisition, the role of the environment and developmental teaching. The Suzuki Method aims to forge ‘children with noble hearts’ through musical environment and musical education.

<sup>39</sup> ‘For instance, outside the German-speaking regions of the world, Japan is the leading country in Goethe studies. Watanabe, ‘Why Do the Japanese Like...’, p. 658.

<sup>40</sup> Vičar, ‘European Classical Music...’, p. 172–173.

time and motivation. In this regard, the Japanese public is still one of the most educated in the world. Even if the classical music consumers have fallen away everywhere else, in Japan their percentage in society is still one of the largest.

However, though the appetite for Beethoven is declining, some important parts of the Western style are still substantially represented in 'light' music. The decrease of interest in European music indicates the decrease of mass interest in classical (i.e. professional) music, and does not imply a recrudescence of the old domestic traditions. The local folklore, no matter how officially encouraged, cannot reach the popularity level of fashionable international light music. Besides, the so-called traditional products largely promoted by the mass media are mostly adaptations, far from the original source. Even Japanese ethnomusicologists and traditional connoisseurs denounce the average broadcast 'Japanese popular music' as hybrids lacking authenticity. The same phenomenon occurs in Romania too, where the broadly encountered popular music (the 'new folklore') has little connection with genuine peasant traditions. Neither the traditional nor any national musical school have benefited from the decline of European classicism, but the music demanded by the less educated social stratum has done so. We can ascertain, regarding contemporary music, that European acculturation implies less culture and a more commercial mentality. The places where European musical culture is surviving are coincident to those social environments which place special concern on education. In this respect, Japan remains a privileged territory. This explains why European cultivated music has survived in Japan to an even greater degree than in most European countries.

### **The 'music of acculturation'**

A particular part of European music has a proven power to seduce and dominate, found in two hypostases: cultured ('classic' 'serious') and entertainment ('light'). The higher professional level is confined within a specific and well-delimited cultural time, mostly the classic-romantic period (the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries), with some before/after extensions. The popular light level is built on a universal ground arising from European traditional language, enriched with various non-European features (African or South American rhythms, Oriental melodic inflections etc.<sup>41</sup>) and local folkloric elements, which is permanently evolving under the influence of fashion.

Besides universality, both cultured and light music have two essential particularities in common: the tonal system and the simultaneity of more or less complex musical strata. These particular features would normally prevent European acculturation in countries with completely different musical traditions such as Japan or the European south-east. Therefore, a specialized analysis of the musical elements which favored that special permeability could be useful. Such an analysis, unaffected by the socio-cultural arguments outlined above, is still lacking. It was the widespread popularity of the organ (in the 16<sup>th</sup> century) and piano (in the 19<sup>th</sup> century), which brought polyphony and harmony with them, which proves that transcending that particular otherness was more than an exploit of some skilled musicians.

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<sup>41</sup> The recordings sold and the size of concert audiences prove the extent to which music market leaders such as the Beatles, Elvis Presley, Michael Jackson, AC/DC, the Rolling Stones etc. etc. actually dominate any local music performers.

The Japanese people's innate zeal to thoroughly acquire any new teaching<sup>42</sup> can only partially explain the assimilation of a musical style apparently so distant from the local pattern. Singing with several voices and performances on harmonic instruments, by people coming from a monodic cultural tradition, seem to contradict not only the overriding of a firm sociological threshold, but also the neurological mechanisms of musical reception. In 1956 Leonard Meyer had conceptualized the term of 'musical expectancy'. He asserted that we are captives of the habits of our musical surroundings which influence not only our preferences or value judgments, but even perception itself. The numerous field researches in the 1960s and 1970s were later confirmed by the event-related potential studies (ERP), especially after the development of the imaging technologies that found the center of the musical negativity in the human brain.<sup>43</sup>

However, more recent research has revealed supplementary complex processes concerning the rejection of musical novelty/incongruity, and discovered that musical competence (instruction) is essential for overcoming initial resistance. The way the habituation to a particular kind of music can affect the understanding and appreciation of other kinds of music<sup>44</sup> has received a nuanced response from the latest cognitive science studies. Musical competence can overlap the natural barrier of negativity.<sup>45</sup> Many experiments have demonstrated higher adaptation and brain elasticity in musically-educated people. That means that even if a human being is sociologically and neurologically conditioned by a specific cultural matrix, this conditioning can be attuned through education. Thus, before mentioning the innate capacities of the European musical language to spread, we should draw attention to Japanese cultural behavior toward knowledge as shaped throughout the centuries.

The precondition of any cultural compatibility would seem to be the existence of some common (or related) features. This raises the question of the degree to which cultural harmonization needs a pre-existent similitude, or is just a matter of education. The salient differences between Oriental and European music might seem to require a radical change

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<sup>42</sup> During the Jesuits' period, the Japanese also endeavored to learn foreign languages such as Latin and Portuguese.

<sup>43</sup> Techniques such as positron emission tomography (PET) and functional magnetic resonance scanning, together with studies of localized brain lesions, have shown that listening to music activates a wide distribution of brain areas. Among thousands of research studies: S. Koelsch, 'Neural Substrates of Processing Syntax and Semantics in Music', *Current Opinions in Neurobiology*, Vol. 15, No. 2; *Cognitive Neuroscience*, April 2005, pp. 207–212; J.J. Bharucha, Keiko Stoeckig, 'Reaction Time and Musical Expectancy: Priming of Chords', *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance*, Vol. 12 No. 4, Nov. 1986, pp. 403–410; M.A. Schmuckler, M.G. Boltz, 'Harmonic and Rhythmic Influences on Musical Expectancy', *Perception & Psychophysics*, Vol. 56, No. 3, 1994, pp. 313–325, etc.

<sup>44</sup> Riccardo Brunetti, Marta Olivetti Belardinelli, 'Effects of Musical Acculturation: Learning, Reproducing, and Recalling Music from Different Cultural Traditions', *Proceedings of the 8<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Music Perception and Cognition*, Evanston, Illinois, USA, August 3–7, 2004, S.D. Lipscomb et al. (eds.), p. 392.

<sup>45</sup> Peter Vuust et al., 'Is Musical Competence Left Lateralized? Pre-Attentive MEG Responses to Rhythmic Incongruency', *Proceedings of the 8<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Music Perception and Cognition*, Evanston, Illinois, USA, August 3–7, 2004, S.D. Lipscomb et al. (eds.), pp. 292–293.

of both perceptive psychology and cultural behavior.<sup>46</sup> Nevertheless, some of the similarities between European and Japanese music suggest that their incompatibility is not totally insurmountable.

One of the arguments on the origin of European music, namely natural resonance, or the belief in sound vibration and especially the concept of *ma*<sup>47</sup> could have prepared Japanese listeners for another way to deal with resonance. It is true that Japanese music is more fluid, but Western metric pulsations are not so far from the binary succession of *omote-ma* and *ura-ma* (close side and opposite side), particularly because of their organization in fairly equal time units (measures). The ambiguity of pitches is a matter of differences in performance, starting from a structured modal system based on similar steps to European tones and half-tones. This division of the octave is closer to the European diatonic structure than to the Indian quarter-tone scale or Arabian chromatics.<sup>48</sup> In the same vein, the musical meeting between Western Europe and the southern part of the Romanian Principalities might seem even more stunning, considering the melodic contour and the rhythmical flexibility.

The phonetic clarity of the Japanese syllabic structure of speech could be another favorable meeting point with European music. Besides, we should add that the apparent rigidity of the European musical style based on a written score does not actually occur in live performances. Even if European performers do not have the concept of *ma*, the breaths, the stopping (*fermatas*), the *rubato*, the pauses meant for the expressive temporality of the musical flow might have some degree of kinship.

Regarding the superposition of the voices, we ought to remember Béla Bartók's theory concerning the harmonization of popular tunes<sup>49</sup> caused by the translation of the horizontal tunes onto a vertical plane. It may be a hazardous hypothesis that a process issued from the creative thought of a great personality might actually reflect a real mental process: a spontaneous fluctuation to and from both the dimensions of a musical language, favored by the natural resonance of the sound. Anyway, such a sensorial ability presupposes a significant mental elasticity, not realizable without a complex and sustained musical education. Eta Harich-Schneider stated that Japanese musicality is a real quality derived from their music itself.<sup>50</sup>

The discussion on the Japanese capacity for musical absorption, whether innate or shaped, is far from being settled as long as the arguments out of education remain mere conjectures which are hard to demonstrate. Irrespective of the debate on the specifics of Japanese music, the differences exhibited almost never refer to strict musical issues, but to

<sup>46</sup> We have already mentioned that the 17<sup>th</sup> century persecution against Europeanism included the destruction of the polyphonic instruments such as organs, and the forbidding of choral ensembles.

<sup>47</sup> Empty spaces between sounds giving the listener time to hear the sounds echo and to deepen their significance.

<sup>48</sup> This particularity could be another argument against the theory of a deliberate European cultural colonization. Both India as the Arabian countries underwent much more European domination, so European music should surely be more present. In reality the European music, be it classical or light has less popularity in those places, no matter how charismatic the performers are.

<sup>49</sup> Bartók Béla, *Notes on the Folk Song* (Romanian translation), București: Editura de stat pentru literatură și artă, 1955, p. 58.

<sup>50</sup> Harich-Schneider, 'European Musician...', p. 419.

philosophy, meaning etc. But even if the cultural signification and the philosophy of the perception rigorously separate Japanese music from European, the physical phenomena themselves are, in fact, less incompatible.

In a similar way, any discussion on the intrinsic virtues of the European music is contaminated by political and social interpretations. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the general opinion was that the European musical system “was so perfect that it could become a source of musical satisfaction and inspiration for members of other cultural regions and ethnicities”.<sup>51</sup> Today such assertions are usually dismissed; official statements draw on the equality of any (musical) culture. In both standpoints we can find bad faith and ideological interference rather than scientific research. It is ignored that the 19<sup>th</sup> century’s European acculturation was not the first of its kind and not unique. One ought to remember the Islamic acculturation of the whole of North Africa. It was not so extended, but much more dominant, generating total changes not just in religion, but also in language, clothing, art and cultural behavior. A similar process led to the pacific expansion of Buddhism that has exerted a complex influence on a large part of Asia.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century’s European acculturation does not even resemble its former missions of Christianization. This time the means of communication were improved enough to generalize a life-style, trade paths and cultural behavior. Subsequently the ideologies (religion included) and art forms were spread too, each with more or less popularity or duration. These art forms frequently operated as seductive triggers. Among these, music had the most powerful impact. Yet the same mechanism of cultural export also included non-European features. An obvious example of a musical culture caught in a similar global trend came from South America: their dance rhythms dominated a significant proportion of light entertainment music during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These dances, or African drums, especially in the second half of the last century, never aroused any discussions referring to cultural colonialism or compulsion. The same is true of young people’s contemporary clothing and accessories all over the world, such as tattoos and piercings. It is true that the international opening and globalism started from Europe, but in the same time and in the same way, the artistic, stylistic and gastronomic cultures of non-European origin were exported, and sometimes generalized.

## Conclusions

The astonishing assimilation of European music in Japan on both major occasions (16<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries), but especially in the latter case, reveals a) some psychosocial aspects; b) a different approach to musical adaptation and c) an educational issue which is re-actualizing the concept of higher culture, nowadays shadowed by strict geographical criteria.

The piano, embodying the significant differences between the two musical cultures, symbolically represents the evolution of European music in Japan and also the role of Japan in the contemporary musical world. Hence, a pattern for cultural harmonization based on the knowledge of culture appears to be relevant, either in the presence or in the absence of preceding common elements.

Unlike other countries where European musical acculturation occurred more or less spontaneously, the penetration of this music in Japan was organized and institutionalized.

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<sup>51</sup> Vičar, ‘European Classical Music...’, p. 172.

Asian cultural behavior, exponentially represented by Japan, did not permit a total replacement, but rather the coexistence of old and new art forms. This has built up the premises of seriousness and resistance in time.

The decline in the attraction of the European model is in fact the decline in the attraction of higher culture, be it European or not. European culture, namely European professional music, is about to become better represented in Japan. If at the present time the Japanese have any rivals in musical achievements (competitions, personalities etc.), they come not from Europe, but from China.

To the question of why the Japanese could have been seduced by a such different musical culture, there are three possible answers: a) the seductive potential of the new culture; b) the fact that the apparent initial differences might be less insurmountable; c) the Japanese type of cultural opening and absorption is very strong, and thoroughly maintained by a consistent educational system forged over centuries. The third argument remains the most significant, especially if we consider that Japan is a huge cultural assimilator – something provable throughout its history. The Japanese have appropriated all kinds of genres, artefacts or tools every time they come into contact with other cultures.

The Japanese lessons of seriousness and dedication, reflected by their education in a broader sense, might be seen as a signal to reconsider the concept of culture as re-actualized by the current spiritual poverty of Europe. Japan did not import a cultural replacement, but acquired a novel form of art to appropriate, and in the meanwhile acquiring an opportunity to learn.

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BEATA KOWALCZYK

## Literary Response to Crisis Elements of Analytic Autoethnography in Tawada Yōko's *After Fukushima. Journal of Trembling Days*

### Abstract

The purpose of this essay is to propose a response to the following questions: can a sociologist make use of literature? And if so, under what conditions may a literary work be of use to sociologists? The answer to the question will be formulated through an analysis of *After Fukushima. Journal of Trembling Days*, a literary work by Tawada Yōko, an exophonic Japanese writer living in Germany. The analysis will be conducted in the framework of the paradigm of analytic autoethnography, which formulates three conditions for field notes to be considered as autoethnographic: (1) the author-researcher must be a full member in the research group or setting, (2) visible as such a member in the researcher's published text, and (3) committed to an analytic research agenda focused on improving theoretical understandings of broader social phenomena. The following hermeneutic approach to the selected literary work will cover all three issues.

### Introduction

*As children, we learnt to stay calm in case of natural catastrophe.  
The moment I hear the word 'catastrophe' I feel very calm.*<sup>1</sup>

The tragedy of the Great East Japan Earthquake (*Higashi Nihon Daishinsai*) and tsunami which rocked the main Island of Japan on March 3, 2011, claiming about 16,000 fatalities, over 6000 injured and over 2600 missing, undoubtedly marked a new era in Japanese history. The breadth and power of this disaster is the greater if we realize how vulnerable and helpless our civilization remains nowadays in the face of natural cataclysms of this kind, regardless of all the advances in technology we are making to communicate with each other, travel and conquer the universe. Such tragic events are not easily forgotten or washed away (*mizu ni nagasu*<sup>2</sup>), as wrote Japanese intellectual Kato Shuichi describing the attitude of the Japanese towards past events. Evoked in the form of an artistic creation, such as literature, these painful experiences constitute a part of the national history, the history of private tragedies.

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<sup>1</sup> Yōko Tawada, *Journal des jours tremblants. Après Fukushima* [After Fukushima. Journal of Trembling Days], Paris: Verdier, 2012, p. 91. All translations from French and Japanese by the author.

<sup>2</sup> Katō Shūichi, *Nihon bunka ni okeru kūkan to jikan* [Time and Space in Japanese Culture], Tōkyō: Iwanami Shoten, 2007, p. 1.

The purpose of this essay is to analyze one example of a literary response to a crisis situation, namely a collection of essays by the Japanese writer Tawada Yōko, which were first published in German in the German-speaking Swiss press, and then published in French translation under the title “Journal des jours tremblants. Après Fukushima” (After Fukushima. Journal of Trembling Days).<sup>3</sup> This analysis will be focused primarily on the following issues: Firstly, the possibility of reading a given literary work as a document in a sociological context from the perspective of the paradigm of analytic autoethnography, providing a sociologist with material for research about a certain reality and/or its conditions, which in the case of the abovementioned earthquake can be used as social analysis of a crisis and an individual response to it. Secondly, by performing a ‘close reading’, a sort of hermeneutic approach, while going through the pages of Tawada’s essays, I will discuss their meaning as a literary as well as a sociological document, trying to understand how the tragic is reworked, and what kind of knowledge it may convey to us about the author as well as the community she belongs to. In other words, the goal of this essay is to read and interpret a literary text not as a fictitious story, but as a material reflecting reality, a material with its inner credibility of statement.

However, before I analyse the text itself, I need to briefly lay out the guidelines of analytical autoethnography and explain for what reasons, in the light of the premises of this method, Tawada Yōko’s literature invites interpretations which far exceed the potentiality of analytical tools used in the discipline of traditionally construed literary studies, which enables the researcher to consider at least certain literary works as a valuable and reliable source of information. So, in reference to the five elements constitutive for this approach, I will discuss the manner these conditions are fulfilled within the framework of *After Fukushima. Journal of Trembling Days*.

### **Insight into the materiality of language. Tawada’s autoethnographic/exophonic literature**

The most distinctive feature of Tawada Yōko’s writing – and she makes use of a wide variety of literary genres from poetry, novel, essay to drama – is its exophonic aspect, thoroughly discussed especially in her *Exophony. A Journey outside of the Mother Tongue*.<sup>4</sup> Having lived in Germany since her first trip to this country in the early 1980s, she writes in both Japanese and German; the fact that she uses a second language to express herself in a poetic manner classifies her as an exophonic writer. The term exophony, in other words a voice from outside, refers to authors who create literature in language other than their mother tongue, most of whom originate from multicultural social environments.<sup>5</sup> The history of literature has many examples of exophonic writing: Joseph Conrad, Samuel Becket,

<sup>3</sup> Tawada, *Journal des jours...*

<sup>4</sup> Yōko Tawada, *Ekusofonī. Bogo no soto he deru tabi* [Exophony. A Journey outside of the Mother Tongue], Tokyo: Iwanami gendai bunko, 2012.

<sup>5</sup> For example see Susan Arndt, Dirk Naguschewski, Robert Stockhammer, *Exophonie: Anderssprachigkeit (in) der Literatur*, Berlin: Kulturverlag Kadmos 2007; Chantal Wright, ‘Exophony and Literary Translation. What it Means for the Translator When a Writer Adopts a New Language’, *Target – International Journal of Translation Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 1, 2010, pp. 22–39; Chantal Wright, ‘Writing in the ‘Grey Zone’: Exophonic Literature in Contemporary Germany’, *German as a Foreign Language*, <http://www.gfl-journal.de/3-2008/wright.pdf> (accessed 21.02.2014).

Vladimir Nabokov, Joseph Brodsky and Eva Hoffman, to name only a few of them. What distinguishes Tawada in comparison to the aforementioned writers is the fact that she does not focus on an attempt to master of the German language, which would wipe away her otherness, or ‘foreign accent’ visible in a certain artificiality – *strange kind of German*<sup>6</sup> – in her German art. Her goal is to dig into the language – be it German, Japanese or any other language she is familiar with – to extract the actual meaning of words, where the word ‘actual’ stands for the initial dictionary-based sense of a given word as well as its practical usage, altered by the speaker or the user in a daily conversations.

What is more, while working and living in a German-speaking environment, she discovered that the naturalness of her Japanese which she had hitherto taken for granted is but a mere translation of the inner self. This translation must necessarily be imperfect because we are born and thrown into a language created by others, as Jacques Lacan has already claimed.<sup>7</sup> In other words, we cannot sound natural in any language, for there is no original meaning that may be replicated in the process of translation. “Her translation of the surfaces of language – that is her focus on letters, sounds, discrepancies between words and images and on other aspects of linguistic form – ultimately makes both German and Japanese enigmatic, animated and multivalent,” states Susan Anderson.<sup>8</sup>

The topic Tawada constantly challenges is language, its materiality (*signifiant*) manifesting itself in the power of bringing certain phenomena to life only by the act of speaking. Yet, on the other hand we tend to rely too much on the symbolic dimension of words, which limits the world we live in to an arbitrary defined *signifié*, where we – the language users – are no longer living organisms, but are reduced to our names.<sup>9</sup> This discussion about language and its awkwardness is intrinsic to Tawada’s personal experience of migration to a foreign country, an everyday experience of asking herself about her own individual identity, created and expressed also through language. The trip to Germany, or a journey outside her mother tongue, was a formative experience for Tawada, which she has been discussing and analyzing ever since she wrote or spoke up her first German word, no matter the actual content of the story. Therefore, I shall argue that any reader of Tawada’s literature is allowed to perceive all of her artworks as an insight into a specific biography of the author. It is in this sense that this literature provides a sociologist with material for qualitative research. This data may be approached via the application of the paradigm of analytic autoethnography.

Autoethnography is defined as “an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (graphy) personal (auto) experience (ethno) in order

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<sup>6</sup> Susan Anderson, ‘Surface Translations: Meaning and Difference in Yoko Tawada’s German Prose’, *Journal of Germanic Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 1, February 2010, p. 50.

<sup>7</sup> Nick Mansfield, *Subjectivity: The Theories of the Self from Freud to Haraway*, Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2000, p. 43.

<sup>8</sup> Anderson, ‘Surface Translations...’, p. 50.

<sup>9</sup> This process is described in Tawada’s novel *Umi ni otoshita namae* [A Name Lost in the Sea], where the protagonist, having lost her memory in an airplane catastrophe, struggles to come back to normal life. What hinders this is the fact that she does not recall her name, and as a nameless person she cannot be recognized by the system of social and cultural institutions either as a patient in the hospital nor as a mother, wife or even citizen of the country of her origins. Yōko Tawada, *Umi ni otoshita namae* [A Name Lost in the Sea], Tōkyō: Shinchosha, 2006.

to understand cultural experience”.<sup>10</sup> This method has been developed for many political and cultural reasons, but also because researchers have realized that a “neutral, impersonal and objective stance (...) is not tenable”<sup>11</sup> anymore. Assumptions about the world are made from many different points of view, including that of the scientist, who questions reality as such and tries to understand it. That is why Geertz’s “thick descriptions” should also be created by the subject of the research, or researchers themselves, who evocatively record personal and interpersonal experience, including emotional states and feelings from the fieldwork, as equally valuable data.

The author of the concept of analytic autoethnography, Leon Anderson, claims that this method “refers to ethnographic work in which the researcher is (1) a full member of in the research group or setting, (2) visible as such a member in the researcher’s published text and (3) committed to an analytic research agenda focused on improving theoretical understandings of broader social phenomena.”<sup>12</sup> This definition develops up to five key features proposed by the author in a more detailed critical elaboration of this sociological inquiry. However, for the purpose of this essay I shall focus only on the abovementioned three essential elements, which I will trace in Tawada’s journal to assess the potential value for expanding the analytic ethnographic conclusion, by including literary art into it.

### **The value of Tawada’s observations and her membership in the research group or setting**

When researchers do autoethnography, they retrospectively and selectively write about epiphanies that stem from, or are made possible by, being a part of a culture and/or possessing a particular cultural identity. However, in addition to telling about experiences, autoethnographers often are required by social science publishing conventions to analyze these experiences<sup>13</sup>.

*After Fukushima. Journal of Trembling Days* provides materials of two types: about the human experience of the disaster itself, as well as about the artistic work which recreates that experience for public and historical discourse. The author is on the one hand a member of the community of Japanese citizens, no matter where she was at the time of the earthquake; and on the other hand, she is also an artist or public intellectual, conscious of the manifold mechanisms whereby an experience is narrated in media-driven discourse through certain rhetoric figures.

Tawada Yōko is not a sociologist *sensu stricto*, yet her work with the language is recognized by scholars, and she has often been invited to universities as a visiting professor<sup>14</sup>. That is also the case with this book, the object of the analysis performed hereby. This collection of essays was written on the basis of three lectures Tawada gave at

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<sup>10</sup> Carolyn Ellis, Tony E. Adams & Arthur P. Bochner, ‘Autoethnography: An Overview’, *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, Vol. 12, No 1, Art. January 10, 2011, p. 1.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>12</sup> Leon Anderson, ‘Analytic Autoethnography’, *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, Vol. 35, No. 4, August 2006, p. 375.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> In 1999 she became writer-in-residence at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for four months.

Hamburg University in May 2011, no more than two months after the earthquake. Furthermore, despite the fact that it lacks the so-called sociological purpose inscribed in the process of thinking and describing objects, the nevertheless thoroughly analytical stance Tawada takes towards her experience renders her work autoethnographical in meaning. This is visible, for instance, in the aforementioned 'Exophony. A Journey outside of the Mother Tongue', a book entirely dedicated to deliberations about words, concepts or gestures, whose sense differs according to the country she is visiting.

She partly continues this discussion about translation in the journal. The process of translating oneself into a language requires of the speaking subject not only a good knowledge of that language, but also and possibly above all a self-consciousness, an awareness of what is to be expressed in order to select appropriate expressions – or I should rather say, the closest expressions to what is being evoked.

The second lecture in the book is based in large part on recollections of the author's trip to Africa. Needless to say, the continent is a representative and symbolic place for the colonial past and its repercussions which African countries have to deal with likewise today. The past cultural and political oppression remains like a stain on African languages. Tawada realizes that the local speech resembles European languages closely. Nevertheless, what strikes her is that most of the similarities are misleading, since the meanings in some cases may be totally different. She admits that when visiting the Cape for the first time, she "didn't realize to what extent their language was tarnished by the history and apartheid".<sup>15</sup> That provokes thinking about her own mother tongue and the Japanese colonial past. She notices: the African language "is tarnished. However, is the Japanese language also strongly tarnished in the countries which were victims of Japan imperial politics? I have no more but to add here, that German likewise is a sullied language".<sup>16</sup>

Tawada's membership in the group or setting which is the object of her study is formed around three parts she plays in the fieldwork, and each role is intrinsic to the type of fieldwork. Going through the first pages of her work, the reader firstly hears her voice as a citizen of Hamburg. "In Hamburg, on the other hand, which is a port city and where I lived from 1982 until 2006, I used to sense the North Sea".<sup>17</sup> Regardless of their subject – common points and dissimilarities in the mutual imaginary process in the West and East – and despite the origins of the lecturer, the three lectures on poetry which open the journal are held from the European perspective. It is clear that the speaker is addressing a Western audience, quoting profusely during her speech from European philosophers (Barthes, Benjamin, Freud or Foucault) and writers (Kafka, Goethe) or evoking European art (Gerhard Richter). At the same time, she makes an effort to understand and retell the story of her ethnic roots and her native country within the framework of Western concepts and expressions, in a Western metaphorical language – when looking for similarities (love as Eros<sup>18</sup>) and Western metonymical expressions, when searching for generalizations. The following line can stand as an example of the latter: "Goethe's violet doesn't arouse any grief, because it can speak German, yet a flower which doesn't know any human language, should be neither stamped on nor cut for the

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<sup>15</sup> Tawada, *Journal des jours...*, p. 38.

<sup>16</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

vase.”<sup>19</sup> Here Tawada associates a silent flower, “which doesn’t know any human language,” with minorities, disregarded for their linguistic illiteracy.

Above all she is Japanese, and this feature will always constitute the core of her identity, no matter how long she remains abroad and embodies Western manners, habits, stereotypes, attitudes or traditions. Her so-called Japaneseness reveals itself in unexpected moments or situations, such as the following:

In Hamburg I realized that I easily become compassionate towards animals, but not towards people. When I saw a drunk woman lying on the floor at the Reeper Station, helping her didn’t even come to my mind. However, there were always one or two passers-by to run and take care of her. Having a guilty conscience, I was looking for the reasons of my behavior. If I help somebody that means that I deny his capacity to help himself.<sup>20</sup>

This attitude stems from the Buddhism Hīnayāna concept of the Small Vehicle (*shōjōbukkō*), as Tawada explains a page earlier, where each individual should find an appropriate path towards illumination for himself only and not for others.

Ultimately, acculturated and socialized in two environments, Japanese and German, Tawada plays the part of a public intellectual through her artistic and academic activity. She is the one who shapes the public discourse and influences perceptions of some phenomena which are constantly occurring around us. By ‘some’, I mean those which oscillate around her areas of interest: language, translation, multicultural encounters and everything related to it. In discussing and describing these issues, Tawada mostly draws on her own experience, thus actively stressing her presence throughout the whole journal.

### **Tawada’s visibility in her *After Fukushima. Journal of Trembling Days***

The journal is written in the first person and collects stories from the Tawada-narrator’s life: “I came to Hamburg to do an internship in the company selling equipment for bars and cafes, Grossohaus Wegner & Co., where I continued working 19 hours per week having begun my studies”.<sup>21</sup> She speaks about her private experiences, emotions and reflections, or the encounters and conversations she had with the people she met while traveling. This is the case with Mr. Bengali in Africa, a young guide, who helped her out when she was visiting Soweto. That is how Tawada’s book complies with the following premise of the autoethnographic method: “autoethnography requires that the researcher be visible, active and reflexively engaged in the text”.<sup>22</sup>

Anderson calls not only for the linguistic visibility of the researcher in the text, but also for a sort of self-analysis of the active impact s/he may have on the field work. By virtue of the dual role, as a subject and object of the study, the narrator should be aware of the changes in the settings, attitudes, behaviors or thoughts of the others observed as well as her/his own, which are triggered by her/his presence, actions, utterances, etc. This requires developed skills of self-reflectivity, which Tawada definitely possesses.

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>20</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>22</sup> Anderson, ‘Analytic Autoethnography’, p. 383.

One day she provokes an argument concerning the language-based division which serves to separate humans from animals, in Tawada's opinion an artificial division. It turns out that an animal cannot have a hand, and if it does then we are automatically transferred to the universe of fairy tales, where animals are personified. That is how Tawada reports her reflection on the whole situation:

It happened to me, when I was still living in Hamburg to hear cultivated Germans using the expression: 'we, long-nosed'. One day, I opposed this manner of speaking: 'It's not possible! Only elephant has a long nose.' I forgot that in the German language an elephant does not have a nose. Still today, I feel psychological difficulty employing words as 'trunk', 'muzzle', 'snout' or 'paw', which give me the impression of separating or to cutting myself off from the animal world. My first pet in Hamburg was a black rat. It had hands and a face. However, I need only to write 'the hand of a rat' to be relegated to a genre of children's literature. How shall I speak about a rat's hand without being banned from the adults' culture?<sup>23</sup>

Another thought-provoking situation takes place at Hamburg University during a seminar by Sigrid Weigel, where the students were discussing the problem of allegoric representations of the female body. "She [the professor] asked me a question which I cannot answer even today: does an analogue phenomenon exist in Japan?"<sup>24</sup> Since she could not think of anything similar in Japanese culture, it came to her mind that actually some Chinese characters which denotes abstract concepts such as 'freedom' (平等, *byōdō*) and their estheticized shape do make her think of a woman representing Freedom.

*After Fukushima. Journal of Trembling Days* is abundant in fragments which prove Tawada's self-reflective as well as self-analytical skills, although I can hardly find any descriptions concerning her influence on the environment she depicts. This is understandable for two reasons: Tawada is not a sociologist, but a writer with a detailed eye for the way we live, use, change and are changed by language. Secondly and consequently, she is not conducting a sociological research; she is not interviewing any respondents from any of the three environments into which I classified her. Therefore Tawada is not seeking feedback from the outside when she enters into contact with the other. Her records and reflections in such cases are one-sided, and exclusively concern either her personal feelings and observations or the reactions of others.

We find more precise studies of the mutual interactions of the two interacting parts, but these fragments of the narration discuss solely historical, objective events extracted from the past, such as the following passage about the changing image of humanity in Japan and the role of translation: "Also today, the activity of the translator is valued higher in Japan than in other countries, probably for the science itself, which emerged along with translation from Chinese and developed with translation from Dutch. A key medical publication, which introduced a new image of the human being in Japan, was translated from Dutch (...)"<sup>25</sup> This book gave the first medical image and insights into the depths of human body, which until that time was considered as a closed entity, described from the

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<sup>23</sup> Tawada, *Journal des jours...*, p. 12.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47

surface by Chinese characters. Dissection was forbidden. A doctor was only allowed to read, press, sting the surface, but never to get inside, to open.

### **What is Tawada's contribution to the theoretical understandings of broader social phenomena?**

Considering the collection of essays by Tawada Yōko as a valuable source of information for sociological study, a written evidence from ethnographic fieldwork, we may claim after Adler and Coffey that the document itself creates the so-called “documentary reality”. The aforementioned sociologists argue that one of the most significant characteristics of how ethnography is conducted nowadays is that literate, contemporary societies produce a large amount of self-reflective documents with the hands of indigenous social actors, documents which “are read, stored and circulate”<sup>26</sup>. These materials, if analyzed through aspects other than their actual content, such as the style, form, purpose or the socio-cultural context in which they have been created, cast light upon a specific reality that emerges accordingly to their existence. In the case of *After Fukushima. Journal of Trembling Days* this reality concerns the author itself, since I suggest that this book should be seen as an example of autoethnographic record. What knowledge do we obtain about the author and the reality that is produced by her literary work, if we approach it from this perspective?

The first important issue that needs to be stressed is the language in which the book was originally written. It is split into two parts: *Trois leçons de poétique* (Three lessons about poetics) and the main *Journal des jours tremblants* (Journal of Trembling Days). The original language of the first part was German, and the second part was written in Japanese. The author explains that the choice of the language was motivated, at least originally, by the addressee of each section. *Trois leçons de poétique* were conceived of as an imaginary conversation with a person from Western culture about the particularity of Japan, while the *Journal des jours tremblants* was addressed more to the Japanese reader.

The closing chapter in the book is entitled *Franchir la barrière de Shirakawa* (*Shirakawa no seki koen to*, Crossing the Shirakawa Barrier), which is a line from the prose and verse travel diary *Oku no hosomichi* (Narrow Road to the Interior)<sup>27</sup>, a major text of classical Japanese literature by the famous *haiku* poet Matsuo Bashō<sup>28</sup>.

The Shirakawa Barrier which the poet wishes to cross is located in Fukushima prefecture and was built around the fifth century to protect civilized Japan from the barbarians to the north. It was considered a gateway to the old Mutsu province, of which Fukushima was a part at that time. It is interesting to notice that the book opens up with an essay where the Tawada-narrator collates Fukushima with Hiroshima. What connects both is the suffix *-shima*, meaning ‘island’, as well as the tremendous human tragedies associated with those locations. Then the author ponders over the dissimilarity in the concept and attitude to the sea as well as the harbor,

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 56.

<sup>27</sup> “Oku no hosomichi” is a poetic travelogue or diary which Bashō wrote on the basis of the journey he took in the late spring of 1689, propelled by the desire to see places praised by the classical poets whom he admired. See Mikołaj Melanowicz, *Literatura japońska, t. 1, Od VI do połowy XIX wieku*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1994.

<sup>28</sup> Bashō Matsuo (1644–1694) the most famous poet of the Edo period in Japan, recognized for his works in the collaborative *haikai no renga* form.

saying that the distance to the sea is bigger in Japan than suggested by both the names referred to above, unlike in Hamburg for example, a city with direct access to the sea. This forms a point of departure for Tawada to enter into a disquisition on differences in mutual perception, the image of the Orient as it was established in Western culture, and vice versa.

A closer insight into the content of the Japanese text will help us understand why this part was initially written in Japanese. In 'Crossing the Shirakawa Barrier' Tawada criticizes Japan's government for its nuclear policy, asking herself how a country having suffered from atomic bombardment (Hiroshima) could purposely expose its citizens to the danger posed by the nuclear plant (Fukushima). This clarifies the previously mentioned collation of both, albeit different, catastrophes. The change of language in this part is justified by the Japanese addressee of this essay. Putting on her national uniform again<sup>29</sup>, the Tawada-narrator gives herself the right to start a critical discussion about Japanese nuclear energy policy. In this essay her voice stands for all the Japanese, who may but tacitly share her opinion. By using her privileged position of a renowned author, Tawada speaks for the anonymous other, the invisible citizen whose voice remains unheard.

The fact that some of her essays initially appeared in the German-speaking press suggests that the author takes a distanced stance, adopts a distanced reflection and looks at the tragedy itself, in which as a German citizen she did not participate directly. Also, the use of German enables her to rationalize the narration, to clean it of emotions, which is crucial since the subject itself is delicate, provocative and prevents easy simplifications. The process of writing and thinking in German requires of Tawada a deep consideration of the words, style and form she selects. The decision to write an essay rather than a work of fiction may have its grounds in the purpose of avoiding *metadiscourse*, universalizing the story that is being told. An essayistic narration is conceived of more as a presentation of one's individual point of view, which does not seek acceptance for its totalizing perspective, but rather invites discussion.

Also, by discussing the tragedy in German Tawada adopts a neutral position, she does not represent the Japanese – neither the victims, nor their insular outlook – and this act opens up her statements for broader debate about the problems she considers in her essays. I have just argued that the essayistic style in which Tawada publicly presents her individual opinions is more convenient for a real debate than the fictional style. On the other hand, the very use of German hinders metaphorical expressions, for there is always a risk of being misunderstood by the German reader. Therefore, Tawada elaborates on the differences between Occident and Orient in the context of the tsunami, earthquake and nuclear accident from March 2011 in a couple of essays written in German, or from a Western perspective. The question remains to what extent somebody who, by their place of birth, initial socialization and mother tongue, represents Oriental culture, is able to take an Occidental position of seeing things. Reading *After Fukushima. Journal of Trembling Days* can be inspiring for a recipient from the Euro-American cultural environment, for it creates a valuable opportunity for a self-reflective look in the 'oriental light'.

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<sup>29</sup> Tawada often uses a metaphor of the tightly fitted costume, when talking about the relation between an individual and her/his mother tongue. See for example: 'Ifuku to shite no nihongo [Japanese as a Costume]', in Yōko Tawada, *Katakoto no uwagoto* [Smattering of Incoherent Muttering], Tōkyō: Seidosha 2007, pp. 109–119.

Given, what has been said so far about the use of German, I would argue that Tawada's goal when writing in German is to sound objective, to bring that discussion about dissimilarities between two civilizations up to an academic/scientific level of universality or objectivity. Expressing her ideas in German deprives Tawada of her victimhood, in other words, this decision allows the author to adopt a neutral position in the discussion of the topics she is considering in the book, one of which is the issue of language as a tool of oppression. Provocatively she raises this problem in the language of the old oppressors, given the Germans' colonial and war history:

In the Japanese empire during the colonial era, Koreans were forced to speak only Japanese. In this sense, I could understand the hatred which Mr. Bengani and the people from his population vowed for the African language. However, it was difficult for me to understand how he could totally separate English from British colonial politics. (...) English managed to avoid being perceived as an incarnation of apartheid.<sup>30</sup>

The last thing I would like to analyze in this essay is Tawada's ability to cast a self-reflective glance on the materials she collects from her specific fieldwork, which is constituted on the one hand by the German/world environment of intercultural interactions, and on the other hand by the space of Japanese public discourse, upon which I will touch in the following paragraph. The moments of self-reflection appear in the text very differently, when the Tawada-narrator claims that she has "realized that a number of (her) prejudices came from the history of Japan".<sup>31</sup> The most important observations with regards to the crisis caused by the triple accidents: the earthquake, the tsunami and the nuclear accident are formulated in the second part of the book, the *Journal des jours tremblants* (Journal of Trembling Days). She records the aftermaths of the catastrophe from her German perspective, offering the Japanese citizen in the first row a reflection on the circumstances they found themselves in this period. If she had not lived far from the country of her origins for such a long time, she would not now be able to make all these remarkable comments on the people's behavior and attitude and the way the politics-driven public discourse exploited it.

Firstly Tawada remarks that the Japanese are trained in certain survival techniques, which are indispensable in a time of crisis:

The moment I find out about a catastrophe, my heart automatically starts beating more slowly, and I become calm as if I had taken a tranquilizer. To survive, it is necessary to avoid panicking (...). It's seemingly in Japan that I learned to unconsciously adopt that attitude as a survival technique. Indeed, people in Japan, after the earthquake, stay calm, patient, affable and obliging (...) with this kind of attitude, one loses her/his critical mind and probably one's political mind likewise.<sup>32</sup>

The very word 'catastrophe' reduces Japanese to that state of calmness and obedience; a calmness which helps them avoid chaotic actions such as protests; an obedience which

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>31</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 93

neutralizes the critical spirit towards the information served by the media, for instance. This poses a risk.

Aware of the manipulative techniques used in the communication process, Tawada observes the work of Japanese media with deep concern. "Once again I have the impression that the Japanese public discourse which takes place in a time of natural catastrophe is strongly manipulated".<sup>33</sup> She is concerned about the way the catastrophe is turned into political propaganda<sup>34</sup> regardless of the dramatic circumstances of the citizens: "Several things struck me. For instance, I didn't understand why they would speak so much about the power cut, as if it were the main problem. I suspected that some people were even taking advantage of this situation to demonstrate the importance of central nuclear plants".<sup>35</sup>

This specific state of emergency, in which people are vulnerable to images and information that they are being fed with by the mass media, served perfectly to change public opinion on Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, which outlaws war as a means to settle international disputes involving the state, and therefore in order to maintain international peace based on justice and order, Japan declared that armed forces<sup>36</sup> with war potential would not be maintained. Tawada notices that Japanese television has used the catastrophe to reinforce the role of the army in public security in the minds of Japanese people by a selection of reports from the site of the catastrophe with soldiers as the main heroes. These types of arguments are the key sociological issues in Tawada's journal, and these phenomena could not have been revealed if not for the writer's work, at least in part.

## Conclusion

Natural catastrophe, and the crisis or chaos it entails, is an event which forces/inspires us to rethink the given world order (the sociological theory of crisis, conflict and change, from Comte, Durkheim, Dahrendorf, Merton, Giddens). In my essay I have attempted to show how by applying the method of analytic autoethnography, a sociologist can approach a literary work as valuable fieldwork material. Autoethnography determines three conditions for data to be considered an autoethnographic analysis. Firstly, the researcher must be a full member in the research group or setting; secondly, s/he should be visible as such a member in the researcher's published text; and ultimately the results of the analysis should fulfill the condition of commitment to an analytic research agenda focused on improving theoretical understandings of broader social phenomena.

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p. 94.

<sup>34</sup> The problem of Japanese mass media manipulating reports on Fukushima-related information in favor of the politicians requires deeper investigation, and goes far beyond the main topic of this essay. Here, just to sketch the background for Tawada's deliberations on this issue, I shall mention that this problem was discussed by European media (BBC, *The Economist*) as well as the Japan Times among others. See for example 'Secrecy and Lies', *The Economist*: <http://www.economist.com/news/asia/21588140-tough-new-law-secrecy-has-suddenly-become-controversial-secrecy-and-lies> (accessed 25.03.2014).

<sup>35</sup> Tawada, *Journal des jours...*, p. 92.

<sup>36</sup> Japan *de facto* maintains armed forces, referred to as the Japan Self-Defense Forces, which are supposed to be a kind of extension of the security police. The need to create a regular forced army has been the subject of vigorous debate over the last two decades.

I have argued that Tawada's membership in the setting of her study is constituted around three aspects: her Japanese nationality, which gives her the right to voice the interests of the mostly voiceless community of her compatriots. Secondly, as an artist re-aculturated in a European environment, living and writing in Germany, Tawada has learned the occidental perspective of perception. Lastly, thanks to her works, she enjoys the status of a renowned writer, a public intellectual whose voice forms a part of public discourse – a discourse which contradicts the official Japanese media.

The questions she considers in *After Fukushima. Journal of Trembling Days* concern such issues as the inequality of cultural encounters, which are usually related to power relations, and which is strongly related to the way we use/manipulate languages as well as the manner of communication. As a Japanese she turns an ethnographic eye onto pursuing sociological involvement into the political circumstances of the catastrophe. She expresses the feelings and emotions of other members of the Japanese community, with whom she shares the aftermaths of the tragic experience, bringing to light the fact that the state uses the media for their own purposes and interests. The reality is adjusted to the officially approved version of the situation of the possible radioactive risks. Inconvenient information is swept under the carpet at the cost of civilian safety. Her far-fetched analysis and reasoning demonstrate that deeply individual and self-analytical ethnography can rise above idiographic particularity to address broader theoretical issue. However, be that as it may, we should keep in mind that this book was not intended as sociological research, and the range of its argument is limited to the reflections and reality presented in this collection of essays.

FORUM MITHANI

## New Heroines for a New Era? Single Mothers in Contemporary Japanese Television Drama

### Abstract

The figure of the single mother has played an important role in Japanese television drama over several decades. In the 1960s and 1970s, the figure of the single mother was often used to uphold traditional, patriarchal notions of family and gender, which stressed the importance of the mother's role in childrearing and running the household, and limited the role of women to the domestic sphere. However, as female participation in all areas of society has increased, and women have begun to question the assumption that marriage and motherhood are an essential part of their lives, so Japanese television drama has responded, reflecting and sometimes anticipating these changes. Today, single mothers in Japanese television dramas are actively rejecting patriarchal structures by forming women-only support networks or forging new identities as independent career women. However, very little academic attention has been paid to these representations. This paper hopes to make a small contribution towards rectifying this situation by analyzing the representations of single motherhood in contemporary television drama.

In her study of unmarried mothers in contemporary Japan, Ekaterina Hertog notes the considerable media attention single (in particular, unmarried) motherhood receives in Japan, considering it is still a relatively rare phenomenon.<sup>1</sup> Mother-and-child households (*boshi setai*) made up only 2 per cent of all Japanese households in 2011.<sup>2</sup> Yet the media is awash with stories of single mothers. In 2011 alone, the *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper and its affiliated publications ran 196 articles referencing 'single mothers' (*shinguru mazā*) or 'single-mother households' (*boshi-setai* or *boshi-katei*).<sup>3</sup> The topic has been particularly popular in television drama, with a wave of dramas featuring single mothers in recent years. In the last ten years, dramas such as *Ashita Tenki ni Naare* (Hoping for Good Weather Tomorrow), *Roomshare no Onna* (Roomshare Woman), *87%*, *14-Sai no Haha* (14-Year-Old Mother), *Konkatsu Rikatsu* (Seeking Marriage, Seeking Divorce), *Mother*, *Magerarenai Onna* (The

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<sup>1</sup> Ekaterina Hertog, *Tough Choices: Bearing an Illegitimate Child in Contemporary Japan*, Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2009, pp. 1–2.

<sup>2</sup> Data collated from: *Heisei 23-Nendo Zenkoku Boshi Setai Tō Chōsa* [National Survey on Single-Mother and Other Households, 2011]: [http://www.mhlw.go.jp/seisakunitsuite/bunya/kodomo/kodomo\\_kosodate/boshi-katei/boshi-setai\\_h23/](http://www.mhlw.go.jp/seisakunitsuite/bunya/kodomo/kodomo_kosodate/boshi-katei/boshi-setai_h23/) and *Heisei 22-Nen Kokusei Chōsa* [National Census, 2010]: <http://www.stat.go.jp/data/kokusei/2010/kihon1/pdf/gaiyou1.pdf> (accessed 23.08.2013).

<sup>3</sup> Kikuzo II Visual database: [www.database.asahi.com/library2e/](http://www.database.asahi.com/library2e/) (accessed 23.08.2013).

Unbending Woman), *Dirty Mama* and *Single Mothers* have all featured single mothers in main roles.

Hertog suggests the main reasons for the low rates of single motherhood in Japan lie in the widespread support for the 'two-parent ideal' and the perception that single motherhood has negative repercussions on children.<sup>4</sup> Recent surveys seem to support this view; according to the 2005 World Values Survey, 89 per cent of Japanese respondents agreed that "a child needs a home with both a father and a mother to grow up happily".<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, more Japanese disapproved than approved of single motherhood (36 per cent versus 23 per cent) and appeared to support marriage; over 94 per cent disagreed with idea that "marriage is an outdated institution".<sup>6</sup>

Hertog suggests this negative perception of single motherhood is reinforced by negative representations of single mothers found in the media.<sup>7</sup> In particular, she describes the way in which the situation of single-mother characters in three dramas was depicted as "far from acceptable".<sup>8</sup> Certainly, the theme of single motherhood offers the potential for melodrama and tragedy, with many obstacles for the heroine to overcome, and creators of television drama have often exploited it to inject drama into the narrative arch of a storyline. Indeed, the single mother could be seen as the ideal heroine for creators and viewers of television drama. According to Ota Toru, a well-known producer of popular 'trendy' dramas, "women are hypersensitive in a negative way toward other women who are too dependent on men... So it is important that the heroine stand on her own. She must bear her solitude and not ask men for help".<sup>9</sup>

However, that is not to say that all representations of single motherhood are uniformly negative. The representations of single motherhood, and indeed of all women in Japanese television drama, has evolved significantly over recent decades. During the golden era of television drama in the 1960s and 1970s, single mothers were usually strong, reliable and cheerful characters who devoted their lives to home and family and ultimately reinforced patriarchal concepts regarding gender and family. This reflected the position of women in real-life Japanese society, which idealized the image of the housewife and mother, lovingly nurturing her children and supporting her corporate warrior husband.<sup>10</sup> However, in recent years, the representation of single mothers in contemporary Japan has become more diversified, again reflecting the changes in real-life society which have seen growing numbers of women reject the 'professional housewife' ideal. Single mothers in contemporary Japanese drama are no longer content to stay at home, but are extending their influence to traditionally male-dominated spheres of influence, such as law and politics. Furthermore, they are challenging traditional structures of marriage and family by creating their own

<sup>4</sup> Hertog, *Tough Choice*..., pp. 127–150.

<sup>5</sup> World Values Survey: [www.worldvaluessurvey.org](http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org) (accessed 20.08.2013).

<sup>6</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>7</sup> Hertog, *Tough Choices*..., pp. 100–103.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 132.

<sup>9</sup> Ōta Tōru, 'Producing (Post-) Trending Japanese TV Dramas', in *Feeling Asian Modernities: Transnational Consumption of Japanese TV Dramas*, Kōichi Iwabuchi (ed.), Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2004, pp. 69–86.

<sup>10</sup> Emiko Ochiai, *The Japanese Family System in Transition: A Sociological Analysis of Family Change in Postwar Japan*, Tokyo: LTCB International Library Foundation, 1997, p. 50.

women-only support networks, or choosing independence. Further, many single mothers in television drama lead happy, successful lives bringing up contented, wellcared-for children.

The theme of single motherhood has clearly captured the imagination of both producers and consumers of a variety of different media in Japan. However, these media representations have received little academic attention. This paper will attempt to make a small contribution to this much neglected field of study by offering an analysis of representations of single mothers in television dramas produced and broadcast during the last ten years. This analysis is by no means exhaustive; limits of space and time mean I cannot analyze every single television drama featuring a single mother during this period. Some form of television drama is shown every day on Japanese television channels, occupying many hours of daytime and evening programming every week. Further, it comes in a variety of forms, including the serial (*renzoku*) drama, usually comprising 10–12 weekly, one-hour episodes, and the one-off (*tanpatsu*), feature-length drama. NHK's daily, morning drama (*asadora*) is a genre in itself that deserves much more attention than I could accord it. For the purposes of this paper, I will concentrate on only a few, serial dramas broadcast during evening schedule slots over the last ten years. By offering an analysis of selected representations in relevant dramas, I hope to demonstrate how the representation of single motherhood can be used to support or challenge traditional notions of marriage and family. However, before I discuss specific dramas, it would be useful to touch on the power of such representations to influence viewers.

### The power of television drama

During the autumn of 2006, the television drama series *14-Sai no Haha* (14-Year-Old Mother) caused a huge stir in the Japanese media and the wider public. The drama courted controversy with its shocking storyline of a junior high school student who becomes pregnant and gives birth at the tender age of 14. It was very popular with viewers, achieving ratings of more than 20 per cent, and many column inches were devoted to its subject matter in newspapers and magazines.<sup>11</sup> On the one hand, in a survey of parents, it came second highest in a list of programmes they were least willing to let their junior high school children watch. On the other, it won the top TV drama award from the National Association of Commercial Broadcasters in Japan in 2007 for its 'realistic' portrayal of an ordinary family.<sup>12</sup> The debate continued among the many viewers who took to the official online bulletin board system (BBS) to air their views. While some (mostly teenaged) viewers applauded the central protagonist, 14-year-old Miki, claiming her to be admirable, others (mostly mothers over 30) criticized the drama for 'glorifying' teenage sex and pregnancy, while ignoring the realities of single motherhood.<sup>13</sup> While this drama managed to polarize public opinion, undeniably parents, broadcasters and ordinary viewers on all sides of the debate were united in recognizing the power such fictional representations have on social perceptions of single motherhood and family.

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<sup>11</sup> 'Gōruden kara bunsan' (From Golden Era to Dispersion), *Asahi Shimbun*, 20 November 2006, evening edition, available at Kikuzou II Visual database (accessed 20.08.2013).

<sup>12</sup> Hertog, *Tough Choices*..., p. 1.

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.ntv.co.jp/14/bbs1/board0.html> (accessed 28.06.2013).

Television has become a universal medium. Viewing rates are particularly high in Japan, where a survey carried out in 2010 found that it was the most widely accessed form of media, regardless of age, with 92 per cent of respondents saying they watched television every day. Television drama is particularly popular in Japan; some 43 per cent of respondents said they watched some drama, making it the third most frequently watched category of programming, after news shows and weather forecasts. Furthermore, over 90 per cent of respondents felt that television had some influence on society, and more than 60 per cent believed that television influenced themselves as individuals.<sup>14</sup>

As a medium that is mostly received in the home, it is not surprising that television's greatest influence has been on the family. Television played an important role in creating a model of the ideal family in post-war Japan and was particularly influential over women, who turned it into a "virtual electronic community of housewives".<sup>15</sup> This influence can still be seen today; Susan Holloway's study of mothers living in the Kansai area found that positive representations of mothers on television, such as the protagonist of the immensely popular 1980s drama *Oshin*, served as a model of ideal motherhood to which some women aspired.<sup>16</sup>

Furthermore, the repetition of dominant media representations have the power not only to influence one's perceptions of others, but also one's perception of oneself. In her essays on gender, Teresa de Lauretis explains that the production and reproduction of dominant representations through various 'technologies' (in this case, television) produces a cultural order shared by the members of that culture. The repeated performance of these representations reinforces certain codes of conduct and belief, to the extent that these representations are accepted by members of society as self-representations, thus eventually becoming self-representations.<sup>17</sup> Ekaterina Hertog's study of unmarried mothers in contemporary Japan found that some of the mothers she interviewed related their negative perceptions of single motherhood to the negative representations they had seen in television dramas.<sup>18</sup> Some continued to hold on to this negative perception of themselves as 'bad mothers', even when the evidence appeared to show they were negotiating their roles as mothers successfully and their children were experiencing no obvious ill-effects.<sup>19</sup>

Scholars working in the field of television studies relate the medium's power of influence to its closeness to 'reality'. John Fiske and John Hartley argue that because it is a more conventional medium than other forms of culture and its codes relate more closely to reality, the boundary between television and reality is difficult to define.<sup>20</sup> This observation

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<sup>14</sup> Hirata Akihiro, Morofuji Emi and Aramaki Hiroshi, 'Television Viewing and Media Use Today: From 'The Japanese and Television 2010' Survey', in *NHK Broadcasting Studies*, Tokyo: NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute, No. 9, 2011, pp. 1–46.

<sup>15</sup> Jayson Makoto Chun, *'A Nation of a Hundred Million Idiots?': A Social History of Japanese Television, 1953–73*, New York: Routledge, 2006, p. 93.

<sup>16</sup> Susan D. Holloway, *Women and Family in Contemporary Japan*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, p. 48.

<sup>17</sup> Teresa de Lauretis, *Technologies of Gender: Essays on Theory, Film and Fiction*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989, p. 12.

<sup>18</sup> Hertog, *Tough Choices...*, p. 68.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 127–150.

<sup>20</sup> J. Fiske and J. Hartley, *Reading Television*, London: Routledge, 2003, p. 47.

is not limited to 'factual' media, but also relates to fictional narratives, such as those offered in television drama. As James Monaco has argued, "no matter how apolitical the work of art may seem, every work has political relevance".<sup>21</sup> Creators of drama are well aware of the power of their works on the perceptions of viewers. Award-winning screenwriter Okada Yoshikazu describes the power of television drama as "immeasurable".<sup>22</sup> In a discussion on 'occupational dramas' (such as those set in a hospital or a police station), he elaborates: "In reality, 'occupational dramas' have a tremendous power of influence on society. It is not a demand for reality. (Viewers) believe the drama is real. This is because we do not know what police rooms look like. We do not know how investigations are conducted... That is why we end up believing what is depicted in television dramas... Of course, we realize that it is the world of television drama, however, because in practical terms we do not have any other image, at some point, the image in our heads becomes the world inside the drama".<sup>23</sup> Of course, as Fiske and Hartley rightly point out, this reality is not natural but a constructed version of reality.<sup>24</sup>

Recognizing the power of the medium, many creators of television drama actively seek to educate and influence viewers. In the NHK drama *Single Mothers*, the creators use a fictionalized story to educate viewers about the real-life struggle of single mothers' advocacy groups against an attempt by the government to curb welfare payments. The drama even features helpful text boxes that appear on screen to explain terms such as 'domestic violence' to viewers. On the official website for NTV drama *Dirty Mama!*, the creators of the drama claim that the main protagonist Maruoka Takako is "sending a rude yell to all those women looking for happiness. Telling them they should stand on their own two feet...".<sup>25</sup>

Furthermore, some television dramas aim to go beyond the representation of a version of 'reality'. In her study of television drama from the mid-1990s, Hilaria Gössman noted the emergence of dramas featuring fathers taking on the role of primary carer, a phenomenon which was (and continues to be) a rarity in real-life Japan. She viewed this as an attempt by creators of drama to sow the "seeds of future trends and conceptualizations of gender roles".<sup>26</sup> Thus, television drama does not simply aim to entertain, but also to educate, stimulate debate and legitimize social change.

But if creators of media, such as television drama, have the power to influence, we must not forget that they, and the messages they create, are themselves influenced by various internal and external factors. Creators of media do not exist in a vacuum; they are fellow members of society, susceptible to the same influences and pressures, be they political, cultural, ideological, social or commercial, as everyone else. Their productions are informed by their life experiences and daily interactions with the outside world. As Fiske and Hartley (and Stuart Hall before

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<sup>21</sup> James Monaco, *How to Read a Film: Movies, Media, Multimedia*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 34.

<sup>22</sup> Okada Yoshikazu, *TV Dorama Ga Suki Datta* [I Used to Love TV Dramas], Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2005, p. 73. All translations from the original Japanese are my own.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117.

<sup>24</sup> Fiske and Hartley, *Reading Television...*, p. 129.

<sup>25</sup> *Dirty Mama!*: <http://www.ntv.co.jp/dirtymama/intro/index.html> (accessed 20.08.2013).

<sup>26</sup> Gössmann, 'New Role Models for Men and Women? Gender in Japanese TV Dramas', in *Japan Pop! Inside the World of Japanese Popular Culture*, Timothy J. Craig (ed.), New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2000, pp. 207–221.

them) have argued, the people who are responsible for the ‘production’ of media messages only mediate but do not originate them.<sup>27</sup> As Okada puts it, television drama is “a mirror that reflects that period of time, whether the creators of the drama are aware of this or not. This includes dramas that don’t aim to depict the ‘present’. Even in these dramas, you will always find signs of that particular era. The atmosphere of the era has been sealed into it”.<sup>28</sup>

However, in spite of the widespread recognition of television drama’s important role in reflecting current trends and influencing opinion on a social and individual level, there has been little academic focus on it. Most research has focused on genres and made generalizations based on quantitative studies, playing little attention to the content and narrative of specific programs. There has been criticism of this approach. Katja Valaskivi appreciates the need for more textual analysis of television drama, blaming the lack of such attention on a general perception that television content is simply not thought of as worthy of qualitative analysis.<sup>29</sup> In her essay on soap operas, the close American relative of the Japanese television drama, Tania Modleski suggests the disrespect often paid to the genre is connected to its perception as a ‘feminine’ text. Conversely, Modleski believes, the femininity of the soap opera should be celebrated, rather than denigrated or ignored, as the genre offers an alternative narrative of pleasure to the dominant (masculine) narrative. Furthermore, she rejects the notion that it is not as worthy as other forms of art, suggesting “soap operas may be in the vanguard not just of TV art, but of all popular narrative art”.<sup>30</sup>

Research on representation of women and gender in Japanese television drama is still a small field. There have been some notable studies carried out by Muramatsu Yasuko on female representation in 1970s and 1980s drama. Hilaria Gössmann has looked at the issue of gender in television dramas of the mid-1990s. In addition, Katja Valaskivi and Andrew Painter have offered analyses of two home dramas from the 1990s, both of which focused on the relationships between mother-in-laws and daughter-in-laws. However, there has been very little research on the representation of women in television drama from 2000 onwards. Considering the significant social and demographic changes that Japan has encountered since then, a re-examination of female representation in contemporary television drama seems long overdue. In this paper, I hope to contribute to the debate regarding women in Japanese television drama by focusing on the representation of single mothers in evening, serial dramas from 2003–2012. First, however, it would be useful to look at the representation of women and family in Japanese television drama up to this period.

### **Women and family in Japanese television drama from the 1970s to 2000**

The current boom in Japanese television dramas featuring single mothers in central roles is not entirely without precedent. In fact, the single mother was often a staple character of the home dramas (*hōmu dorama*) of the 1960s and 1970s. In her ground-breaking study

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<sup>27</sup> J. Fiske and J. Hartley, *Reading Television*, p. 62. Stuart Hall, ‘Encoding/Decoding’, in *Culture, Media, Language: Working Papers in Cultural Studies, 1972–79*, S. Hall et al (eds.), London: Hutchinson, 1980, pp. 107–116.

<sup>28</sup> Okada, *TV Dorama...*, p. 3.

<sup>29</sup> Katja Valaskivi, *Wataru Seken Wa Oni Bakari: Mothers-in-law and Daughters-in-law in a Japanese Television Drama*, Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä, 1995.

<sup>30</sup> Tania Modleski, *Loving with a Vengeance: Mass-Produced Fantasies for Women*, New York: Routledge, 1990, p. 87.

of female characterizations in dramas from the mid-1970s, Muramatsu Yasuko identified a particular character type, the ‘reliable mother’ (*tanomoshii haha*), which (with some exceptions) epitomized the depiction of women in these types of dramas.<sup>31</sup>

As the term suggests, home dramas revolved largely around daily, family life within the household. The main characters of home dramas almost always lived with other family members and were depicted in terms of their relationships to others, i.e. wife, husband, mother, father, daughter, son etc. These dramas tended to be upbeat, with characters that were mostly satisfied with their lot and led happy lives. Typical examples include *Kimottama kāsān* (Gutsy Mother, 1968–72) and *Arigatō* (Thank You, 1970–5).

Often single, due to circumstances beyond their control (the death of the husband etc.) rather than by choice, the ‘reliable mother’ was robust, assertive and independent. Even serious problems did not seem to affect her enthusiasm for everyday life. At the same time, she put others’ needs before her own. Not only could she be relied on by members of her own family, she often also came to the rescue of others within the community. She was a kind, wise, motherly figure, who took satisfaction in protectively watching over others. ‘Reliable mothers’ tended to be employed in the service industries, working as hairdressers or running small eateries, where they could be their own boss. However, their power was usually confined to the context of the home and the local community. While offering a positive representation of the single mother that appeared to challenge the two-parent ideal, the ‘reliable mother’ also reinforced the notion that a woman’s identity as a mother should be prioritized over her identity as a woman.<sup>32</sup>

These women contrasted with the ‘suffering woman’ (*taeru onna*), a character type identified by Muramatsu as the staple character of dramatic dramas from the same period. Characters appearing in these dramas were usually not as happy, and women were comparatively unhappier than men. Dramatic dramas were not as bound to the household as home dramas, and often featured characters that lived alone or had few family ties, leading to situations where single female characters often had no one to turn to in times of despair. One example of this type of drama was *Ju-hyō* (Tree Frost, 1974–5). Unlike the ‘reliable mother’, the ‘suffering woman’ was timid and weak, did not take an assertive role in deciding the course of her life, easily gave in to men and usually suffered in silence. Some women of this type were victims of domestic violence, others were single women who on the face of it were leading modern, successful lives in high-status occupations, but underneath retained a feminine vulnerability.<sup>33</sup>

The combination of these two types of representations served to reinforce conservative, patriarchal notions regarding gender roles and the status of women in society. Muramatsu concluded: “(These dramas) seem to be saying that, as long as women limit their stage to the narrow world of the household and daily life, they will be happy and secure, as they only have the power to take on this world. On the other hand, if they venture into the outside world, they are always powerless and weak”.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Muramatsu Yasuko, *Terebi Dorama no Joseigaku* [Women’s Studies in Television Drama], Tokyo: Soutakusha, 1979.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 150–151.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 163

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 144

By the late 1970s, the idealized world of television drama began to catch up with the realities of life for the modern Japanese housewife. As the first drama to portray a housewife who has an extra-marital affair, *Kishibe no arubamu* (Photo Album on the Shore, 1977) suggested that home life might not be as idyllic as it seemed.<sup>35</sup> The 1980s saw a progressive change in gendered representations within Japanese television drama, with many dramas taking a critical position toward the idealized roles of wife and mother. Storylines featuring unhappy housewives venturing outside the home and into the workplace were commonplace. An NHK-sponsored study comparing evening dramas from 1974 and 1984 found there had been a shift away from nostalgia for three-generation families and warm community ties to an emphasis on friendship outside of the family. New dramas focused on the baby-boom generation and depicted women who did not sacrifice themselves for others but showed a strong sense of self-regard. By 1984, more dramas portrayed female characters questioning their current or future way of life – women deciding between career and family, or housewives seeking a new sense of purpose.<sup>36</sup> Hilaria Gössmann links these changes to Japan's rising divorce rate, evidence that women were no longer content with traditional notions of marriage and family.<sup>37</sup>

However, despite these changes in the portrayal of female characters, many traditional gender role stereotypes still remained. According to the NHK study, the number of female characters employed outside the home actually decreased from 63% in 1974 to 51% in 1984, in contrast to the changes in actual society. Therefore, 1984 dramas showed a disproportionate number of full-time housewives.<sup>38</sup> Working scenes were far more frequent for men than for women – 26 per cent versus 14 per cent – and far fewer men than women were depicted doing housework, proving that the traditional, gendered division of labor still existed in dramas.<sup>39</sup> In historical, action, mystery and detective dramas, men far outnumbered women, who tended to play 'accessory or decorative roles', often in the bedroom.<sup>40</sup> While female protagonists in the later dramas tended to be more modern and independent than their 1970s counterparts, they were still more likely to be emotional and family-oriented than men.<sup>41</sup> Muramatsu offered a negative assessment of the overall picture, arguing "we still find deep-rooted preconceptions of the role pattern of a dominant male and a subservient female, and the male-oriented view that women are only valuable as young and beautiful objects".<sup>42</sup>

The 1990s represented a sea change in Japanese television drama. The economic bubble had finally burst, and dramas depicting middle-class wealth and luxury were no longer seen

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<sup>35</sup> Gössmann, 'New Role Models...', pp. 207–221.

<sup>36</sup> Tetsuo Makita and Yasuko Muramatsu, 'Changing Themes and Gender Images in Japanese TV Dramas, 1974–1984', in *Studies of Broadcasting*, Tokyo: Theoretical Research Center, Radio & TV Culture Research Institute, Nippon Hoso Kyokai, No. 23, 1987, pp. 51–72.

<sup>37</sup> Gössmann, 'New Role Models...'.

<sup>38</sup> Makita and Muramatsu, 'Changing Themes and Gender Images...'.

<sup>39</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>40</sup> Yasuko Muramatsu, 'Of Women by Women for Women: Japanese Media Today', in *Studies of Broadcasting*, Tokyo: Theoretical Research Center, Radio & TV Culture Research Institute, Nippon Hoso Kyokai, No. 26, 1990, pp. 83–104.

<sup>41</sup> Makita and Muramatsu, 'Changing Themes and Gender Images...'.

<sup>42</sup> Muramatsu, 'Of Women by Women for Women...'.

to represent real-life society. As the popularity of the genre waned, television producers looked for new ideas and dramas with unusual storylines or characters pursuing alternative lifestyles emerged. The drama *Wagamama na onnatachi* (Selfish Women, 1992), celebrated the ‘selfishness’ of women daring to challenge social convention by pursuing careers, divorce and single-motherhood.<sup>43</sup> Even the home drama genre, while continuing to emphasize the importance of family, offered some criticism of the traditional gender system.<sup>44</sup> While the two-parent ideal remained largely unchallenged, television drama became more concerned with dismantling gender stereotypes and renegotiating the division of labor within the household. Dramas from the mid-1990s began to depict mothers returning to the workplace and fathers assuming childcare duties.<sup>45</sup> However, by the turn of the twenty-first century, more dramas featuring unorthodox family structures began to emerge. Kelly Hu’s analysis of three dramas from this period found that the idea that traditional marriage and family automatically led to happiness were being questioned, and alternative structures such as the ‘unmarried family’ were being promoted as an “ideal alternative to the inflexibility and suppression of a modern family”.<sup>46</sup>

As we have seen, the representation of women in Japanese television dramas from the 1960s through to the 1980s tended to conform to the traditional notions of gender in a society that continued to emphasize and prioritize the importance of women within the home over their contribution in public spheres of influence, such as the workplace. The narrative of the two-parent ideal remained largely unchallenged during this period. However, the 1990s saw increasing diversity in the representations of gender, with both men and women playing against stereotypes. Towards the end of the century, television drama featuring unconventional families also began to emerge, suggesting the possibility that the narrative of the two-parent ideal, which has held such strong sway over modern Japanese society, might finally be challenged. Since the advent of the twenty-first century, the concept of ‘family’ has continued to occupy a central place in Japanese television drama and again, the figure of the single mother has played a significant role in how this concept has been renegotiated. In the following sections, I offer a textual analysis of several recent dramas featuring single mothers which have aired during the last ten years. My aim is to demonstrate how the character of the single mother has been used in different ways to either support or challenge traditional notions regarding marriage, family and motherhood.

### **A return to idealized heroines and traditional, family values: *14-Year-Old Mother***

The beginning of the twenty-first century was a time of general malaise in Japanese society. The country had entered its second decade of economic woes, burdened by a rapidly ageing population, exacerbated by a declining birth rate that reached a low of 1.26

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<sup>43</sup> Andrew A. Painter, ‘The Telerepresentation of Gender in Japan’, in *Re-Imaging Japanese Women*, Anne E. Imamura (ed.), Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996, pp. 47–72.

<sup>44</sup> Valaskivi, *Wataru Seken...*

<sup>45</sup> Gössmann, ‘New Role Models...’.

<sup>46</sup> Kelly Hu, ‘Can’t Live without Happiness: Reflexivity and Japanese TV Drama’, in *Television, Japan, and Globalization*, Mitsuhiro Yoshimoto, Eva Tsai and JungBong Choi (eds.), Ann Arbor, MI: Center for Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan, 2010, p. 203.

in 2005.<sup>47</sup> Lawmakers feared they had gone too far in encouraging women into the workplace, as more chose to delay or reject marriage and family.<sup>48</sup> At the same time, horror stories in the media of mothers who abused, abandoned or even murdered children were becoming more frequent, leading social commentators to wonder whether Japanese women had lost their 'natural' maternal instinct.<sup>49</sup>

In television drama, the renegotiation of gender roles continued, both in the home and in the workplace. However, there was also a return to traditional family values, a concept that many felt had disappeared in modern Japanese society. The 2004 drama *At Home Dad*<sup>50</sup> aimed to challenge traditional ideas on the gendered division of labor by depicting families in which the fathers are responsible for housework and childcare while the mothers are the main breadwinners. However, it essentially promoted the message that cooperation and partnership between *two* parents was necessary for a harmonious family life. Both the main protagonist, a father in his thirties who has just been made redundant, and his wife, who has returned to the workplace after several years as a housewife, face many obstacles in their respective spheres of influence, which are usually only resolved through the assistance of others, usually family or members of the local community. There is a strong implication in the drama that in families where there is no cooperation between parents (such as single-mother households), raising a child is more difficult and leads to instability and discord within the family. Further, single-motherhood is seen as something shameful and to be pitied. A supporting character is so embarrassed at having been abandoned by her husband for another woman that she creates the façade of being the perfect mother and having the perfect home life; whenever anyone asks about her husband, she claims he is away on business. In her zeal to portray the perfect image of a diligent housewife and devoted mother, she comes across as overbearing and critical, and many of the other characters become wary of her. Unfortunately, her lies are exposed in a humiliating fashion, when her husband fails to turn up for an important family event. While the tone of the drama is sympathetic, the message seems to be that the two-parent family is ideal, and a woman left to bring up a child on her own should be pitied rather than admired.

This message is reinforced in the highly controversial yet popular drama *14-Year-Old Mother* (2006). With its attention-grabbing title, which recalled a similar storyline in the first series of the popular, school drama, *Kinpachi Sensei* (*Sannen B-gumi Kinpachi sensei*, 1979–80), *14-Year-Old Mother* seemed to offer the promise of a radically progressive view

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<sup>47</sup> Total number of births per woman aged 15–49 in 2005 according to the *Heisei 18-nen jinko dotai chosa* [A Survey of Population Trends, 2006]: <http://www.mhlw.go.jp/toukei/saikin/hw/jinkou/kakutei06/hyo5.html> (accessed 25.06.2013).

<sup>48</sup> To cite one of many examples, in 2002, Diet member Matsuzaki Kimiaki complained that feminism had gone too far in promoting work over motherhood: [http://kokkai.ndl.go.jp/cgi-bin/KENSAKU/swk\\_dispdoc.cgi?SESSION=13976&SAVED\\_RID=3&PAGE=0&POS=0&TOTAL=0&SRV\\_ID=8&DOC\\_ID=5877&DPAGE=1&DTOTAL=1&DPOS=1&SORT\\_DIR=1&SORT\\_TYPE=0&MODE=1&DMY=22376](http://kokkai.ndl.go.jp/cgi-bin/KENSAKU/swk_dispdoc.cgi?SESSION=13976&SAVED_RID=3&PAGE=0&POS=0&TOTAL=0&SRV_ID=8&DOC_ID=5877&DPAGE=1&DTOTAL=1&DPOS=1&SORT_DIR=1&SORT_TYPE=0&MODE=1&DMY=22376) (accessed 28.06.2013).

<sup>49</sup> Articles linking child abuse to the loss of maternal instinct include: 'Ikuji wo houki suru hahatachi: issai no joji ga gashi' [Mothers Who Abandon Childrearing: 1-year-old Girl Starves to Death], AERA, May 31, 1999, available from Kikuzou II Visual database (accessed 28.06.2013).

<sup>50</sup> *At Home Dad* aired on Fuji TV from April–June 2004 in 10 parts, followed by a 1"-hour special in September 2004: [http://www.fujitv.co.jp/b\\_hp/dad/](http://www.fujitv.co.jp/b_hp/dad/) (accessed 20.08.2013).

of teenage sex and single motherhood. However, compared with *Kinpachi Sensei*, which was seen as radical in its day, *14-Year-Old Mother* was fairly conservative and did little to challenge patriarchal notions of family and gender stereotype.

The first series of *Kinpachi Sensei*<sup>51</sup> featured a storyline under the title “15-Year-Old Mother” (note the similarity to the title of the 2006 drama) about a junior high school student who becomes pregnant by a classmate and eventually decides to proceed with the pregnancy and raise the child herself, despite parental opposition. She is supported by her teacher, the eponymous hero Kinpachi Sensei, but her father, a strict authoritarian with extremely conservative views, cannot accept his daughter’s digression and cuts all ties with her and his grandchild. The domineering patriarch is eventually overruled by his formerly submissive wife following the death of their son, who committed suicide after learning he had failed to gain entrance to a prestigious university, contrary to the father’s high expectations. In his attempt to wield ultimate authority and preserve the reputation of the family, the father has in fact broken the family apart. It is up to the mother to rebuild the family by accepting her daughter and grandchild back into the household. In its opening series, this drama managed to tackle several controversial themes, including teenage sex, pregnancy, Japan’s pressure-cooker education system and the challenging of patriarchal authority.

*14-Year-Old Mother*, on the other hand, does very little to challenge conservative views of family and motherhood. Although this drama appears on the surface to be offering a rather radical perspective on motherhood in its positive representation of a teenage, unmarried mother, in fact, its overall message seems to support the traditional, two-parent family norm. Further, its idealization of motherhood as a ‘natural’ experience that enables a young girl to mature to womanhood, and its promotion of the concept that even a young girl can possess an innate maternal instinct, supports the patriarchal stereotype that confines a woman’s role to the domestic sphere.

*14-Year-Old Mother*, an 11-part series, was broadcast on NTV on Wednesday nights from October to December 2006.<sup>52</sup> The protagonist, Miki,<sup>53</sup> a 14-year-old student at an exclusive private girls’ junior high school, is portrayed as the ideal daughter of a typical, suburban, middle-class family. She is good-natured, spirited and full of hope. She uses her school radio show to impart inspirational messages to her peers every morning and, in the opening episode, she falls into a river attempting to rescue a puppy. The opening credits of the drama show a bright, blue, cloudless sky and there are several scenes of Miki looking up at such a sky throughout the series, presumably meant to evoke feelings of hope and optimism. She even names her daughter Sora, or sky. Miki is a ‘good’, innocent girl, whose one lapse, becoming pregnant at 14, happens as a result of the first (and only) time she has sex with her 15-year-old boyfriend, Satoshi. Of course, the act itself is never shown, but the circumstances leading to it are portrayed in a dramatic, romanticized way; they are not two hormone-driven teenagers but a couple in love, who are helplessly drawn to each other.

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<sup>51</sup> The first series of *Kinpachi Sensei* aired on TBS from October 1979 to March 1980 in 23 parts. There have been eight series (and 11 specials) in total, the final episode airing in 2011: <http://www.tbs.co.jp/kinpachi/> (accessed 20.06.2013).

<sup>52</sup> *14-Year-Old Mother* official website: <http://www.ntv.co.jp/14/> (accessed 20.08.2013).

<sup>53</sup> In this paper, I refer to characters by the names they are most commonly referred to within the drama they appear in.

In the depiction of Miki, we can see a very traditional stereotype of gender roles being promoted. There is a strong suggestion in the drama that women should take the primary role in raising a child. Miki regards raising her child to be her responsibility alone. Even though still a child herself, she believes it is her duty, as the mother, to care for her child and asks nothing from the father of the baby. In the mold of many television drama heroines (see *Oshin*)<sup>54</sup> before her, Miki is portrayed as self-sacrificing and willing to endure anything for the sake of her child. Despite the medical risks of childbirth, the disruption to her education and future career prospects, the difficulties of raising a child as a single parent and the social stigma, she decides to proceed with the pregnancy. It is a strong maternal instinct (*bosei honnō*), which seems to develop almost as soon as Miki discovers she is pregnant, that drives her to become a mother in spite of all the obstacles in her way. This bond with her unborn baby grows stronger as the pregnancy advances, and is heightened after her premature birth, during which the lives of both mother and baby are put at risk.

The instinct to protect and nurture is presented as a natural phenomenon in women, echoed in the tagline of the drama: “Born to love” (*Ai suru tame ni umarete kita*). This concept is reaffirmed in the portrayal of the close relationship between Miki and her own mother, who is supportive of her daughter. Several episodes feature scenes where the thoughts of mother and daughter are narrated by the respective characters retrospectively, as though they are remembering the events portrayed on screen from some future point in time. The narration of these thoughts over the action forms a ‘telepathic conversation’ between mother and daughter, emphasizing the strong bond between the two characters. Interestingly, there is no mention of a ‘paternal instinct’ and Miki’s boyfriend, Satoshi, refuses to take any responsibility for the situation until the very last episode. Although Miki’s reluctance to apportion any responsibility to him is challenged by other characters, including her father, her stance is idealized as noble and admirable.

Furthermore, the emphasis on Miki’s warm, supportive, two-parent family, when contrasted with the unhappiness of Satoshi, who has been brought up by a workaholic single-mother, reinforces the notion that mothers should really devote most of their energies to their children in order to create a stable and happy family environment, ideally with two parents involved. While Miki’s mother is depicted as a supportive and caring woman, who prioritizes her role at home as mother and housewife, Satoshi’s mother is depicted as a cold and heartless woman, who puts her reputation as a successful business woman before the welfare of her son. As Miki’s pregnancy advances, her mother quits her part-time job as a waitress to help prepare for the impending birth. During Miki’s hospitalization, her family – parents, brother, uncle and aunt – all visit to offer their support. Meanwhile, Satoshi’s mother pays the price for putting business before family: she suffers the humiliation of her son’s digression being publicly exposed in the media and her business collapses as a result, forcing her to go into hiding to escape her creditors. Whereas Miki’s family have each other for support during this difficult time, Satoshi and his mother, who had prided herself on being independent and self-sufficient, now find themselves in a desperate

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<sup>54</sup> Paul A. S. Harvey, ‘Interpreting *Oshin* – War, History and Women in Modern Japan, in *Women, Media and Consumption in Japan*, Lisa Skov & Brian Moeran (eds.), Richmond: Curzon Press, 1995, pp. 75–110.

situation with no-one to turn to. Eventually they are forced to flee their luxury, two-story home for a small, dingy apartment in a run-down part of the city.

In the final episode, this message is further compounded by the announcement by the teenage couple of their intention to marry, as soon as they are old enough. Thus, Miki's one aberration, to have underage sex and fall pregnant, can be excused as the actions of a girl in love and neatly swept under the carpet. Rather than challenge social norms, *14-Year-Old Mother* actually conforms to the traditional narrative of marriage and the two-parent family ideal.

### Rejecting men: The rise of the matriarchy in contemporary drama

The concept of maternal instinct as a strong motivating force for women has continued to feature in more recent dramas dealing with motherhood, including *Mother* (2010), which ran with the tagline “motherhood drives women crazy” (*bosei wa josei o kuruwaseru*).<sup>55</sup> However, while these dramas continue to make a strong association between women and the maternal role, these new dramas distinguish themselves from the home dramas of the 1970s, which featured idealized ‘reliable mothers’, by actively challenging traditional patriarchal structures. Unlike the dramas of the 1970s and 1980s, newer dramas, such as *Mother* and *Single Mothers* (2012), stand out for featuring almost entirely female casts, with only a handful of male characters in supporting roles. The female characters in these dramas are building their own family structures and support networks, consisting only of women. These dramas emphasize the strength of women when they are united and pointedly dismiss men as unreliable, unstable and unnecessary in any aspect of their lives.

This point is most acutely demonstrated in *Mother*. The drama centers on an elementary school teacher, Nao, a single woman in her thirties, who kidnaps a young girl, Rena, to save her from an abusive home. In order to escape the authorities, Nao returns to her family home in Tokyo with Rena, whom she passes off as her own child. Nao's family, which consists of her divorced, adoptive mother and two unmarried sisters, eventually agrees to help the runaways and protect them even after the truth is discovered. Even Nao's birth mother makes an appearance in the drama and joins forces with the other women to protect Nao and Rena, despite the fact that she is dying of cancer. Although there are many differences between the women, not only are they eventually able to put these aside in order to help each other when necessary, these experiences help them to form close bonds with each other. As well as helping Nao and Rena evade the authorities for as long as possible, the women support Nao's birth mother through her illness and Nao's sister Mei, who is heavily pregnant, eventually turns to her mother (and not her fiancé) for support when she discovers her unborn baby has a disability.

In contrast, the few male characters that appear regularly in *Mother* are mostly depicted as abusive, obstructive or simply uncaring. Rena's mother's boyfriend is portrayed as a dark, sullen, young man who abuses the six-year-old both physically and emotionally. Most of the scenes he appears in are set at night, in dark rooms, where he is either playing video games or drinking, almost always with a gloomy expression on his face. Other male characters include a journalist who tries to discover the truth behind Nao and Rena's

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<sup>55</sup> *Mother* aired on NTV in 11 parts, from April-June 2010: <http://www.ntv.co.jp/mother/index.html> (accessed 20.08.2013).

disappearance and seems intent on exposing their secret, and Mei's fiancé, who is portrayed as a cold, brusque man from a conservative family, who, until the final episode, seems to care more for his reputation than he does for Mei and their baby. These men are portrayed as isolated loners, unable to understand or benefit from the close bonds and feelings of solidarity that develop between the women. This point is most adeptly demonstrated in a scene near the end of the series, where all the women, having bonded over their many struggles, get together to have a family photo taken. The two men who happen to be with them, quietly leave the room while the women have the photo taken. As one remarks to the other, their presence "doesn't feel necessary".

In a similar vein, the NHK drama *Single Mothers*<sup>56</sup> also emphasizes female solidarity by focusing on a mostly female cast, with very few male characters. All the main female characters are members of a single mothers' group which advocates for better rights and treatment of single mothers, and supports individual single mothers in finding employment and further education. Through this network, the main protagonist, a former housewife with a young son escaping a violent husband, is able to find a new place to live, receive advice about welfare payments, training and employment, as well as emotional support and friendship. The group welcomes single mothers from different backgrounds and circumstances, including divorcees, unmarried mothers and widows, from teenagers to women in their fifties, suggesting that whatever their differences, all single mothers are equal in their aims to forge better lives for themselves and their children. Together, the women support each other and work together to successfully lobby the government to back down in its attempt to curb welfare payments to single mothers. These women, many of whom are outside the normal social structures centered on extended family and workplaces, build their own social network, based on play dates and shared meals.

In contrast to the stability and support offered by the women, the two supporting male characters, both husbands who have been left by their wives, represent instability and aggression. The husband of the main protagonist is depicted as harsh and exacting, quickly losing his temper and turning violent when his strict demands are not met. Often we see him sitting alone in a dark room, his face set in a terrifying grimace. The other husband approaches the single mothers' group for help in understanding why his wife left him. Initially, the women are sympathetic and accept him into their group; however later in the series, still anguished by the continuing separation from his wife and children, he explodes in a sudden rage and is told must leave.

### **The independent single mother as a new role model for modern women**

Alongside these strong, matriarchal figures, who have banished men from their lives, another type of single mother heroine has also emerged. In contrast to the 'suffering woman' of the 1970s, this type of woman finds success in male spheres of influence, such as the legal profession or law enforcement, not by acquiescing to men but through sheer stubbornness. The protagonists of dramas such as *Magerarenai Onna* (The Unbending Woman, 2010) and *Dirty Mama!* (2012) refuse to conform to traditional stereotypes of femininity, being brutally honest, strong-willed and even ruthless at times. Fiercely

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<sup>56</sup> *Single Mothers* aired on NHK in eight parts, from October–December 2012: <http://www.nhk.or.jp/drama10/sinmama/> (accessed 20.08.2013).

independent, these women are dedicated only to their careers and their children, and manage to succeed in both roles without compromising either.

The main protagonist of *The Unbending Woman*<sup>57</sup> is a single woman in her early thirties, intent on passing the bar exams so she can fulfil her dream of becoming a lawyer. Despite failing the exam 10 times, Saki is unfaltering in her dedication, spending night after night studying alone in her apartment. She does not have a wide network of friends and family to offer support and comfort; rather she is portrayed as an awkward loner with a brusque, straightforward manner that makes it difficult for her to get along with others in a society that generally disapproves of directness, especially in women. However, Saki is determined not to ‘go with the flow’ like other women of her age, which would include marriage and family, but to forge her own path. Each time her long-suffering boyfriend proposes marriage, she rebuffs him, saying marriage “is not necessary” for her. When she discovers she is pregnant, instead of choosing between career and motherhood, she decides she will take on both, defying the people (and society) who seem to believe this is not possible.

Initially, Saki is viewed by her few friends as a somewhat hapless character who needs the advice of others to get her life on track. Her married friend Riko is one of those trying to help. However, despite presenting the façade of a happy housewife, Riko’s life is far removed from marital bliss. As Riko openly admits, she is the “world’s best liar”, buying designer goods to compensate for the fact that, when she returns to her luxury, two-story home, she is ignored by her cheating husband and her distant children. The contrast between ‘honest’ single Saki and ‘lying’ married Riko is used to undermine the widespread assumption that marriage automatically leads to happiness. Although Saki is alone, it is Riko who is lonely. Eventually, Riko comes to admire Saki for being true to herself and her beliefs. Inspired by Saki’s determination and resolve, Riko decides she can no longer live a lie, and leaves her family to become a single mother, embarking on a new vocation as a carer in a nursing home.

*Dirty Mama!*, a comedy drama set in a central Tokyo police station, is even more progressive in its depiction of women breaking barriers in the workplace.<sup>58</sup> The two central protagonists of the drama, Maruoka Takako, and her subordinate, Nagashima Aoi, are the only two female detectives in their department. Furthermore, Maruoka,<sup>59</sup> the ‘dirty mama’ of the title, has successfully managed to combine her career (she has the highest success rate for solving cases in her department) and her role as the single mother of a one-year-old boy, Hashizō. However, far from living up to the idealized image of the warm, kindly and self-sacrificing mother, Maruoka is a tough, stubborn and disagreeable woman, notoriously difficult to work with, often infuriating her partners with her exacting demands and her refusal to follow the rules. She constantly uses impolite language and makes condescending remarks about her colleagues, and is willing to do whatever it takes to solve a crime, even

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<sup>57</sup> *The Unbending Woman* aired on NTV in 10 parts, from January–March 2010: <http://www.ntv.co.jp/mage/> (accessed 20.08.2013).

<sup>58</sup> *Dirty Mama!* was broadcast on NTV from January to March 2012 in ten parts: <http://www.ntv.co.jp/dirtymama/index.html> (accessed 20.08.2013).

<sup>59</sup> Unlike the characters in other dramas I have discussed in this paper, Maruoka and Nagashima are mostly depicted in work situations and, therefore, are most commonly referred to by their family names.

if this means taking bribes or torturing suspects until they confess. Her attitude to life is summed up in a revised version of ‘The Tortoise and the Hare’ story she has written for Hashizō. In Maruoka’s version, after having napped during his race against the tortoise, the hare catches up to the tortoise, violently twists his neck and crosses the line first. In her world, ruthlessness, not fairness, is a requisite for success in life.

Although *Dirty Mama!* purports to be a detective drama, each episode structured around a case that must be solved by the end of the hour-long episode (except for the first two episodes, which form a two-parter), this construct is merely a device used by the drama to promote Maruoka’s uncompromising world view. First and foremost, Maruoka believes in being true to herself. As she puts it, “I don’t believe in rules made by others. I use the methods I believe in because I don’t want to lie to myself”. She feels justified in employing illegal methods in her investigations because she is acting for the greater good. If she can catch the criminal (which she always does), the ends justify the means. She also refuses to conform to accepted norms regarding childrearing by having Hashizō accompany her while she is on duty. Despite repeated criticism from colleagues and wider society that she is being an irresponsible mother by putting her baby’s life at risk, she insists that the safest place for him is by her side. While recognizing that Maruoka’s way of life is unconventional, the narrative of the drama supports her approach: her work does not suffer and Hashizō is a happy, well-looked after baby. Both as a detective and a mother, she eventually earns the respect of those around her.

Maruoka is also fiercely independent. Several times during the series, she reiterates her belief that essentially, humans are on their own (*ningen no kihon wa hitori*) and should not rely on others. She is particularly critical of women who blackmail men into relationships, rejecting the idea that women need men to protect them. Her colleagues, in particular Nagashima, disagree with her; they have all formed close partnerships with their ‘buddies’, and worry Maruoka will end up lonely. However, Maruoka insists she has no interest in forming bonds or having a ‘buddy’, in her opinion, such relationships are a hindrance to the work of a detective. Maruoka’s sobering viewpoint is vindicated when Nagashima is shot by her former ‘buddy’, a teammate from her old softball team. While Nagashima has fond memories of her friendship with her former teammate, whom she sees as inspirational, the teammate has harbored a grudge towards Nagashima, whose injury prevented their team from going to the Olympic Games. Ultimately, Nagashima’s ‘belief’ in her former ‘buddy’ is found to be misplaced, and not only compromises her ability as a detective (it does not occur to her to suspect her former friend of a murder she is investigating) but also endangers her life. This rejection of the ‘buddy’ convention can be seen as an indirect criticism of marriage – the most conventional partnership. Just as *The Unbending Woman* shattered the illusion of marital bliss, *Dirty Mama!* undermines the assumption that marriage automatically equals happiness by repeatedly questioning its necessity in a woman’s life. Early in the series, Maruoka asks, “Is marriage so happy?” The ‘will-they-won’t-they’ question mark that hovers over Nagashima’s relationship with her boyfriend reflects the hesitation many women feel regarding marriage in modern Japan.

While offering a representation of a strong, successful, working, single mother, *Dirty Mama!* does not ignore the barriers and discrimination Japanese women, in particular single women, face in trying to combine a career with motherhood. Several times during the series, Maruoka is asked, “Isn’t it difficult to work and raise a child on your own?” Maruoka

alludes to the difficulties herself in the opening episode, explaining one of the reasons for bringing her son to work is the high cost of childcare. According to Nagashima, who faces a dilemma when she discovers that she is to become a mother herself, Maruoka is an exception – most women are not able to manage a career and family life. Twenty-eight years have passed since the enactment of the Equal Employment Opportunity Laws in 1986, which promised equal opportunities for men and women in the workplace, yet still, the notion that women must choose between family and work persists. When a professional photographer describes having an abortion in order to continue her career, Nagashima expresses sympathy. Furthermore, the expectation is that, given a choice, women should prioritize marriage and family. This is demonstrated when Nagashima's male colleagues learn her boyfriend has proposed to her. They automatically assume she will resign from work and attempt to install a man (her boyfriend) as her replacement. The dialogue of even sympathetic characters, such as Nagashima's boyfriend, can betray a casual sexism that persists in Japanese society. When describing Maruoka as a 'great' (*sugoi*) person, whom he admires very much, he qualifies this by adding, "even though she is a woman".

However, the fact that such chauvinistic attitudes are occasionally represented in the drama does not necessarily mean they are being promoted by it. When Nagashima first suspects she is pregnant, unwilling to give up her promotion (as her male colleagues would expect) she asks her boyfriend if he would consider becoming a house-husband. In fact, compared with the dramas of the 1980s that Muramatsu criticized for their bias towards gendered stereotypes, *Dirty Mama!* represents significant progress in terms of the representation of women. Although men outnumber women in the drama, the two central protagonists are both female and, even though it is detective drama, their roles are far from 'decorative'. They are pivotal characters, driving the plot and serving as the focus of dialogue and action. When a crime is committed, they are usually the first to rise to their feet, often leaving the men trailing in their wake. The women assume an authoritative tone when interrogating suspects and even in their conversations with male colleagues. They are often depicted in scenes of physical action: chasing and tackling criminals or holding them at gunpoint. There are even several opportunities for Nagashima to show off her skills as a softball pitcher.

Unlike the women in 1980s television dramas, women in *Dirty Mama!* (this is not limited to the two main characters) frequently appear in working environments and are never seen in the bedroom or the kitchen. It is men, rather than women, who are depicted as family-oriented and domesticated. Nagashima's boyfriend is keen to marry her and is described as having the perfect skills for being a house-husband – being kind and good at cooking and household chores. Further, male characters are often depicted as emotional or irrational. Many of the crimes investigated by Maruoka and Nagashima are committed by men who lose their sense of reason after being rejected by women or having to endure personal tragedies, such as the illness or death of a loved one. When confronted by the female detectives, they usually break down in tearful confessions.

That is not to say that the women never show emotion. Although Maruoka is normally emotionally restrained in her work, the few moments of tenderness she shares with Hashizō during the series demonstrate that, beneath her tough exterior is a warm, loving mother who dotes on her son. In several scenes we see her cuddle him, and she sheds tears of joy when she sees him stand for the first time. However, this emotional side to her is depicted

as a strength, not a weakness. When Hashizō is kidnapped by a criminal gang, Maruoka's anger and fierce determination to save her son are the driving force behind the eventual capture of the gang.

While emphasizing the ability of single women to raise children independently, *Dirty Mama!* does not allow fathers to escape responsibility in the way that *14-Year-Old Mother* did. Unlike 14-year-old Miki, Maruoka demands Hashizō's biological father acknowledge him legally and is prepared to take him to court when he refuses. Although she neither expects nor requests any financial contribution from Hashizō's father, she feels that every child should have at least some contact with their father, even a good-for-nothing (*rokudemonai*) liar. When compared with the martyr-like stance of Miki, this pragmatic approach perhaps more accurately reflects the position of real-life unmarried mothers, many of whom, while having accepted (or even choosing) their status as single mothers, still want some paternal involvement in the raising of their children. The reluctance of Hashizō's father to attend mediation highlights the tenuous legal position of many unmarried mothers in Japan.<sup>60</sup> The importance of a father is further emphasized in the relationship between Maruoka's superior, who is also a single parent, and his own teenage son. Initially, the boy is insolent and disrespectful to his father, insulting and even striking the older man, whom he sees as weak and incompetent. However, the father is eventually able to earn the respect of his son after saving him from the clutches of violent drug-dealers, and the two are reconciled.

Dramas such as *Dirty Mama!* and *The Unbending Woman* challenge traditional notions of motherhood by suggesting that, while motherhood is an important aspect of a woman's life, it does not have to be one's sole purpose. Further, they contest patriarchal concepts of gender and family with the message that women can be just as (or even more) capable than men, and that single motherhood is not a burden but can actually be empowering. We see this in the last scene of the final episode of *Dirty Mama!* Unsure about the future of her relationship with her boyfriend, Nagashima resolves, nevertheless, to become a 'strong mother' like her *sempai* Maruoka, with or without a man.

Rather, than conform to the stereotype of the cheerful 'reliable mother' or the tragic 'suffering woman', these new heroines are pragmatic about their circumstances; they are not blind to the realities of single motherhood, but are still determined to do the best they can. *Dirty Mama!* might be a light-hearted comedy, but it perhaps offers a more accurate representation of the realities of single motherhood in contemporary Japan than more serious dramas. Maruoka is neither saint nor sinner, just a mother trying to do the best she can for herself and her son.

### A hopeful future for single-mother representations?

The last decade has seen much diversity in the way single motherhood is represented in television drama. On the surface, dramas such as *At Home Dad* and *14-Year-Old Mother* appear to promote unconventional families by presenting positive representations of men and women switching roles and making unconventional lifestyle choices. In actual fact, these dramas have served to reinforce the traditional stereotype of the 'two-parent ideal'

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<sup>60</sup> For more information on the problematic issue of legal acknowledgement (*ninchi*) of illegitimate children by fathers, see Hertog, *Tough Choices...*, pp. 86–90.

by presenting families that conform to this type as much more desirable than single mother families.

By contrast, the dramas of the past three years have taken a more progressive approach in their depiction of single motherhood. Some dramas, such as *Mother* and *Single Mothers*, have continued to promote the rule of the mother, much like the home dramas of the 1970s. However, they differ from their 1970s counterparts in their complete rejection of traditional family structures. In these dramas, the empowering of women can only be achieved through the disempowering of men, who are weak and unnecessary figures in their lives.

Furthermore, we see the emergence of a new, strong-willed heroine, who refuses to compromise her principles in order to conform to social norms expected of women. The protagonists of *The Unbending Woman* and *Dirty Mama!* refuse to be confined to the domestic sphere, tied down by the patriarchal structure of marriage, or be made to choose between motherhood and a career. Maruoka, in particular, is able to embody a combination of physical, intellectual and moral authority with the warmth and affection of a loving mother, challenging and redefining the concept of the 'ideal' mother.

These new representations of single mothers are perhaps an indication of the social and demographic changes that are taking place in Japan today. Since 1975, the number of marriages has dropped by around 40 per cent, while the divorce rate has more than doubled.<sup>61</sup> If these trends continue, the number of single-parent families is likely to increase in the future. In the past, many single mothers chose to remain hidden, fearing social condemnation. However, as single mothers become more visible in society and on television, the negative perception of single motherhood that still exists in Japan is likely to wane. Further, positive representations of single mothers that do not conform to outdated, gender-based stereotypes not only influence attitudes towards single mothers, but towards all women who share many of the same dilemmas as single mothers. Although the image of a woman with a gun in one hand and a baby in the other (on the poster for *Dirty Mama!*) is used for dramatic effect, rather than to portray realism, it can be seen as a metaphor for the real juggling that all working mothers have to manage on a daily basis. Such dramas are powerful not because they draw distinctions between single mothers and other women, but because they are able to find common ground.

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<sup>61</sup> Data collated from the *Heisei 23-nen jinkō dōtai tōkei* [Population Statistics, 2011]: [http://www.mhlw.go.jp/toukei/saikin/hw/jinkou/kakutei11/dl/04\\_h2-1.pdf](http://www.mhlw.go.jp/toukei/saikin/hw/jinkou/kakutei11/dl/04_h2-1.pdf) (accessed 20.08.2013).



ANDREA REVELANT

## Economic Growth and Tax Inequality in Japan: Evidence from World War I

### Abstract

Tax systems are useful indicators of the economic and political conditions which concur to shape them. With respect to developing countries, an analysis of the tax burden can help to understand how the process of modernization is sustained through fiscal extraction from different social classes and productive sectors. This paper presents statistical evidence on the distribution of taxes in Japan around the time of World War I, which was a pivotal moment for both economic growth and political change. Sources indicate that government officials had a clear perception of inequality and its structural causes; the surveys examined here can therefore be considered a starting point for reform of the tax system, as discussed in the next twenty years.

### Introduction

Income inequality is a major social problem in developing countries, especially as it appears that achieving an equitable distribution of wealth is not a necessary consequence of economic growth. As an early case of modernization in Asia, Japan has long been a favorite object of study to scholars interested in analyzing industrialization and its relationship with socio-political change in a comparative perspective. The literature on this country, however, has paid relatively scarce attention to the role fiscal policy may play as an instrument to redistribute income – with the exception of the land tax reform of the 1870s, which was a decisive passage in the dismantlement of the feudal system. This paper will discuss the structure of the tax burden in Japan by focusing on another turning point in the process of economic development, namely World War I. As is well known, the conflict created extraordinary market conditions that projected the country into a short but intense period of high-speed growth. While the boom determined a substantive upgrade of the national economy, it also brought about social dislocation and widened the urban/rural gap, leaving an unstable setting for domestic politics in the following years. It is against the background of these events that the issue of tax inequality acquired prominence, leading to discussion and the partial implementation of reform plans over the next two decades.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For a general treatment of finance and politics in the 1910s, see Sakairi Chōtarō, *Nihon zaiseishi kenkyū* [A Study on the History of Japan's Public Finance], Sakai shoten, 1988, Vol. 2, Chapter 5.3–4; Vol. 3, Chapters 1–2. The place of publication of all works in Japanese cited in this article is Tokyo. As essential readings on tax policy in the interwar period (until 1940), see Ide

In order to evaluate the tax policy carried out in those later years, though, it is opportune to first gather adequate evidence on the distribution of the burden. A few attempts have been made to reach a comprehensive estimate by assessing the ratio between income and taxes in the main economic sectors.<sup>2</sup> However, one of the major limits of this approach is that it cannot shed light on the vertical distribution of taxes by income class. As a complement to the macro-economic method, therefore, sample surveys which the government and other institutions conducted at the time represent a precious source of information. The main purpose of this paper is to present in detail two such surveys compiled during the Great War. Although rather overlooked by researchers, these documents are fundamental to grasping how the state bureaucracy perceived the problem of structure unbalance at a pivotal moment of economic modernization – particularly as no other comparable sources are available for those years. The next section will outline the circumstances for the compilation of the surveys and illustrate their methodology. Then, data on different categories of taxpayers will be analyzed separately, with the addition of the necessary background explanations. Finally, through comparison of the tax burden between each category in the sample, this article will draw a general conclusion on fiscal inequality and its causes in modern Japan.

## Sources

Although Japan's military involvement in the Great War was marginal, the outbreak of the conflict spurred a wave of interest throughout the country in the techniques of national mobilization. In government circles, in particular, the issue of state planning in the economic

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Eisaku, 'Gendaiteki sozei shisutemu no kōzō to sono zasetu. Takahashi zaiseiki ni okeru sozei seisaku no genkai' [The Structure of the Modern Tax System and Its Failure. The Limits of Tax Policy at the Time of Takahashi's Finance], *Kaiei kensa kenkyū*, No. 33, March 2006, pp. 259–278; Ikegami Takehiko, 'Senkanki Nihon no zeisei seiri' [Tax Reform in Interwar Japan], *Niigata daigaku shōgaku ronshū*, No. 23, 1991, pp. 1–78; Jinno Naohiko, 'Baba zeisei kaikakuan (1, 2)' [Baba's Reform Plan of the Tax System], *Shōken keizai*, No. 127, January 1979, pp. 130–156; No. 128, May 1979, pp. 108–137; Jinno Naohiko, 'Shakai seisakuteki sozei seisaku no tenkai. 1920 nendai no sozei seisaku' [Tax Policy as a Social Policy: Japan's Tax Policy in 1920s], *Keizaigaku zasshi*, Vol. 86, No. 3, September 1985, pp. 15–48; Jinno Naohiko, 'Kindai Nihon zeisei no keisei katei (1, 2)' [A Birth of the Modern Tax System in Japan], *Keizaigaku zasshi*, Vol. 88, No. 2–3, September 1987, pp. 116–143; No. 5–6, March 1988, pp. 58–80; Jinno Naohiko, '1940 nen (Shōwa 15 nen) no zeisei kaikaku (1, 2)' [The Tax Reform of 1940 (Shōwa 15)], *Shōken keizai*, No. 135, March 1981, pp. 135–156; No. 136, June 1981, pp. 107–137; Kanazawa Fumio, 'Ryōzei ijōron tenkai katei no kenkyū' [A Study on the Development of the Debate on the Devolution of the Two Taxes], *Shakai kagaku kenkyū*, Vol. 36, No. 1, July 1984, pp. 67–145 (reprint in *Kindai Nihon chihō zaiseishi kenkyū*, Kanazawa Fumio, *Nihon keizai hyōronsha*, 2010, Chapter 1). A recent work on local taxation, largely descriptive but rich in data, is the series by Takayose Shōzō: *Taishō chihō zaiseishi* [History of Taishō Local Finance], 2 Vols, Kōjin no tomosha, 2008–2009; *Shōwa chihō zaiseishi* [History of Shōwa Local Finance], 2 Vols, Kōjin no tomosha, 2010–2011.

<sup>2</sup> See Tsunematsu Seiji, 'Nōgyō to zaisei no sayō' [Agriculture and the Working of Public Finance], in *Nihon no keizai to nōgyō: seichō bunseki* [Japan's Economy and Agriculture: Growth Analysis], Tōbata Seiichi and Ōkawa Kazushi (eds.), *Nōgyō sōgō kenkyūjo*, 1956, Vol. 1, pp. 365–385, 416–425; Jinno, 'Shakai seisakuteki...', pp. 17–23; Takayose, *Taishō...*, Vol. 1, pp. 60–63; *Shōwa...*, Vol. 1, pp. 38–39.

sphere and other policy areas became the object of careful study, prompting the creation of several research committees and provisional agencies.<sup>3</sup> These developments gave impulse to the collection of statistical data, which policy makers would then use as reference when discussing important matters. It was in this climate that, in 1917, the Terauchi Masatake cabinet established in the Ministry of Finance a Temporary Research Bureau (*Ōkurashō rinji chōsa kyoku*). Headed by the vice-minister, the new agency would “conduct research related to tariffs and finance”.<sup>4</sup> It would operate with a small but full-time staff of mid-ranking officials and their subordinates, organized in two sections: one under the chief of the Tax Bureau (*Shuzei kyoku*), the other under the chief of the Financial Bureau (*Rizai kyoku*). Active until a few years after the end of the war, the Research Bureau compiled reports on a wide range of topics, devoting much attention to the comparative study of the belligerent countries.<sup>5</sup>

Within the smaller production devoted to domestic affairs, there is a *Survey on the Tax Burden* printed in August 1918.<sup>6</sup> Also, the end of that year saw the issuing of a *Gist of the Survey on the Situation of the Tax Burden by Profession*, which is a derivative work by the same editors.<sup>7</sup> While the *Survey* consists exclusively of statistical tables, the *Gist* accompanies a synthesis of these data with explanatory notes, therefore providing precious insight into the view of government bureaucrats. Marked “Minister” on the cover, the original manuscript is preserved in the former collection of Shōda Kazue, who at the time held the top finance post. Sections of the survey are transcribed from the longer version, without indication of the source, in a scholarly essay on the Japanese tax system published in 1932.<sup>8</sup> Later on, the economic historians Takahashi Makoto and Kanazawa Fumio have presented a shorter selection of data.<sup>9</sup> The relation between the *Survey* and the *Gist* remains

<sup>3</sup> For an outline of these initiatives, see Toshitani Nobuyoshi and Honma Shigeki, ‘Tennōsei kokka kikō-hōtaisei no saihei’ [Reorganization of State Mechanisms and Legal Structure of the Emperor System] in *Kindai II*, Nakamura Masanori (ed.), pp. 163–237, Vol. 5 of *Taikei Nihon kokkashi* [A Compendium of the History of the Japanese State], 5 Vols, Hara Hidesaburō *et al.* (eds.), Tōkyō daigaku shuppankai, 1975–1976.

<sup>4</sup> Imperial ordinance No. 18/1917, [http://www.digital.archives.go.jp/DAS/meta/Detail\\_F000000000000024968](http://www.digital.archives.go.jp/DAS/meta/Detail_F000000000000024968) (accessed 7.10.2013).

<sup>5</sup> For the complete list, see the CiNii database, <http://ci.nii.ac.jp/books/search?sortorder=3&count=20&q=%E5%A4%A7%E8%97%8F%E7%9C%81%E8%87%A8%E6%99%82%E8%AA%BF%E6%9F%BB%E5%B1%80&p=2&advanced=false&type=0> (accessed 7.10.2013).

<sup>6</sup> Ōkurashō rinji chōsa kyoku sozeibu naikokuzei gakari, *Sozei futan chōsho. Taishō rokunen kugatsu shirabe*, TōA insatsu. Hereafter *Chōsho T6*. Although unusually printed by a commercial publisher, the document bears the stamp ‘secret’ on the cover. At present, four copies are stored in different libraries of the Hitotsubashi, Tokyo and Kyoto Universities.

<sup>7</sup> [Ōkurashō] Rinji chōsa kyoku sozeibu naikokuzei gakari, *Kakugyō betsu sozei futan jōkyō chōsa yōryō*, secret, December 1917, in *Shōda-ke monjo* [Papers of the Shōda family], Vol. 12, ‘Sozei ippan’ [Taxes General], No. 16. Published as microfilm in *Shōda-ke monjo*, Reel 8, Yumani shobō, 1987. Hereafter *Chōsa yōryō*.

<sup>8</sup> Abe Isamu, *Nihon zaiseiron. Sozei* [Essay on Japan’s Public Finance. Taxation], Kaizōsha, 1933 (1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1932), pp. 360–369.

<sup>9</sup> Takahashi Makoto, ‘Gendai shotokuzeisei no tenkai. Nihon shotokuzeisei shiron (3)’ [The Development of the Modern Income Tax System. Essay on the History of Japan’s Income Tax System], *Keizai shirin*, Vol. 28, No. 1, 1960, pp. 131–136; Kanazawa, ‘Ryōzei ijōron...’, pp. 91–93, 96.

unclear in these works: Kanazawa cites the former, Takahashi the latter; however, neither of the two scholars mentions that the digest of the report includes analytical passages. Moreover, both studies ignore another survey, preceding the one compiled by the Research Bureau by several years, and closely related to it. Issued by the Tokyo Supervisory Bureau of Taxation (one of the eight that oversaw tax offices across the country), this report is less sophisticated but sufficiently detailed for cross-checking some of the most significant evidence in two different samples.<sup>10</sup>

Let us first clarify the method used in either investigation.<sup>11</sup> The older survey, conducted in September 1914, collects information provided by each Supervisory Bureau chief about the previous fiscal year (April 1913 to March 1914). It compares aggregate data for 7211 “agriculturers” (*nōgyōsha*) resident in rural villages and 5252 urban “businessmen” (*eigyōsha*), both sampled throughout the country. The former are divided into four income classes, between 500 and 2000 yen per year; the other category has two additional layers, up to 10,000 yen. For each class, a breakdown of the average tax burden per person lists the main national direct taxes, the related additional rates levied by prefectures and municipalities, and the total sum paid in “special” (autonomous) local taxes at either of these administrative levels.

The sample of the second survey is smaller – 8791 households in all – but similarly spread across the country and more articulated: besides 3963 farmers and 3349 businessmen, it includes 1241 people “employed in the public sector” (*kōmu gyōsha*) and 238 “holders of an independent activity” (*dokuritsu gyōsha*). The latter expression is quite misleading, as it stands for persons whose main income consists of stock dividends and interest on securities (bonds and debentures) – in other words, financial rentiers. The arrangement of data, which refer to the fiscal year 1916, basically follows that of the previous survey with some omissions (such as the detail of surtaxes by level) as well as some notable additions, starting from the ratio between income and living expenses. The income range is extended upwards to 50,000 yen. It seems, all things considered, that the first survey served as groundwork for a more elaborate investigation at a three-year distance. Together, these two studies mark the starting point of a long series on the distribution of the tax burden, which in the next two decades underpinned legislative initiative for the achievement of a more equitable system of imposition.<sup>12</sup> Although the sample size falls short of the standard of postwar statistical methodology, these early works from the 1910s represent a remarkable effort of scientific accuracy; they actually surpass, both in scale and precision of detail, several of the surveys that government agencies carried out at a later stage.

The period of data collection is of particular interest for investigating the effects of the Great War on public finance, such as on the balance between state and local taxation.

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<sup>10</sup> Tōkyō zeimu kantoku kyoku, *Sozei futan chōsho. Taishō sannen kugatsu shirabe* [Survey on the Tax Burden. Survey of Taishō 3, September], secret, November 1915, TōA insatsu. Hereafter *Chōsho T3*. The printer is the same as for the 1918 survey. Two copies are kept at Hitotsubashi and Tokyo Universities.

<sup>11</sup> *Chōsho T3*, pp. 1–3; *Chōsho T6*, pp. 1–4.

<sup>12</sup> A review of these surveys will be the object of another article, currently in preparation. Here it may suffice to mention the apex of such production, namely the study edited by the Planning Section (Kikaku-ka) of the Tax Bureau in 1937. See Jinno, ‘Shakai seisakuteki...’, pp. 17–18; ‘Baba zeisei...(1)’, pp. 132–141.

Fiscal 1913 was a year of moderate economic growth, which then came to a halt when the outbreak of the conflict disrupted the regular flows of goods and currency. After this negative shock, in the spring of 1915 war overseas turned into a benign event for Japan. The second survey captures the phase of high growth that lasted until shortly after the end of the war, while domestic manufacturers could reap the benefits of the forced withdrawal of their European competitors from the domestic market, as well as from other parts of Asia.

Concerning the social target of either study, it has to be acknowledged that their spectrum is restricted to mid-upper income classes, so that information on the largest part of the population can only be inferred indirectly. However, this limitation is common to almost all statistical attempts to define burden distribution in prewar times. More than political decisions, technical constraints are likely the cause of this reductive approach: on the one hand, as explained further, the main direct taxes hit property or income beyond the range of working-class people; on the other, indirect taxes with a broad base were intrinsically difficult to assess in relation to the individuals who bore their final cost. In order to obtain an approximate idea of the correspondence between social status and income layers considered in the surveys, we can refer to the daily wage of factory workers.<sup>13</sup> In 1913, a male blue collar would earn about 65 *sen* (cents) per day, which on an annual basis makes for an amount well below 500 yen. The same applies to 1916, when the daily wage was 67 *sen*. The actual increase in purchasing power was a little higher, as prices had declined by 7 percent in the meantime. Wartime inflation would raise prices above 1913 levels only from the next year. This means that, in real terms, there is no marked difference between income brackets in the first survey and their counterpart in the second one. Having defined the object of government research and the method used to collect data, we can now proceed to examine the resulting evidence on the structure of the tax burden.

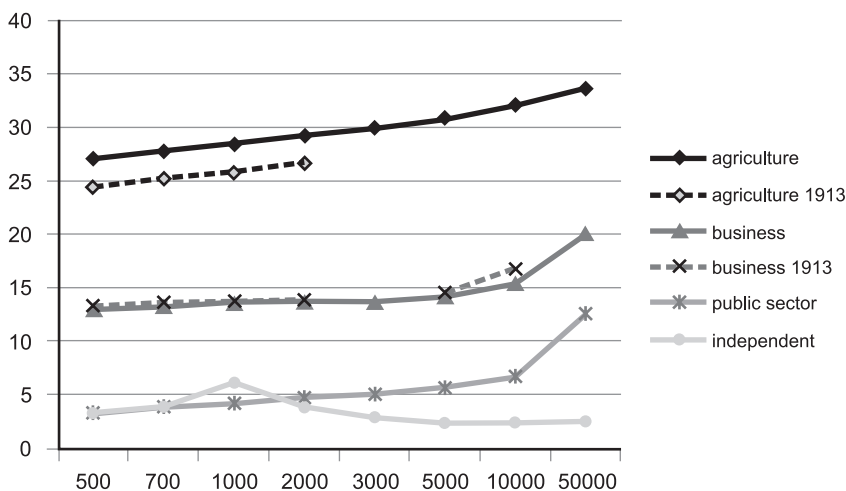
### Overview of burden distribution

Figure 1 shows how the total tax burden varies as income increases in each kind of household sampled. Let us examine first the data for 1916, which encompass a broader range. It is evident at a glance that the burden of agriculturists is much heavier than that of other categories throughout the scale: compared to businessmen, it is more than double up to the second highest bracket and about 67 percent higher in the top one; the gap becomes even wider between farmers and the other two classes of taxpayers, who remain mostly below half the level of businessmen. From the standpoint of vertical distribution, rentiers represent an exception because of the reverse U-curve between 500 and 5000 yen, with a peak at 1000, and a flat line beyond. The burden of other categories increases across the scale at an extremely slow pace (the apparent surge at the upper edge being here merely the result of graphic compression). In particular, there is hardly any change for businessmen up to the 5000-yen bracket.

A comparison between the two surveys, limited to agriculturists and businessmen in the available range, indicates that the burden of the latter group did not rise by a significant

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<sup>13</sup> Statistics of the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce, transcribed in Ōkawa Kazushi *et al.* (eds.), *Bukka/Prices*, 1967, Vol. 8 of *Chōki zeizai tōkei: suikei to bunseki/Estimates of Long-Term Economic Statistics of Japan Since 1868*, Tōyō keizai shinpōsha, 14 Vols, 1965–1988, p. 243. The data cited here are average figures for factories sampled in 18 different manufacturing industries.

**Figure 1. Percentage of income paid in taxes, 1913/1916**

There is no 3000 yen income bracket for businessmen in 1913.

Sources: *Chōsho T3*, pp. 154, 208; *Chōsho T6*, pp. 1, 9, 15.

degree over that span of time, while the former sustained an appreciable increase. All these observations suggest that at the beginning of the Taishō era (1912–26) there was marked tax inequality on both horizontal and vertical axes. Some of the structural causes of this general unbalance can be grasped intuitively, starting from the lenient treatment of financial capital vis-à-vis real property. However, for an accurate evaluation, it is necessary to delve into the details of the burden, as recorded in the same sources.

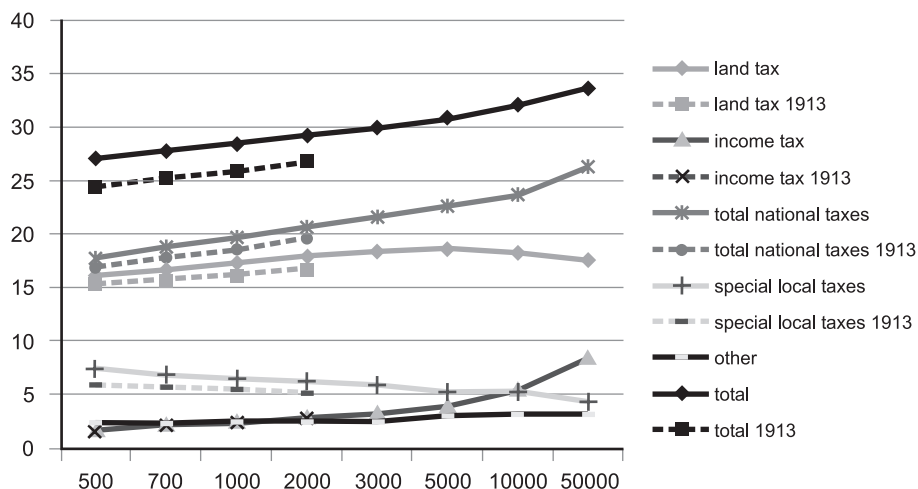
### Agriculture

Taking the *Gist* of the second survey as the guiding thread, this section will review the composition of taxes paid by each category in the sample. Concerning those persons whose main income accrues from agriculture (Figure 2), compilers note the following:<sup>14</sup>

1. national taxes are on the whole progressive and present no imbalance;
2. in contrast, the sum of local taxes shows a regressive trend, which depends on the inadequacy of the *kosūwari* (household tax) and other special taxes;
3. up to the 3000-yen income bracket, local taxes exceed national ones; the causes of this improper ratio are the independent local taxes, again, and excessive rates on the land tax;
4. land tax progressivity is related to the fact that the share of land leased to tenants rises at each successive income bracket: because direct farming is more profitable than renting out, the burden is heavier on large landowners.

The first observation somewhat overstates the progressive character of national taxes, which is minimal. The rates of personal income tax, introduced in 1887 and then gradually revised, were still mild even in the upper range. The main redistributive mechanism, therefore, lay in the high threshold: 300 yen, raised to 400 in 1913.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, dividends and interest

<sup>14</sup> *Chōsa yōryō*, microfilm slides 105–106 (the original has no numbered pages).

**Figure 2. Tax burden of farmers, 1913/1916**

Land tax, income tax and total national taxes include the additional rates levied by local government.

The same in following figures.

Sources: *Chōsho T3*, pp. 153–154; *Chōsho T6*, p. 1.

on securities were taxed separately at flat rates. During the Great War, high-paced economic growth determined a strong natural increase in income-tax revenues, especially in the share paid by corporations. From the government perspective, it was in those years that income taxes finally replaced land tax as the most important instrument of direct imposition. While in 1913 their respective revenues was of 35 and 74 million yen, by 1916 the gap had shrunk to 51 against 73 million; the next year, the balance was reversed to 94 against 73 million yen.<sup>15</sup> This was a telling sign of the relative decline of agriculture against the modern sectors of the economy. To the individual landowner, however, income tax remained a secondary concern; the chief levy was still that on real property.

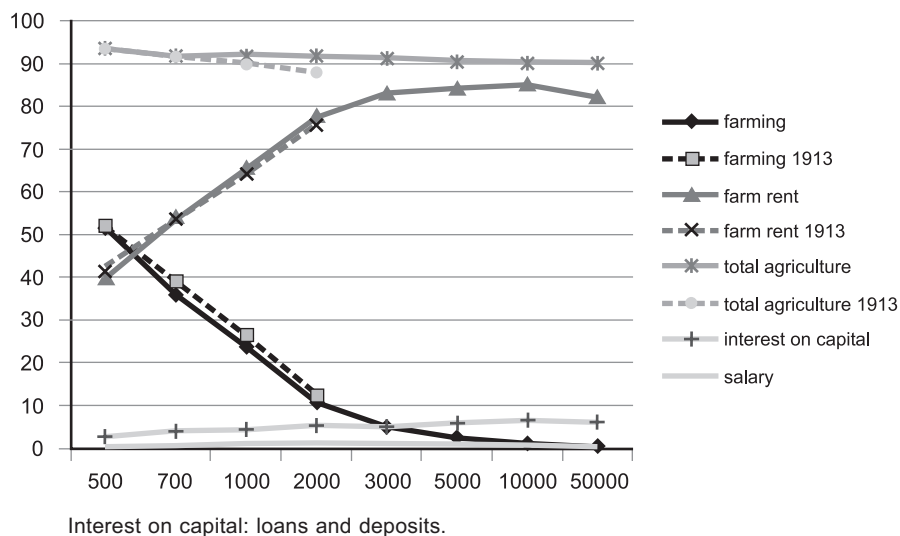
Irrespective of the actual profits of agriculture or other activities, land tax was assessed as a fixed percentage of cadastral value (4.7 for paddies and fields, then lowered to 4.5 in 1915). Therefore, the progressive trend recorded in Figure 2 is only apparent. As explained above at point 4, there is an inverse relationship between the size of the property and the portion cultivated directly by the owner. If land is rented out, at least half of the product remains to the tenant, but the tax still falls entirely on the owner. The economic incentive for renting out, then, derives from the technical limits to cultivation of a large area by a single household. Since hiring workers for labor-intensive agriculture, as typical in Japan,

<sup>15</sup> The exemption point was further raised in 1918 (500 yen), 1920 (800) and 1926 (1200). The purpose of the first two revisions was chiefly to offset inflation, while the latter aimed to ease the burden of the middle classes.

<sup>16</sup> All data on national tax revenue cited in this article are taken from *Ōkurashō shuzei kyoku, Shuzei kyoku tōkei nenpōsho* [Annual Statistical Report of the Tax Bureau], *Ōkurashō shuzei kyoku*, published since 1876. Local tax revenue is from *Naimushō chihō kyoku* (ed.), *Chihō zaisei gaiyō/Extracts from Local Finance of Japan*, *Naimushō chihō kyoku*, published annually since 1903.

becomes too onerous beyond a certain scale, tenancy represents the best solution to the needs of big landowners. The 1913 survey shows that the ‘natural’ limit of direct farming is around two *chō* (approximately two hectares), as all land in excess of that amount (4–14 *chō*) is rented out.<sup>17</sup> Both documents also reveal that rent is the chief income of “agriculturers” above the 500 yen bracket (Figure 3).

**Figure 3. Sources of farmers’ income, 1916**



Sources: *Chōsho T3*, p. 153; *Chōsho T6*, p. 6.

According to the original comment, the problem with land taxation lies in the high additional rates. On an average of the 500–2000 income range, in both years the ratio between state and local rates is 100/69. The relative weight of surtaxes in the sample is therefore heavier than in aggregate revenue nationwide, which is 64 percent in 1913 and 62 percent in 1916. This discrepancy suggests that in rural districts the additional rates were higher than in urban areas, where administrators could rely on a more diversified endowment of fiscal resources.<sup>18</sup> Since local bodies had to cope with rising expenditure without adequate support from the central government, in the Meiji period (1868–1912) the share of additional rates over total land taxation had already started to increase. This trend peaked in the years that immediately followed the surveys examined here: by 1922, with the land tax staying flat at 73 million yen, surtaxes had burgeoned to 128 million. While much of the

<sup>17</sup> *Chōsho T3*, p. 153. In this light it can be better appreciated why in 1920, when a government advisory committee started discussing introduction of a property tax, the proposed threshold corresponded to the market value of about two *chō* of farming land. See Andrea Revelant, ‘Tax Reform as Social Policy: Adjusting to Change in Interwar Japan’, *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 3, May 2013, p. 877.

<sup>18</sup> For a comprehensive discussion of the urban/rural gap see Ikegami Takehiko, ‘Senkanki ni okeru chokusetsuizei futan no chiikikan kakusa’ [Interregional Differential of the Burden in Direct Taxes in the Interwar Period], *Niigata daigaku shōgaku ronshū*, No. 25, 1993, pp. 1–52.

political debate on fiscal reform in the interwar years converged on the issue of local taxes and the possible transfer of resources from center to periphery, the *Gist* tells us that Finance bureaucrats were well aware of this problem when it was still incipient. Points 2 and 3 of the above-cited passage, in fact, constitute an acknowledgment of the structural defects of local taxation as a whole. Additional rates, which simply replicate national taxes, are criticized for being too heavy. Special local taxes, on the other hand, are judged faulty in themselves.

The *kosūwari*, in particular, stands out in the text among the items that require amendment. Usually translated in period sources as “household tax”, it was a prefectural levy that lacked unified criteria of imposition at national level.<sup>19</sup> Originally, prefectures would use it to fill the gap between planned expenses and ordinary fiscal resources, setting a revenue target and leaving to their dependent municipalities the task of defining in detail how to apportion the burden among residents. Different criteria could be used to assess the capacity of a family, such as the amount paid in national taxes, land property, size or value of the house. In many cases the municipal council would adopt a combination of two or more benchmarks. However, in towns and villages it was also a common practice to leave the final definition of the *kosūwari* to an arbitrary estimate of tax officials (*mitatewari*). The justification for this method was that in rural communities it would be relatively simple to verify the economic status of each household. For the opposite reason, city councils would often substitute the *kosūwari* with a house tax (*kaokuzei*), the definition of which also varied around the country. As can be easily guessed, this overall lack of uniform and objective criteria for assessment was a major cause of criticism. What made the situation less tolerable was the growing importance of *kosūwari* and house tax in local finance, particularly as additional rates levied at the municipal level. In 1913 the two taxes combined represented 24.0 percent of the total tax revenue of prefectures and 62.5 percent of that of municipalities. Compared to ten years earlier, i.e. before the war against Russia, it meant a respective increase of 4.5 and 15.2 points. The predominantly rural character of the *kosūwari* emerges clearly from the distribution of the additional rate on the territory (Table 1).

**Table 1. Details of municipal tax revenue (in million yen)**

|      | <i>kosūwari</i> |        |                |        | house tax |        |                |       |
|------|-----------------|--------|----------------|--------|-----------|--------|----------------|-------|
|      | cities          |        | towns–villages |        | cities    |        | towns–villages |       |
| 1903 | 1.2             | (9.9)  | 26.3           | (54.3) | 1.0       | (8.3)  | 0.1            | (0.2) |
| 1913 | 2.2             | (10.1) | 60.0           | (68.3) | 5.4       | (24.9) | 1.2            | (1.3) |
| 1916 | 2.6             | (11.0) | 70.9           | (77.4) | 5.2       | (22.1) | 1.5            | (1.7) |

In brackets, percentage of total tax revenue of either Cities (*shi*) or Towns and Villages (*chōson*).

<sup>19</sup> The development of this tax and related problems are outlined in several prewar essays, particularly Tanaka Kōtarō, *Chihōzei kosūwari* [Local Tax *Kosūwari*], Ryōsho fukyūkai, 1922; *Chihōzei kenkyū* [A Study on Local Taxes], Teikoku chihō gyōsei gakkai, 1928, pp. 205–228; *Chihō zaisei* [Local Finance], Nihon hyōronsha, 1930, pp. 146–170. For a general account among recent studies, see the relevant sections in Takayose, *Meiji...*, *Taishō...* and *Shōwa...*

Not surprisingly, measures on the *kosūwari* featured in the first plan for comprehensive reform of the tax system laid after the Great War. Implemented in 1921, the revision focused on the abolition of *mitatewari* and the adoption of unified criteria nationwide, with greater weight assigned to income. This proved insufficient to correct inequality, though, leading to some adjustments the next year and a thorough reorganization of both *kosūwari* and house tax in 1926.<sup>20</sup>

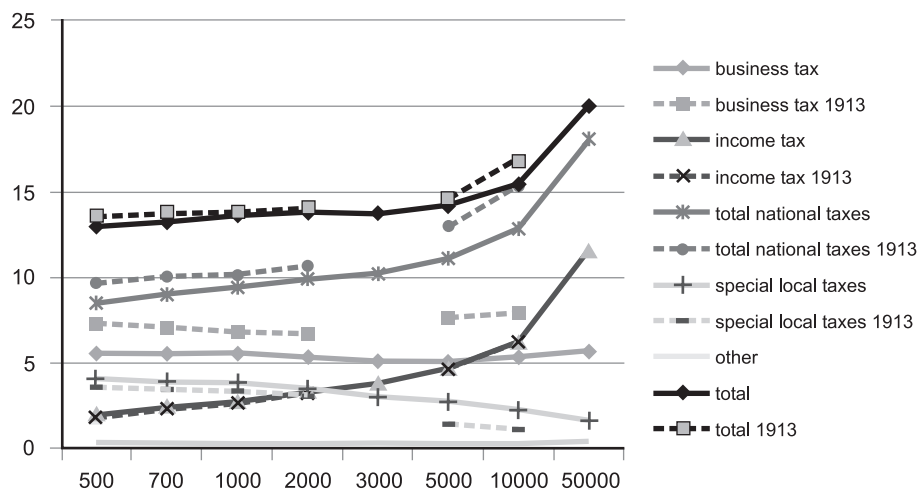
### Other professions

Notes on urban entrepreneurs in the *Gist* follow the same order adopted for landowners.<sup>21</sup>

1. National taxes: on the whole progressive, with the exception of the business tax, which is disproportionately heavy in the lower brackets and light in the upper ones.
2. Local taxes: overall regressive, due to the combined effect of rates on the business tax, the *kosūwari* and other independent levies, such as the house tax.
3. Balance between national and local taxes: aside from the lowest income bracket, the former prevail. However, it has to be remarked that this gap decreases as income gets lower.

These comments draw attention on the fact that the tax burden, although much lighter than on landowners, does not have an equitable distribution (Figure 4). Moreover, while the core issue for the rural sample was local taxation, here we also find a dysfunction of the main national tax; the latter affects the additional rates, which amplify the problem.

Figure 4. Tax burden of businessmen, 1913/1916



Sources: *Chōsho T3*, pp. 215–216, 221–222, 227–228, 233–234, 239–240, 245–246; *Chōsho T6*, p. 9.

<sup>20</sup> See Mizumoto Tadatake, *Kosūwarizei no seiritsu to tenkai* [Establishment and Development of the *Kosūwari* Tax], Ochanomizu shobō, 1998, pp. 121–179.

<sup>21</sup> *Chōsa yōryō*, slide 116.

The business tax (*eigyōzei*), originally levied by the Prefectures, was transferred to the central government in 1897 with the double aim of harmonizing its criteria of assessment countrywide and supporting the expansion of the national budget after the Sino-Japanese War. Instead of targeting profits, which were the object of income tax, it dealt with the ‘size’ of either individual or corporate business. The amount due depended on a mix of flat rates and lump sums on annual sales, capital, number of employees and other criteria.<sup>22</sup> This method of computation, which from the viewpoint of administrators had the merit of curbing evasion, clearly favored big firms over small businesses. Always controversial, the tax gave rise to a movement of entrepreneurs calling for its abolition, which gained momentum precisely on the eve of World War I.<sup>23</sup> The two surveys considered here, therefore, provide valuable evidence on the reasons of that protest. Three years after undergoing revision in 1923, the business tax was suppressed to introduce a business profit tax (*eigyō shūekizei*), in the attempt to redistribute the burden in accordance with actual income. Furthermore, the single flat rate introduced at that time for individuals (2.8 percent of profits) was substituted by two in 1931, adding a touch of progressivity.<sup>24</sup> By comparing figures for either survey, one may note that the incidence of business tax and additional rates combined decreases in the interval, especially for the upper income brackets. This can be explained in part with the revision of national rates enacted in 1914, but also as a consequence of the wartime boom: since the tax was less elastic than income, a rapid increase of profits would reduce the burden. As already observed with respect to land tax, there is no significant variation in the national/local rates ratio, which on average of the 500–2000-yen income layer is 100/31 in 1913 and 100/32 in 1916. The local share, in other words, is less than half of that recorded for the land tax. Given the relative importance of agriculture and other economic sectors in either rural or urban context, the lower level of business surtaxes suggests that cities, in contrast to villages, did not need to rely heavily on a single resource. At the same time, however, restraint in taxing business was in compliance with government policy: the legal ceiling for additional rates was much lower than for land tax.<sup>25</sup> It can be noticed, however, that both land and business surtaxes exceeded these limits thanks to special government authorization, as provided by law in case of need. Exceptions had become common practice.

<sup>22</sup> Law 33/1896, <http://kindai.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/787999/33>.

<sup>23</sup> See Eguchi Keiichi, ‘1914 nen no haizei undō’ [The 1914 Campaign for Tax Abrogation], in *Taishōki no seiji to shakai* [Politics and Society in the Taishō period], Inoue Kiyoshi (ed.), Iwanami shoten, 1969, pp. 53–115; Eguchi Keiichi, *Toshi shōburujōa undōshi no kenkyū* [A Study on the History of Movements of the Small Urban Bourgeoisie], Miraisha, 1979, Chapters 1 and 3.

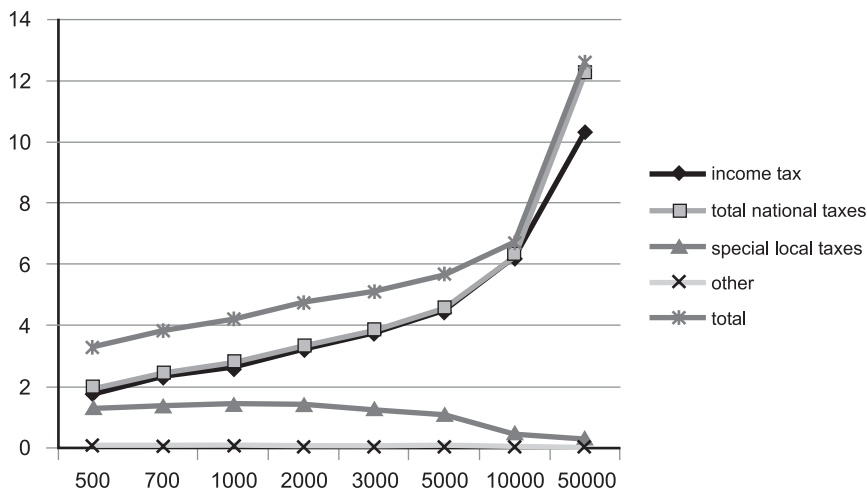
<sup>24</sup> The new rates were 2.2 percent of profits up to 1000 yen and 2.6 percent of the exceeding sum. For corporations, the rate decreased from 3.6 to 3.4 percent. See Laws No. 11/1926 and 47/1931, [http://www.jacar.go.jp/DAS/meta/listPhoto?REFCODE=A03021584300&IS\\_STYLE=default&image\\_num=7](http://www.jacar.go.jp/DAS/meta/listPhoto?REFCODE=A03021584300&IS_STYLE=default&image_num=7); [www.jacar.go.jp/DAS/meta/listPhoto?REFCODE=A03021795600&IS\\_STYLE=default&image\\_num=3](http://www.jacar.go.jp/DAS/meta/listPhoto?REFCODE=A03021795600&IS_STYLE=default&image_num=3) (accessed 7.10.2013).

<sup>25</sup> As a percentage of the national tax, at the time the municipal limit was 53 on land and 26 on business. The lowest ceiling was for income surtaxes, set at 19 percent. *Chōsa yōryō*, slide 133. See Laws 37/1908, 27/1910 and 32/1911, <http://kindai.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/788058/56>; <http://kindai.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/788070/96>; <http://kindai.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/788076/165> (accessed 7.10.2013).

The third category of taxpayers, namely people employed in the public sector, has a simpler burden structure (Figure 5). Editors observe the following:<sup>26</sup>

1. there is nothing in particular to note about national taxes, which consist almost entirely of income tax;
2. with the exception of the lowest income bracket, national taxes exceed local ones, as it should be;
3. however, local tax incidence drops above income of 3000 yen, because top earners live mainly in big cities, where they pay less in special local taxes.

**Figure 5. Tax burden of public employees, 1916**



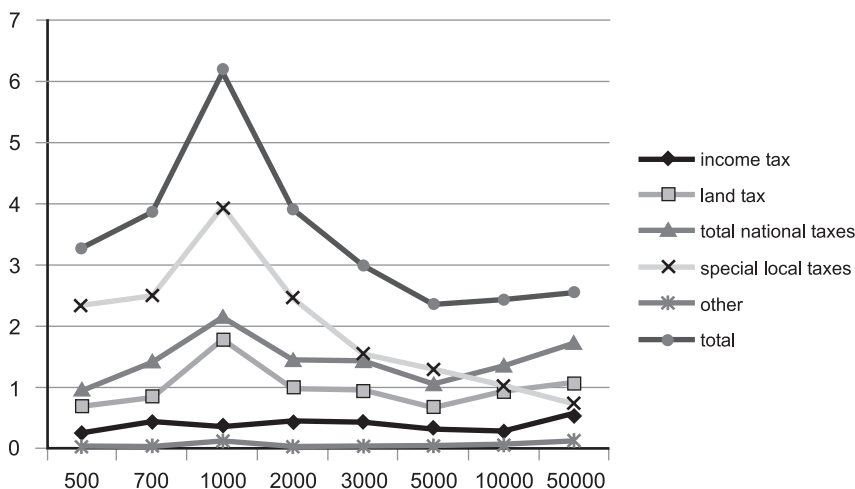
Source: *Chōsho T6*, p. 15.

The text does not specify what kinds of public employment are included in the sample. It is clear, however, that salary represents over 98 percent of income in all classes except the top, where ‘other’ sources make for 17 percent.<sup>27</sup> Taking as reference the salary scale for the civil service,<sup>28</sup> it results that income brackets up to 1000 yen correspond to the basic remuneration of clerical staff (*hannin* class); between 500 and 3000 yen, to that of mid-rank officials (*sōnin*); while the upper brackets are restricted to bureaucrats holding key posts (*chokunin*), such as vice-ministers and prefectural governors. The single person in the top bracket, with 18,300 yen earned in “salary, allowances and bonuses”, is likely the prime minister, whose basic pay was at that time 12,000 yen per year. The curve of income tax is similar to the one already drawn for landowners and businessmen. Considerably lower, instead, is the level of local taxes, which probably depends on the relative lack of landed property and other fixed assets. In addition, the remark on special taxes confirms previous observations on the higher burden imposed on residents by towns and villages.

<sup>26</sup> *Chōsa yōryō*, slide 122.

<sup>27</sup> *Chōsho T6*, p. 18.

<sup>28</sup> Imperial ordinances No. 6/1886, 36/1886, 134/1910, <http://kindai.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/787968/258>; <http://kindai.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/788070/336> (accessed 7.10.2013).

**Figure 6. Tax burden of financial rentiers, 1916**

Source: *Chōsho T6*, p. 21.

Finally, it remains to outline the situation of financial rentiers (Figure 6). In the *Gist*, it is noted that in this case national taxes do not follow a regular pattern; that local taxes, for the largest part of the independent kind, are regressive; and that such a regressive character prevails overall.<sup>29</sup> The peak of burden at around 1000 yen in income seems to depend on the greater weight of land property (directly as land tax, indirectly as special local taxes), but the reason for this feature is not clear. There is a peculiarity, however, in the definition of income for this type of taxpayers. In the other cases, the amount includes only individual earnings classified as “type 3” under income tax law, that is salary, business profits, net receipts from agriculture and other kinds of income subject to progressive rates. For rentiers, on the other hand, the amount is also comprehensive of income “type 1” (corporate income) and “type 2” (interest on financial assets),<sup>30</sup> both taxed at flat rates. From the viewpoint of individuals, type 1 income consisted of dividends received net of the tax paid by the firm. Personal income tax on dividends would be introduced in 1920, with a 40 percent deduction. Similarly, type 2 income was taxed at source, and not summed into other personal earnings. The big difference between rentiers and other categories in the survey, then, is that the former income includes all three types, but taxes refer only to type 3. Consequently, the total burden shown in the graph is lower than the actual one. For this reason, editors note that these data can serve only as an approximate reference.<sup>31</sup>

The above considerations on income assessment raise a broader question of the validity of the figures presented so far for each professional category. To what extent would the burden change if income other than type 3 were computed with related taxes? Although the information is not detailed enough to provide a precise answer, data are

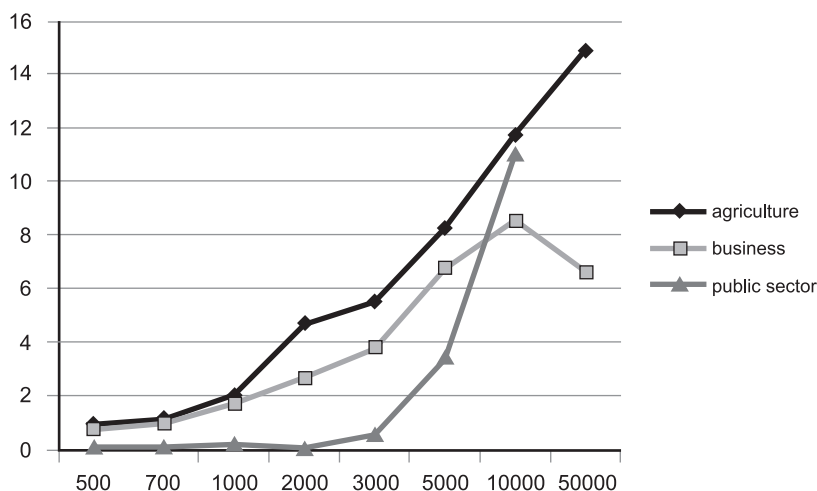
<sup>29</sup> *Chōsa yōryō*, slide 127.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*. On income classification, see Law 13/1913, [http://www.jacar.go.jp/DAS/meta/listPhoto?REFCODE=A03020953200&IS\\_STYLE=default&image\\_num=16](http://www.jacar.go.jp/DAS/meta/listPhoto?REFCODE=A03020953200&IS_STYLE=default&image_num=16) (accessed 7.10.2013).

available on the ratio between either kind of income (Figure 7). Notwithstanding some differences, dividends and interest on securities represent an appreciable portion of total income for each profession from the 5000-yen bracket upwards. As a result, the redistributive efficacy of progressive income tax on individuals becomes even feebler than as shown in the previous graphs.<sup>32</sup>

**Figure 7. Sum of income type 1 and 2 as a percentage of income type 3, 1916**



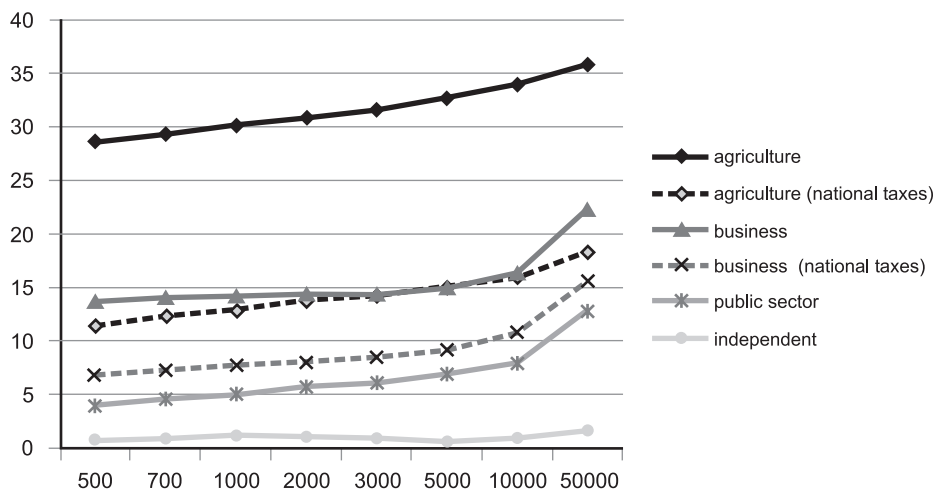
The figure for public employment in the 50,000 yen bracket (one person) is 767.18 (170,000 yen).

Source: *Chōsho T6*, pp. 6, 12, 18.

There is another adjustment to the final estimate of burden which editors carry out with scientific method. It consists of revising figures in accordance with the “real capacity” (*jishitsuteki futan nōryoku*) of either capital or labor income.<sup>33</sup> Moving from the assumption that the former is stable and durable, while the latter is uncertain, they assess a capacity ratio of 10 to 8. Next, the overall capacity of each segment in the sample is measured by taking into account the relative shares of capital and labor as sources of income (for example, in the case of landowners rent is treated as pure capital income, while farming as a combination of capital and labor). The revised frame (Figure 8) does not depart substantially from the initial estimate, aside from a slight reduction in the gap between agriculture and business, on the one hand, and a downgrade of the rentiers’ burden. The operation, however, deserves notice as it signals the concern of Finance bureaucrats for the gradation of taxes on the basis of income source. Although analysis in the *Gist* is not followed by policy recommendations, it implicitly points at the convenience of exerting a relatively heavier pressure on capital. Some steps towards implementation of this principle had been taken in 1913, with the introduction of the first deductions on labor income. More measures would follow in the next years, as in the

<sup>32</sup> This is acknowledged in *Chōsa yōryō*, slides 106–107, 117, 123.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, slides 136–141.

**Figure 8. Real tax burden, 1916**

Source: *Chōsa yōryō*, slide 141.

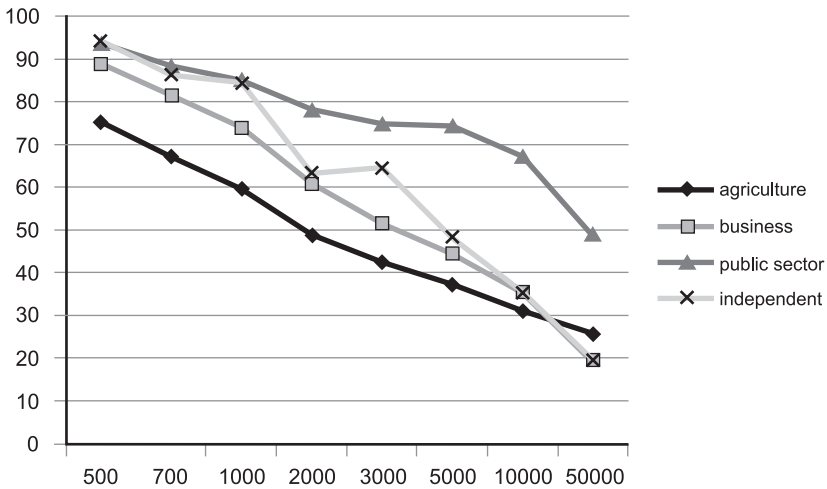
revision of income tax (in 1920 and 1926) and the enactment of the tax on capital interest (*shihon rishizei*, 1926). Strengthening the distinction of treatment between capital and labor was also a key element of interwar plans that eventually saw the light, albeit in modified form, in the comprehensive tax reform of 1940.<sup>34</sup>

### Conclusion: Setting the stage for reform

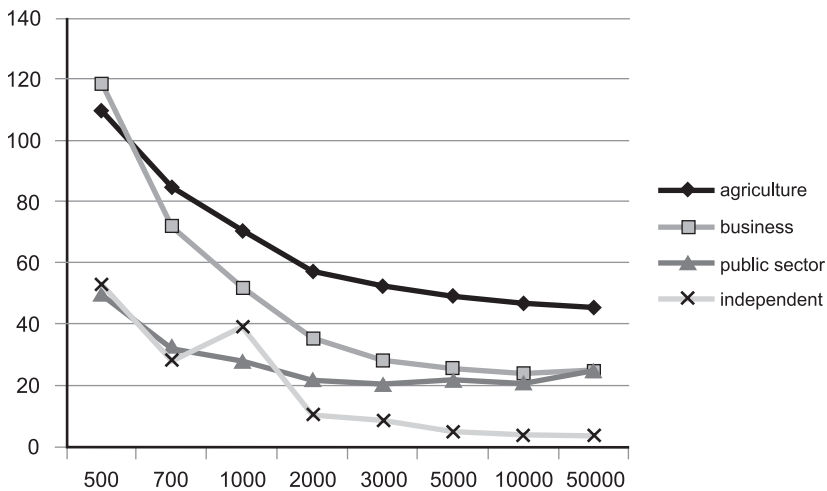
The data discussed up to this point shed light on tax incidence at different income layers and make a comparison among professions possible. As noted above, several deficiencies clearly emerge from the standpoint of equality. However, none of this tells us whether the burden is commensurate to the ability to pay of people at each income level in either category. If earnings barely suffice to cover the cost of living, then taxes equivalent to just 5 percent of income may be hard to bear. Conversely, if the household has a large income surplus, even a 20–30 percent share may pose no major problem. In order to understand the actual impact of taxation on a family, one has to look at the balance between income and personal outlays. This kind of information appears only in the second survey (Figure 9), which shows the steady increase of surplus as income rises. The following passage is to measure taxes as a share of income net of living expenses (Figure 10). It is evident that taxes weigh more in the lower range. The most striking fact is that both farmers and businessmen are running a deficit in the 500-yen bracket.<sup>35</sup> Although moving upwards there is a margin for savings, these are less than half the amount paid in taxes until the 1000-yen income class of businessmen and the 3000-yen class of landowners. In the

<sup>34</sup> In this respect, two early proposals that deserve particular mention are those for a property tax and a classified income tax, both first examined by policy makers in 1920–22. See Revelant, 'Tax Reform...', pp. 876–887.

<sup>35</sup> *Chōsa yōryō*, slides 107, 118.

**Figure 9. Percentage of income spent in living expenses, 1916**

Source: *Chōsho T6*, p. 30.

**Figure 10. Percentage of surplus (income minus living expenses) paid in taxes, 1916**

Sources: *Chōsho T6*, p. 29.

compilers' opinion, the burden placed on entrepreneurs as a whole is "not excessive", while that of farmers is "not light". They also acknowledge that indirect taxes, which are included in the expenses for personal consumption, contribute to making the burden of lower-class farmers excessive.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., slides 107–108, 118–119.

In conclusion, the Research Bureau extracts from the findings a comprehensive diagnosis of Japan's tax system.<sup>37</sup> These, in order, are the ills detected:

1. land and business taxes, especially the former, are excessive;
2. consequently, the burden on the lower classes is too heavy;
3. there is no taxation on movable assets, aside from those related to business;
4. income tax is not the real center of direct taxation, but plays only a complementary function to land and business taxes;
5. local taxes lack appropriate limits;
6. in particular, they weigh too much on land;
7. the criteria for imposition of special local taxes are not correct.

Concerning the last point, it is also specified that *kosūwari* and house tax are heavy in farming districts and light in business districts.<sup>38</sup> The editors can therefore state that, notwithstanding the effects of inflation and the economic cycle on the distribution of burden, the problems lie chiefly in structural faults; in order to achieve a well-balanced burden, "appropriate amendments" to the tax system are required.

Putting these comments in a broader historical context, some considerations can be made on the political causes of tax inequality and its persistence over time. As noted in the comparison between the two surveys, the economic boom triggered by the Great War was not at the root of the burden imbalance; rather, it accelerated its deepening, with tangible effects in the years which immediately followed the period examined here. Both the vertical and horizontal inequality recorded in the surveys were the long-term products of a government policy that encouraged investment in the industrial and financial sectors at the expense of distributive justice. Since the Meiji Restoration, the newly established oligarchy had striven to modernize the economy, consistently with its ultimate goal of turning the country into a power of international standing. In terms of fiscal extraction, this effort implied a transfer of resources from agriculture to other sectors; it also materialized as support for the larger and more competitive firms over small producers. Some of the negative consequences were predictable and accepted by the government as a necessary price to be paid on the path to development; others, such as the disorderly growth of local taxation, were unintended and perceived with increasing alarm. The two surveys presented in this paper prove that there was a clear awareness of structure problems in the Ministry of Finance by the 1910s, based on factual evidence. Each of the defects listed above became the target of legislative revision in the wake of the war, when the raised level of political and social conflict within the country put greater pressure to ease inequality on policy makers. The uneven pace and extent of actual reform, however, reflect the tension among the interests of different social groups and the successive shifts in their influence over state institutions. For these reasons, much can be learnt from the debate on taxation that unfolded between the two world conflicts about power relations in the domestic politics of that period.

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., slide 146.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., slide 132.



PARK SUNYONG

## Consumption of an Expedition: Media Perceptions of Kyoto University's Expedition to Mt. Baekdu\*

### Abstract

Mt. Baekdu is considered to be one of the most crucially symbolic geographical locations for the peoples of Korea, China and Japan. The Japanese empire used Kyoto University's expedition to this mountain to confirm their own colonial and territorial empire, and to expand their knowledge and horizons. The Kyoto University expedition explored Mt. Baekdu scientifically and with great interest, and the *Asahi* newspaper reported upon this trip in detail. This article discusses what the expedition achieved and how Japanese society made use of its findings. The paper concludes that the risks associated with the scientific expedition motivated a renewed interest in further exploration.

### 1. Introduction

Exploration is about seeking new areas of knowledge, places and questions which have not been addressed by previous ventures. It is also about obtaining more data and knowledge about locations which have not been completely explored. People often use their imaginations to think about places about which little or even nothing at all is generally known. In fact, within this process, some areas are more enticing to explore than others.

Writing an article about the exploration of the unknown can often include the strongly subjective opinions of a reporter which extend beyond the normal limitations of a newspaper. In fact, any in-depth coverage of the unknown requires a great deal of basic knowledge, as well as direct communication with the subjects. This may allow readers to gain a more direct understanding of new topics.

In the era of global exploration during the 1930s, Kyoto University planned an exploration to Mt. Baekdu (2744 m), an active volcano and the highest mountain in Manchuria, located between Korea and China, which plays an important geological role in East Asia. This place is the pride of the Korean and Manchurian peoples, and plays a vital cultural role in their national identity. Mt. Baekdu has been worshipped by the surrounding peoples throughout history. Both the Koreans and Manchu minority consider it the place of their ancestral origin and a sacred mountain. Japan's purpose for this expedition was to establish more knowledge about their colonial empire and to strengthen their own national identity.

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Consequently, due to the importance of this trip and its destination, the *Asahi* newspaper published an intensive report on the topic.

Previous research reveals that Japan used experiments, expositions, field trips, and travel in order to increase its knowledge of its colonial possessions. However, no previous research has considered how the mass media itself was used to discuss the exploration of these unknown areas.

This paper will examine Japan's exploration of Mt. Baekdu as carried out by Kyoto University. Also, we will examine the involvement of the *Asahi* newspaper in expanding the Japanese Empire's capacity while increasing its printed circulation. Furthermore, it will explore their reasons for the trip, and how the mass media was used to promote national prestige during this event. Building on this foundation, the article will then analyze the expedition historically, scientifically, and in terms of media information. The conclusion will also consider how this unique combination of exploration and science inspired and initiated other explorations, while providing colonial education.

## 2. Historical background of the expedition and the recognition of Japan's colonial empire

### 2.1. Historical background of Japanese exploration

In the 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Vikings and Marco Polo began to explore, while in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, Columbus and Magellan discovered the 'New World'. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, advances in science allowed for the discovery of Australia and the South Pole.<sup>1</sup> Finally, the 18<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the conquest of much of the world by Europe using advances in marine technology and science.

Despite this long history, Japan did not initially engage in much exploration in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, due to the isolationist policies of their feudal government. However, incursions into Asia by Western countries soon encouraged Japan to start exploring. Some examples include Gondo Chuzo (近藤重藏) and Mamiya Rinzo (間宮林藏).<sup>2</sup> Financial sponsors quickly appeared and began to support further explorations.<sup>3</sup>

Areas for exploration became more diverse in the Meiji Era. For instance, in 1892 Hukushima Yasumasa (福島安正) crossed Siberia. In 1898, Iemura (家村相助) traveled with Zhang Jiakou (張家口) to Kulun (庫倫). In 1902, Inoue Masaji (井上雅二) traveled around western and central Asia. In 1905, Hayashite (林出賢二郎) went from Beijing (北京) to Xian (西安), to Lanzhou (蘭州) and also to Hami (哈密), Tianshan (天山), Yili (伊犁), and Urumqi. He also introduced the idea of exploring the countries bordering on western China to the Japanese. Hino Tsutomu (日野強)'s 1906 journey to Beijing, Yili, and India was published in *Yili (伊犁) Expedition*. Shirosé (白瀨) travelled to the South Pole, and thus gained worldwide attention, as he took a small 24-ton boat all the way to 78 degrees, 31

<sup>1</sup> Seo Jungbok, 'Expedition Background of North America by France and Its Result', *North America Studies*, No. 13, 2004, p. 68.

<sup>2</sup> Toshiyuki Akizuki, *Nihon hokuhen no tanken to chizu no rekishi* [A History of the Exploration and Cartography of the Northwest Pacific], Sapporo-shi: Hokkaidō Daigaku Toshō Kankōkai, 1999, preface.

<sup>3</sup> Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (DAMOFA), K-2-2-0-1, *Tanken no iron tekikenkyū no kokoromi* [Theory Study of Expedition], June 1941, pp. 37–38.

minutes south. He also went all the way to 151 degrees, 20 minutes west to the South Pole. Another team used a dog sled until 80 degrees, 5 minutes south. In 1907, Otani Kozui (大谷光瑞) made many visits to central Asia and Buddhist heritage sites, and Tarabana (橘瑞超)'s reports are still especially valuable regarding modern explorations into a comprehensive 'New Western China'.<sup>4</sup>

The ambition to conquer the world had dropped away in the 1920s, due to the growth of the democratic movement, but became active again in the 1930s when Japan took over the area of Manchuria and founded the Manchukuo puppet state, and an atmosphere of nationalism reemerged. After the 1930s, the East Asia Archeology Association (東亞考古學會), Kyung Sung (京城) and the Kyoto University exploration group were exploring the Mongolian area, while Rehe (熱河) set Shigeyasu Tokunaga (徳永重康) as the head of their exploration. The Manchuria area was explored by the army, the South Manchuria Railway Company, and the Mainland Academy, while Hainan Island (海南島) was explored by other organizations.<sup>5</sup>

These explorations were not conducted simply for sake of exploring the unknown, but were also necessary for awakening the nation's interest and promoting cultural knowledge. Japan's intention during these explorations was primarily to challenge the national imagination, and to strengthen the independence of the nation. Furthermore, it created a visible achievement for other nations to notice.

Secondarily, Japan explored these territories in order to obtain more information about remote places and frontiers, as part of Japan's attempt to create an East Asian New Order. Acquiring basic information about the area was necessary in order for the unification of nations. This data described the ethnicity, society, religion, and habits of the region, which were all necessary for future colonial policies. Using this information, Japan conducted detailed studies on cultural, ethnology, linguistics, and anthropology.<sup>6</sup> Japan also required this information for topographical, geographical, geopolitical, economic and mining studies, as well as for determining food resources for stable colonial expansion.

These studies were also conducted in order to gather important scientific information. For example, both animal studies and plant research were also conducted in order to estimate figures on the potential loss of livestock and grains. Exploration was also needed to obtain information about the climate in local areas, as this allowed scientists to obtain geological and climate information, and thus to fill in the areas on the map that were not complete. Furthermore, radio and telegraph equipment were needed for this exploration. In additions, these explorations helped to improve roads, railroads and the construction of bridges. Medical knowledge was also gathered, as the explorations reported about the diseases endemic to a given area. Overall, all of this information was reported using the mass media, so as to educate the wider public.<sup>7</sup>

Japan's exploration attempts, then, were not carried out just for the sake of exploration itself, but were also a calculated attempt to expand their colonies. This exploration for the sake of expansion also helped to accelerate the growth of the modern academy.

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<sup>4</sup> DAMOFA, K-2-2-0-1, pp. 40–41.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 42.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp. 44–50.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp. 51–53.

Japan was also interested in the exploration carried out by other nations. Japan's diplomacy records include documentation of the explorations of many other nations. For example, Japan was interested in exploration efforts not only in areas of their own spheres of interest, but also in the United States' expeditions to the Gobi deserts, Taiwan, Siberia, India, Tibet, Mongolia, and the South Pole. In addition, Japan was interested in England's exploration of Tibet, and Russia's exploration of further Russia, the North Pole, polar crossings, and Mongolia. They also recorded documentation about the Swiss exploration of China, and Germany's expeditions to Morocco, Paraguay, and the South Pole, as well as the Netherlands' explorations in New Guinea, France's explorations in Asia, Italy's explorations in the Amazon, Norway's widespread explorations, as well as those undertaken by many other nations.<sup>8</sup>

However, despite this extensive record-keeping, Japan's main interest remained the Pacific region in Asia. Their foreign policy states that exploring the Asian area was their priority, and therefore needed the government's support.<sup>9</sup>

After the 19th century, exploration advanced more scientifically. Europe was concluding a major war, and thus was actively engaged in exploration within the Himalayas, central Asia, China, South America, the South Pole, and Greenland. England was also planning to explore the world's highest peak, Mt. Everest, and Germany was planning to explore the third highest peak of Mt. Kanchenjunga, while Japan explored the Canadian province of Alberta.<sup>10</sup>

While travel to every part of the world was booming, Kyoto University was interested in exploring Mt. Baekdu. The notion of this area as 'virgin soil' was especially important and a symbolic requirement for this era of exploration.<sup>11</sup> As a result, the exploration of Mt. Baekdu provoked interest not only in newspaper articles,<sup>12</sup> but had also long been considered a goal of the exploration and colonization work conducted by the Japanese Governor-General of Korea, who therefore provided assistance.

An *Asahi* article from November 23, 1930 revealed plans to explore the abundant resources of the sparsely populated Mt. Baekdu, as drawn up by the Japanese Governor-General of Korea. In order to conduct this mission, the planning body needed to gather evidence before the start of 1931 under intense scrutiny, as well as to establish a fundamental policy. Their plan had the nominal goals of improving the Korean economy via the united efforts of the officials and the people, and especially by creating an industrial base for the production of pulp, sugar, hemp, sanctions, live stocks, and starch.<sup>13</sup> Mt. Baekdu is located between Korea and Manchuria, possesses an abundance of resources, and was therefore an important strategic location for Japan. Koyata Kotori (鳥尾小弥太) was a politician and soldier, and he claimed that 'Mt. Baekdu was the first line of the national defense of Japan'.

<sup>8</sup> DAMOFA, K-2-2-0-1, *Tanken kankei zakken* [Expedition related materials].

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>10</sup> Kinji Imanishi, *Hakutōzan: Kyōto Teikoku Daigaku Hakutōzan Enseitai hōkoku* [Mt. Baekdu: Kyoto University Expedition Reports], Tōkyō: Azusa Shobō, Shōwa 10, 1935, p. 6.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>12</sup> 'Hakutozan no Tanken' [Mt. Baekdu Expedition], *Tokyo Asahi Shinbun* [Tokyo Asahi Newspaper], Aug. 20, 1913.

<sup>13</sup> 'Hakutozanroku no kaitaku keikaku' [Reclamation Plan for Mt. Baekdu], *Tokyo Asahi Shinbun* [Tokyo Asahi Newspaper], Nov. 23, 1930.

Shima Hirotake (島弘毅) led a group that explored Manchuria for seven months, as based upon Kotori's policies.<sup>14</sup>

Kyoto University's plan to scientifically explore Mt. Baekdu was exclusively promoted in the *Asahi*. During that time, exploration and hiking were tightly integrated. Hiking was one aspect of a multifaceted culture movement which valued recreational sports in addition to art, literature, science and philosophy. A hiker who sought an adventure in unknown areas was generally considered to be exploring. Indeed, hiking provided a great sense of satisfaction as exploring an unknown area required overcoming difficulties with determination, knowledge, will and physical ability.<sup>15</sup>

Tsunekichi Kōno (加納一郎), who graduated from Hokkaido Empire University in 1923, worked at the *Asahi*, and served as chairman of the Japanese hiker's association, made an interesting analysis of hiking and exploration. He stated that the discovery of unknown places in nature is the key factor connecting hiking and exploration. Hiking could be considered to be a type of mountain expedition. Ichirō Kano notes that "Exploration is the discovery of an unknown area and its nature, in order to serve the government and the people's advancement".<sup>16</sup> Therefore, exploration is not just a personal desire to explore, but should also be a scientific venture. In fact, without scientific results, it should not be called exploration at all, as it is not just about hiking in an unknown area, but rather the discovery of new scientific results which should assist a nation's interests in the future, such as through the expansion of colonies.

## 2.2. The purpose for exploring Mt. Baekdu and the expansion of national prestige

Scientific exploration was booming around the world, and Kyoto University's exploration team had a clear goal when they decided to explore Mt. Baekdu in the harsh winter climate.

First, the exploration team wanted to conquer the highest peak in winter, which was a significant challenge due to the icy conditions.<sup>17</sup> They wanted to experiment with Mt. Baekdu,<sup>18</sup> and this desire "was born and raised against the history of Japanese exploration".<sup>19</sup> The trip was also described as one of the most interesting expeditions ever conducted by the Japanese.

Secondly the team wanted to make the exploration scientific. Each member of the group was an expert in his or her own field, and was ready to explore Mt. Baekdu successfully.<sup>20</sup> For example, Kyoto University's Kinji Imanishi (今西錦司) had plenty of experience in

<sup>14</sup> Shin'ichi Yamamuro, 'Bunka aiwataru katutotoshite no kunjichosha to shoukuminchi keiei' [Military Investigation and Colonial Control as a Culture Activity], *Jinmun kakuho* [Humanity Studium], No. 12, 2004, p. 237.

<sup>15</sup> Ichirō Kano, 'Tosan to tanken' [Hiking and Expedition], *Nihon sangakugai gansai shibuhen, Sangaku kenkyu koza* [Mountain Study Course] 1, Tokyo, 1943, p. 71.

<sup>16</sup> Ichirō Kano, p. 76.

<sup>17</sup> Kyōto Teikoku Daigaku Hakutōzan Enseitai, *Hakutōzan: Kyōto Teikoku Daigaku Hakutōzan Enseitai hōkoku* [Mt. Baekdu: Kyoto University Expedition Reports], preface.

<sup>18</sup> Kinji Imanishi, 'Hakutōzan Enseitai nitsuite', *Hakutōzan: Kyōto Teikoku Daigaku Hakutōzan Enseitai hōkoku, Kyōto Teikoku Daigaku Hakutōzan Enseitai* [Mt. Baekdu: Kyoto University Expedition Reports], Tōkyō: Azusa Shobō, Shōwa 10, 1935, p. 5.

<sup>19</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>20</sup> Kyōto Teikoku Daigaku Hakutōzan Enseitai, *Hakutōzan: Kyōto Teikoku Daigaku Hakutōzan Enseitai hōkoku* [Mt. Baekdu: Kyoto University Expedition Reports], preface.

hiking. He wanted to find out more about the co-existence between humanity and nature, and to explore their relationship in the field, through the study of Mt. Baekdu.

Thirdly, as well as achieving academic results, the group's goal was to show Mt. Baekdu off to the world. They hoped this would plant a seed to inspire future Japanese scholars, in addition to the rest of the academic world.<sup>21</sup>

Kyoto University was keen to join the rest of the academic world's drive to explore by sending a team to Mt. Baekdu. The expedition was prepared with expertise in medicine, meteorology, and biology so as to tackle the harsh winter climate on Mt. Baekdu. They also wanted to experiment with food rationing in the cold winter temperatures, for military reasons.<sup>22</sup>

While Kyoto University had general intentions regarding exploration, they did not have one specific purpose for the exploration.<sup>23</sup> They wanted to make the exploration scientific, and did so by conducting scientific experiments during their journey. This was the reason the exploration team did not call themselves the 'Scientific Exploration of Mt. Baekdu', but instead just referred to themselves as an exploration team. However, they did equip themselves with the scientific tools necessary for scientific purposes rather than simply for hiking.<sup>24</sup>

They believed this exploration was not just for recreational purposes but also to gain new knowledge for the academic community.<sup>25</sup> The team was made up of the following members (see Table 1).

Most of the team members were Kyoto University students. The leader, Kinji Imanishi, and several others had bachelor's degrees, and were already teaching at the university. One member had a PhD degree, but not all members had expertise in all of the fields.

Whether scientific or explorative in intention, the Kyoto University team nonetheless had to prepare for harsh conditions in the mountains. They gathered considerable information from experts and prepared extensively for the exploration.<sup>26</sup> For example, they learned to use the radio for communications from an engineering professor. They also learned about food from an agriculture professor and prepared accordingly.<sup>27</sup>

With basic experience in hiking, they equipped themselves with hanging tents, stoves, round tents, chapter furs, beds, dog-skin clothes from Hokkaido, and also lined the bottom

<sup>21</sup> Takeshi Kaneko, 'Okaruto Jappon no bunsuirei', Morio Yoshida, *Okaruto no wakusei: 1930 nendai mō hitotsu no sekaichizu* [Occult Planet: Another World Map in 1930], Tōkyō: Seikyūsha, 2009, p. 45.

<sup>22</sup> 'Shotoko no miwaku kisho hakubutsu no kenkyumo' [Study on Weather and Wide Knowledge by the First Hiking], *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, Dec. 6, 1934.

<sup>23</sup> Takeshi Kaneko, 'Okaruto Jappon no bunsuirei', Morio Yoshida, *Okaruto no wakusei: 1930 nendai mō hitotsu no sekaichizu* [Occult Planet: Another World Map in 1930], Tōkyō: Seikyūsha, 2009, p. 45.

<sup>24</sup> Kinji Imanishi, *Hakutōzan Enseitai nitsuite, Hakutōzan: Kyōto Teikoku Daigaku Hakutōzan Enseitai hōkoku, Kyōto Teikoku Daigaku Hakutōzan Enseitai* [Mt. Baekdu: Kyoto University Expedition Reports], Tōkyō: Azusa Shobō, Shōwa 10, 1935, p. 9.

<sup>25</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>27</sup> Eizaburō Nishibori, 'Zunbi nitsuite' [About Preparation], *Hakutōzan: Kyōto Teikoku Daigaku Hakutōzan Enseitai hōkoku* [Mt. Baekdu: Kyoto University Expedition Reports], 1935, p. 26.

**Table 1. List of the Mt. Baekdu expedition team**

| Name                          | Status   | Name  | Status                                 |
|-------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Kinji Imanishi<br>(今西錦司)      | Leader, B. Agr. Faculty<br>of science            | Kanji Kojima<br>(兒島勘次)  | Student of science                     |
| Eizaburō Nishibori<br>(西堀榮三郎) | B.S. Faculty of science                          | Sukiyama<br>(杉山佐一)  | Student in humanities                  |
| Kenji Takahashi<br>(高橋健治)     | B. Agr., Plants<br>laboratory of science         | Tani Hiroshi<br>(谷博)  | Medical student at<br>Kyoto University |
| Asai<br>(淺井東一)                | M.D. Surgery laboratory<br>of the medical school | Kuzō Fujiki<br>(藤木九三)   | <i>Osaka Asahi</i><br>newspaper        |
| Takeo Miyazaki<br>(宮崎武夫)      | B.A. in Economics,<br>Working for Osaka city     | Maruyama Shiro<br>(丸山四郎)  | <i>Tokyo Asahi</i><br>newspaper        |
| Oku<br>(奥貞雄)                  | B.A. in Law                                      | Imada<br>(今田友茂)   | Guiding team of<br>Wuradakuchi (浦田口)   |
| Hira<br>(平吉功)                 | B.Agr. Plant genetic<br>laboratory of Agr.       | Yamato<br>(大和由松)  | Mountain guide team                    |
| Hasekawa<br>(長谷川清三郎)          | Student of agriculture                           | Saeki<br>(佐伯宗作)   | Mountain guide team                    |
| Hori<br>(堀龍雄)                 | Student of engineering                           | Iiyama<br>(飯山)  | Staff of Chosun railroad<br>company    |
| Taian Katō<br>(加藤泰安)          | Student of economics                             | guards 13 persons, police 8 persons, workers<br>16 persons, total sum of 56 persons |  |

Kyōto Teikoku Daigaku Hakutōzan Enseitai, *Hakutōzan: Kyōto Teikoku Daigaku Hakutōzan Enseitai hōkoku* (Mt. Baekdu: Kyoto University Expedition Reports), 1935, p. 3 and p. 31.

of their boots with sea-leopard hide. Cooking implements were made of wood or aluminum so as to decrease their weight. They also packed special lightbulbs that continued to work at temperatures as low as  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$ , along with short skis.<sup>28</sup>

The team selected lightweight food that did not spoil quickly, including fruits, vegetables, salted foods, canned foods, spices, dried fruits, rice, and some military foods. To ensure the team's safety, each member prepared radio transmission equipment that would work from the tallest peak of Mt. Baekdu. They also used airplanes and pigeons for communication.<sup>29</sup>

As the exploration team did not have one single specific purpose for the trip, they were equipped with a wide range of scientific items. Despite this preparation, the trip was not just about demonstrating their scientific skills to the world,<sup>30</sup> but rather intended to provide

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., pp. 14–20.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., pp. 20–26.

<sup>30</sup> Kyōto Teikoku Daigaku Hakutōzan Enseitai, *Hakutōzan: Kyōto Teikoku Daigaku Hakutōzan Enseitai hōkoku* (Mt. Baekdu: Kyoto University Expedition Reports), preface.

a feeling of prestige to young scholars and the Japanese people, and to demonstrate that the Japanese empire was expanding.

Japan's conquest of the Manchuria area and the creation of the Manchukuo state meant that the area where Mt. Baekdu was located was no longer foreign land, but belonged to Japan's newly expanded Empire. As the victor of the Russo-Japanese war, Manchuria was more than just a profit margin, but a sovereign power line. The Kyoto University exploration fitted right into the scheme of advertising who the winner of the war was, and marked the expansion of Japan's imperial territory. The exploration was a perfect means for exalting the Japanese Empire's national prestige and its territory, which the *Asahi* newspaper used to educate the Japanese people.

### 3. 'Discovering' the 'mysterious land' and creating 'consumption value'

#### 3.1. 'Discovering' the consumption value and the mysterious land

The Russo-Japanese war of 1904–1905 was a special event in Japanese newspaper history, and is known as a direct cause of the rise in newspaper circulation. Reporters were sent out with the troops to report breaking stories as they happened. As a result, they quickly grasped that the media could have a powerful influence upon political, economic, and social ideas.

In June 1906, the *Asahi*, which had previously experienced success with media events planned tours to Korea and Manchuria. The *Asahi* wanted to highlight the Japanese empire's newly acquired territory, as well as to educate and raise patriotic feelings among the Japanese people. They created huge outdoor sets and points of interests to complete the tour package. Through these actions, they sought to give the Japanese people a sense of 'monumental patriotism'.

On the other side, the people in the colonies had to witness the success of Japan's empire when the tour came to visit conquered lands. The *Asahi* was the first newspaper to demonstrate this sense of superiority, via the tour products obtained from the newly acquired colony.

The *Asahi Newspaper* wanted to continue the colony tours after the Russo-Japanese war was over, but the 1920 Kantō earthquake (關東) brought recession to Japan's economy, and thus a slowing of the tourism industry. In addition, the 'Taisho Democracy', a new trend of liberalism, slowed the tour industry in the colony. However, soon afterwards, China's nationalist movement reached Manchuria and the Chinese movement for retaking sovereign power over its former territory was expanded. This movement created a fear of encroachment onto Japan-held territory, which created a rapid increase in campaigning Japanese nationalism, and consequently travel by Japanese increased to boost nationalist sentiments.

After the Manchurian incident in 1931, and the 1932 establishment of Manchukuo, Japan had a strong grasp upon the region. However, Japan was still struggling to make a profit from this area, and it was from this attempt that Kyoto University suggested an exploration of Mt. Baekdu.

While the Mt. Baekdu expedition had merit simply by virtue of exploring the unknown, the mass media painted it with considerably more glory, thus drawing more attention to it. However, the expedition was intended for reasons different than those presented by the

media. Furthermore the media focused on very different aspects than those most people considered to be a part of traveling to the colony.

Indeed, during a time when scientific exploration was spreading throughout the world, the expedition to Mt. Baekdu was not just about travelling into the unknown, but was also a great chance to sell more newspapers through the promotion of travel events, to educate readers, and finally to improve science.

An analysis of the method used to discover the value of such travel events can be broken down as follows:

**First**, the expedition attracted attention from many different organizations and from people of all social standings.

The Kyoto University expedition received sponsorship from many individuals and organizations. In Chosun, the former king of Korea provided grant money, while the Japanese Governor-General of Korea, the military headquarters, the national railroad, the post office, and the Kyungseong Empire University welcomed the expedition. Furthermore, the 19<sup>th</sup> commander of the Chosun-based Japanese military supported the Kyoto University team, and offered them protection to ensure their safe travel.<sup>31</sup> In addition, many hiking enthusiasts and the *Asahi* newspaper provided their support.<sup>32</sup> In addition, the *Asahi* provided air transportation, as well as monetary support to ensure that the exploration was a success.<sup>33</sup>

"The time that we have been waiting for has finally arrived".<sup>34</sup> This statement, which started the expedition, points to the support provided by the people and organizations of the nation. The exploration team was rather calm, especially as compared to the supporters, including Kyoto University's agriculture and science professors, and the staff of the university and the *Asahi Newspaper*. At the Osaka train station, many employees from the newspaper and members of the Kansai ski club cheered the explorers as they were leaving; an event that the *Asahi* reported as emotionally overwhelming.<sup>35</sup>

It was not only Japan which was excited about the exploration. In fact, according to the *Asahi*, the Japanese colony of Chosun was excited about and impatient for the exploration.<sup>36</sup> Governor Ukaki (宇垣) of the Japanese Government-General of Korea, Watanabe (渡邊), the chief of Education and Study, as well as the police officers of Hamkyung's southern and northern provinces all showed strong support for the expedition. The Chosun military and the railroad administration also supported the trip.<sup>37</sup> Both the empire and the colony were thus overcome with joy about the exploration, as the newspaper described.

<sup>31</sup> 'Hakutozan ensei senbatsu tai keijo chaku' [Advance Party of Mt. Baekdu Expedition Team Arrived at Kyungseong], *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, Dec. 23, 1934.

<sup>32</sup> 'Shotoko no miwaku kisho hakubutsu no kenkyumo' [Study on Weather and Wide Knowledge by the First Hiking], *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, Dec. 6, 1934.

<sup>33</sup> Kyōto Teikoku Daigaku Hakutōzan Enseitai, *Hakutōzan: Kyōto Teikoku Daigaku Hakutōzan Enseitai hōkoku* [Mt. Baekdu: Kyoto University Expedition Reports], preface.

<sup>34</sup> 'Hakutozan ensei senbazutai kooshi hanabanashiku shuppatsu' [Dispatch Advance Party of Mt. Baekdu Expedition Team], *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, Dec. 21, 1934.

<sup>35</sup> 'Ibidem.

<sup>36</sup> 'Zensen no Kofun (Excitement in Chosun)', *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, Dec. 21, 1934.

<sup>37</sup> 'Ibidem.

**Second**, resolving a series of unknown mysteries.

The newspaper repeatedly wrote front-page articles about Kyoto University's Mt. Baekdu expedition, even before the topic began to interest the readers. The following statements were used to advertise the media events, so as to maximize its value.<sup>38</sup>

'Mysterious heavenly lake',  
 'Mysterious lake under the Caldera Wall',  
 'Dignity covered with shining silver snow',  
 'Unsearchable twig gate silently hidden with puzzle'  
 'An enchanted land of deep forests cast over the mystique',  
 'Spiritual mountain from the old days',  
 'Wildness of Snow',  
 'Massive forest displays in front',  
 'Primeval forest over 200 years old',  
 'The thickness of the 'yellow grass', well known in the world',  
 'The coldest place on the Earth',  
 'Virgin forests in desolate places without the smoke of steamed rice',  
 'The place of Manchurian bandits and gangs of Chosun people'  
 'Cold winter exploration to Mt. Baekdu',  
 'Splendid achievement of an unprecedented event',  
 'Virgin hiking to the top of Mt. Baekdu during the winter'

**Third**, the emphasis of the "first time".

The *Asahi's* coverage of the Mt. Baekdu expedition emphasized the description of the initial experiences. Initially, it was depicted as the area where horse-riding bandits first appeared. While sources had always described Mt. Baekdu as an unspoiled place with many plants, few had recounted anything about horsemen. Secondly, the Hyesan county (惠山鎮) military escorted the explorers into the harsh conditions, which reached -40°C, the first such experience for the Japanese army.<sup>39</sup> Thirdly, it was the first time that skis had been used for exploration; a fact welcomed by the recreational sports world.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, the newspaper emphasized the uniqueness of the event by stressing the methods used to explore the ends of the earth. Fourth, the newspaper emphasized that flight had been used for the first time, as the explorers sought to reach Mt. Baekdu's peaks with Nagamoto aircraft. Indeed, this attempt was successful,<sup>41</sup> as the Nagamoto aircraft reported that they "took pictures of the mysterious land before making communication with the expedition

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<sup>38</sup> 'Nichimankokkyo no daiyitsuhō' [The First Peak of the Boundary between Japan and Manchukuo], *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, Dec. 6, 1934; 'Shinrintainiwa bazoku' [Bandits in Forest], *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, Dec. 6, 1934; 'Shinpi tozasu taiginrei', *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, Dec. 21, 1934.

<sup>39</sup> 'Rikukun demo saishu reika 40 do no kokan kogun' [The Army's First Intense March in 40-degrees below Weather], *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, Dec. 25, 1934.

<sup>40</sup> 'Dozankai kuzen no kaikyo' [Brilliant Achievement in Alpine Society], *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, Dec. 12, 1934.

<sup>41</sup> 'Honsha nagatomoki ikkini haku joku o seihuku' [Our Company's Nagamoto Aircraft Conquer the Sky of Mt. Baekdu], *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, Jan. 6, 1935.

team".<sup>42</sup> They claimed that they were the first to broadcast this news via airplanes.<sup>43</sup> They even released this experiment and the essay written by the pilot, and this incident was widely and profoundly admired.<sup>44</sup>

The value of exploring Mt. Baekdu was increased when the danger of the mission was stressed. Thus, the reports not only emphasized the sense of stillness on Mt. Baekdu, but also the dynamic side. If it was represented as an untouched, ancient place with pure white snow, it would just have been portrayed as an unknown place. However, the focus on danger turned this representation into a realistic scientific area of research.

**Fourth**, the interest in exploring a scientific mystery in order to solve a puzzle.

The newspaper explained that the exploration was not just for academic purposes. Indeed, it argued that the Kyoto University exploration team would also solve the mystery of the temperature of the heavenly lake, and suggested that they might be able to provide a variety of explanations.<sup>45</sup>

The newspaper reported on every move made by the team, particularly as they prepared the scientific equipment, such as the microscope, barometer, and the UV detector, all of which emphasized their scientific approach to conquering Mt. Baekdu.<sup>46</sup> The paper also reported that the team performed many tests on the furs that they brought, as well as upon their foods and vegetables, to ensure that they could withstand temperatures of  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$ .<sup>47</sup> In addition, the team would attempt to find previously undiscovered microorganisms and plants that lived on or near Mt. Baekdu. Finally, the paper explained that the team would locate and explore the paths made by the wildlife living near the mountain.

**Fifth**, putting emphasis on military and social dedication, while adding an entertainment aspect to create a media event.

The *Asahi* did not just report on the aspects of military and social dedication, but included the entertainment factor of enjoyable winter sports event in their article, which the public was interested in. The expedition team was composed of experts in skiing, and the opportunity to ski the untouched territory of Mt. Baekdu was a dream for most ski enthusiasts. This exploratory skiing in  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$  was not just about discovering new academic information, but also provided an interesting news story.

The Kyoto University expedition was presented in the newspaper both realistically and non-realistically. In terms of the former, the paper described harsh deserts, unknown territory, scientific discovery, military expeditions, and social dedication. In terms of the latter, it also described an interesting spectacle and drama, which was written for all groups and ages. The article was very detailed, and thus elicited great curiosity in readers.

<sup>42</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>43</sup> 'Hakutozan no joho o kijo kara muden tsushin' (Mt. Baekdu: Information from Wireless Correspondence of Aircraft), *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, Jan. 9, 1935.

<sup>44</sup> 'Nagatomo Hikoshi shuki' [Nagatomo Pilot's Note], *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, Jan. 6, 1935.

<sup>45</sup> 'Nichiman kokkei no dai itsubo' [The First Peak of the Boundary between Japan and Manchuria], *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, Dec. 6, 1934.

<sup>46</sup> 'Hakutozan enseitai dainimotsu tsumitashi' [Large Amounts of Luggage Shipped for Exploration Team to Mt. Baekdu], *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, Dec. 24, 1934.

<sup>47</sup> 'Shotoko no miwakukishohakubutsu no kenkyumo' (Study on Weather and Wide Knowledge by the First Hiking), *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, Dec. 6, 1934.

One article described “Mt. Baekdu where the Kyoto University exploration team will conquer” as a “silver lining of beauty lying between Manchuria and Chosun”.<sup>48</sup> The article also highlighted the expedition as worthy of praise by all hikers and academic members.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, the *Asahi*, which held exclusive rights to the story, also praised itself for this coverage.

After the Russo-Japanese war, international travel and school field trips were once again expanding, of which the Japanese army was very supportive.<sup>50</sup> The support from the army was paralleled by the mass media’s interest in making these tours an event for consumers. In addition, the expeditions resulted in increased prestige for the nation. These three factors combined to make the scientifically focused explorations safe and efficient. Furthermore, the government, media and army also collaborated to make it easier to travel to the colonies, so as to educate and bring prestige to the people of Japan.

### 3.2. To develop the value of consumption

To determine how the *Asahi* developed the consumptive value of the Mt. Baekdu expedition, one must examine the articles published in the *Asahi*, and compare them to the daily logs of the exploration team.

The *Asahi* sought to raise its own sales value in the following ways.

First, they reported on the expedition in both their morning and evening publications for a month, from December 12, 1934 to January 26, 1935. Consisting of both small articles and large articles encompassing an entire page, daily stories were published detailing this trip, which also included interviews and pictures.

The second method of increasing newspaper sales involved extensive reporting upon exciting and climactic events which were presented as turning points in the expedition. For example, the January 3, 1935 article reported that the expedition team had encountered seventy horse-mounted bandits, who planned to kidnap the explorers, and who wounded ten members in the resulting confrontation.<sup>51</sup> This article emphasized the dangerous elements of the expedition. Similarly, another article was published explaining that it was impossible to use sleds between the base camp and the Xuxiang ridge (虛項嶺), and thus all the supplies had to be carried by hand.<sup>52</sup> Such dramatic tales of adventure and struggle created a great sense of curiosity in readers, and increased newspaper sales.

When the exploration team was nearing the peak of Mt. Baekdu, the wind was so strong that they were not sure if they could reach the top.<sup>53</sup> The first group of seven climbers was

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<sup>48</sup> ‘Hakutozan enseitai yube sobetuen’ [Farewell Party for Exploration to Mt. Baekdu], *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, Dec. 16, 1934.

<sup>49</sup> ‘Hakutozan enseitai no zunpi mattaku naru’ [Ready for Exploration to Mt. Baekdu], *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, Dec. 17, 1934.

<sup>50</sup> Yim Sungmo, ‘Expanded Boundary and Perspective of Empire’, *Empire Geology, Manchuria as a Boundary*, Seoul: Dongkuk University Press, 2010, p. 44.

<sup>51</sup> ‘Tanken daiin o nerahu bazoku to shototsu’ (Chasing Bandits Collision with Exploration Team), *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, Jan. 3, 1935.

<sup>52</sup> ‘Docho wa yokka’ [The Fourth Day of Hiking], *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, Jan. 3, 1935.

<sup>53</sup> ‘Hakutozanchō wa kyōhū’ [Strong Wind on Top of the Mountain], *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, Jan. 8, 1935.

supposed to leave the camp in the morning, so as to reach the summit and then return to the base. However, it was reported that the wind was so severe that the team was not sure if they would ever make it.<sup>54</sup>

This lack of verifiable evidence about reaching the summit led to the first use of an airplane news broadcast. The main role for the Nagatomo aircraft (長友機) was to fly to the top of the peak and then radio to the base. The base would then radio the airplane, which was routed via the Kyungsung radio tower back to the newspaper company.<sup>55</sup> The use of this airplane was highly dramatic, and resembled the protagonist in a film, who might miraculously come to rescue someone in danger.

However, a comparison of the newspaper articles to the daily logs of the exploration team members reveals several differences. Unlike the newspaper articles, which reported on the many dangers and difficulties the team faced, the daily logs report that the expedition was smooth and uneventful. These discrepancies can likely be attributed to the exaggerations of journalists.

Indeed, the exploration team admitted that it was unfortunate to have to make such compromises with the journal in exchange for the large amount of sponsorship they provided.<sup>56</sup> However, the team members themselves explained that the successful exploration could largely be attributed to this support, as well as to the rather flat surfaces of the mountain, the short duration of the expedition, and the escort initially provided by the army and the police.<sup>57</sup>

From a journalistic perspective, one can understand the differences in intention between the newspaper and the exploration team. While the expedition team officially stated that they both shared mutual interests, nevertheless differences between the groups did exist.

The discovery of the unknown area had significant sales value. While this value did bring readers closer to an experience of the unknown, any media-sponsored event will inevitably have many different and highly subjective interpretations.<sup>58</sup>

In fact, this creation of a sense of mystery and an emphasis upon recreation created a huge demand in newspaper consumption. Mt. Baekdu came to possess two meanings, as both a closed and an isolated image, and Japan emphasized this dual focus. First, the mountain represented the Japanese empire expanding into other lands, and eliciting sympathy and a sense of connection with the people at home. Second, it represented an interest in the habits and religion of other cultures, which Japan would nonetheless seek to conquer in the near future.<sup>59</sup> This dual focus was part of Japan's efforts to expand its empire.

<sup>54</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>55</sup> 'Hakutozan no joho o kijo kara muden tsushin' (Mt. Baekdu: Information from Wireless Correspondence of Aircraft), *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, Jan. 9, 1935.

<sup>56</sup> Kinji Imanishi, Hakutōzan Enseitai nitsuite, *Hakutōzan: Kyōto Teikoku Daigaku Hakutōzan Enseitai hōkoku*, *Kyōto Teikoku Daigaku Hakutōzan Enseitai* [Mt. Baekdu: Kyoto University Expedition Reports], Tokyo: Azusa Shobō, Shōwa 10, 1935, p. 10.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>58</sup> Takeshi Kaneko, 'Okaruto Jappon no bunsuirei' [Watershed of Occult Japa], Morio Yoshida, *Okaruto no wakusei: 1930 nendai mō hitotsu no sekaichizu* [Occult Planet: Another World Map in 1930], Tōkyō: Seikyūsha, 2009, p. 43.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 46.

#### 4. Conclusion: educational effect on the empire and colony

After the Russo-Japanese war ended, the Japanese increasingly began to travel to their colonies. However in 1920 Japan faced economic struggles, which reduced the amount of tours. This situation changed again in 1930, when Chinese nationalism began to spread, and Japan sought to counter this threat by campaigning for increased travel. Indeed, the global trend was to explore the unknown, and Japan participated by sending the Kyoto University expedition to the harsh conditions of Mt. Baekdu, both for the purposes of science and also for increasing national prestige. The *Asahi* newspaper had gained considerable success by reporting on the Russo-Japanese war, and now sought to expand and emphasize the prestige of Japan's empire by reporting exclusively upon the Mt. Baekdu exploration.

Indeed, the newspaper stated, "Asia's mountain shall be opened by Asia's hands".<sup>60</sup> They also reported upon every step of the exploration by creating suspenseful articles to attract new subscribers, thus bringing the expedition to the attention of their readers.

These exclusive reports on the exploration were a new and adventurous way of educating people, and they inspired future expeditions. One example is provided by Tadao Umesao (梅棹忠夫), the First Director of the Japanese National Museum of Ethnology, who was introduced to the exploration team members in 1935.

When Tadao Umesao was in his junior high school, the first middle school delegates of Kyoto prefecture (京一中), the members of the Kyoto University exploration team, had just returned. Among them, Kinji Imanishi (今西錦司), Eizaburō Nishibori (西屈榮三郎) and Tani Hiroshi (谷博) had graduated from the same junior high school. They then visited their old school and gave lectures. While Tadao Umesao did not recall the exact content of the lecture, he remembered watching the movie clips that accompanied them, and was thereby inspired to do the same thing.

In 1940, when Tadao Umesao was a senior in high school, he and Fujida Kazuo (藤田和夫) climbed down the northern slope of Mt. Baekdu. They completed their exploration of a previously untouched area in one week, and then arrived at Erdaobaihe (二道白河), where they found the second source of the Songhua river (松花江), which was a new geological discovery. Tadao Umesao, who later became a leading anthropologist, began his lifelong habit of exploring on Mt. Baekdu.<sup>61</sup> After his expedition to Mt. Baekdu, he published a book called *The springtime of Mt. Baekdu*.<sup>62</sup>

These media events were not just intended to educate the people of the Japanese empire. In Chosun, Mt. Baekdu was a significant cultural symbol,<sup>63</sup> so the people of Chosun were also very interested in the story. After completing their exploration, the Kyoto University team gave lectures at the Kyungsung Empire University on January 19, 1935. Perhaps due to Kyoto University's emphasis on scientific exploration, in 1936 the

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<sup>60</sup> 'Hyosetsu no dendo hakudozan' [The Hall of Ice and Snow of Mt. Baekdu], *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, Dec. 29, 1934.

<sup>61</sup> Kurita yasuyuki, 'chohakusanjiku o koetatabi' [Travel over Mt. Baekdu], *AACK Kyoto Daikaku Gakushi Sangakukai Newsletter* [Newsletter of the Academic Mountaineering Club of Kyoto University], No. 51, Nov. 2009, p. 17.

<sup>62</sup> Tadao Umesao, 'The Springtime of Mt. Baekdu', *Tokyo Asahi Newspaper*, 1995.

<sup>63</sup> 'Mt. Baekdu Expedition Plan Held by Head Office', *Chosun Daily Newspaper*, July 15, 1936.

representation of the expedition was modified, and it was then presented as having been sponsored by the *Chosun* newspaper.

Furthermore, in 1936 the *Chosun Daily* newspaper stated that regardless of whether any previous explorations of Mt. Baekdu were completed by the Japanese or westerners, “we will conquer Mt. Baekdu with our own hands”.<sup>64</sup> The newspaper’s purpose in planning the expedition was not just a simple mountain adventure, but rather both to explore historical and holy lands, and to scientifically study animals, plants, and other materials.<sup>65</sup> They put a strong emphasis on “using science as a surgical knife to dissect and to explore this matrix.”<sup>66</sup>

After planning the Mt. Baekdu exploration, the *Chosun Daily* consistently released articles about Mt. Baekdu’s exploration, including its process and discoveries. These were released in several series until October 10, 1936.

On its editorial page, the *Chosun Daily* emphasized the study of Mt. Baekdu’s highlands, which could provide important information about meteorology, geology, geography, and history. They also wrote that it was very important to observe the mountain with their own eyes, to walk on it with their feet, and to use a mirror as if to dissect it with a knife. They stressed that, should this expedition even be 0.001% successful, it would represent a huge monument to the academic world.<sup>67</sup>

The *Chosun Daily* repeatedly emphasized that the exploration of Mt. Baekdu was not just about hiking up the mountain, but also about studying its history, geology, geography, and meteorology, as well as the local plants, insects, animal, birds and other species, and to then present this new knowledge to the world.<sup>68</sup>

Furthermore, the *Chosun Daily* sought to plan an exploration conducted by the people of Chosun. It also wanted to conduct explorations that had never been done scientifically, and to discover treasures that the world had never seen. Mt. Baekdu had a breath-taking view, an enormous height, untouched pristine areas, and a lake at its peak. However, these wonders were only a background when compared to its extensive array of alpine plants and insects.<sup>69</sup> The *Chosun Daily* sought to discover all of these things, and then to share them with academics worldwide.

While the *Chosun*’s approach was not identical to the *Asahi*’s desire to educate the people of the empire via a major media event, their approaches to Mt. Baekdu were somewhat similar in regards to the colony. The *Asahi*’s media event was very successful in reporting the first exploration of Mt. Baekdu. As a result, it created not only sales value, but also challenged subscribers to learn an ‘Asian New Order’. It also gained valuable information about the unknown area, while raising the nation’s prestige and educating the people of both the empire and the colony.

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<sup>64</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>65</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>66</sup> ‘Advance Party of Mt. Baekdu Expedition’, *Chosun Daily Newspaper*, Aug. 4, 1936.

<sup>67</sup> Editorial ‘Mt. Baekdu Expedition Team Congratulated by Head Office’, *Chosun Daily Newspaper*, July 17, 1936.

<sup>68</sup> ‘Two Times Exceeded the Fixed Number’, *Chosun Daily Newspaper*, July 26, 1936.

<sup>69</sup> ‘World Repository of Plants, Insects’, *Chosun Daily Newspaper*, July 28, 1936.



LEON WOLFF

## Japanese Law Goes Pop

### Abstract

This article explores the extent to which the growth in law-themed popular culture since the turn of the century, especially television shows, signals a shift in popular attitudes towards law. Four decades of research into Japanese legal consciousness has called into question the extent to which there is a Japanese cultural aversion to law, with most scholars expressing doubt over whether culture properly explains the comparatively low litigation rates in Japan compared to other industrialised nations. This article argues that popular culture, although not without its limitations, offers new clues into how legal consciousness is developing and changing in 21<sup>st</sup>-century Japan. The article concludes that popular culture paints a picture of a greater readiness by Japanese people to engage with law, although scepticism remains about the law's promise to achieve justice and social solidarity.

### Introduction

Is Japanese law going “pop”?<sup>1</sup> Since the turn of the century, Japanese prime-time television has dedicated more time to legal themes and characters. Lawyers, overwhelmingly women, are figuring more prominently as heroes in both dramatic and comedic television series;<sup>2</sup> court-room battles are featuring as the setting for plot developments;<sup>3</sup> and practising lawyers are becoming the new celebrities on light-entertainment talk-shows. For example, in 2005–2007, network television screened at least six series about the professional and personal lives of lawyers: “Bengoshi no Kuzu” (Trash Lawyers) (TBS, 2006), “Rikon Bengoshi II” (Divorce Lawyer) (Fuji Television, 2005), “Machiben” (Small Town Lawyer) (NHK, 2006), “Shichinin no Onna Bengoshi” (Seven Female Lawyers) (TV Asahi, 2006), “Watashitachi no Kyoukasho” (My Textbook) (Fuji Television, 2007) and “Shimane no Bengoshi” (The Lawyer in Shimane) (NHK, 2007).<sup>4</sup> Other recent television series, such as

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<sup>1</sup> Richard K. Sherwin, *When Law Goes Pop*, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2000. This article borrows from Sherwin's evocative book title, using “pop” to indicate both “popular culture” and “explosion” – that is, the noticeably greater interest in law by Japanese creative industries, especially the television industry. Sherwin himself, however, was more concerned with the opposite trend – the influence of popular culture on American legal practice and its resulting corrosive impact on the legitimacy and authority of law.

<sup>2</sup> Hisao Nakamura, ‘Dorama «Shimane no Bengoshi»’, *Jiyū to Seigi* [Liberty and Justice], Vol. 58, No. 7, July 2007, pp. 6–7.

<sup>3</sup> Hiroshi Ishikawa, ‘Dorama «Shiroi Kyoutou» ni Torikunde’, *Jiyū to Seigi* [Liberty and Justice], Vol. 55 No. 9, September 2004, pp. 5–7.

<sup>4</sup> Nakamura, ‘Dorama...’, p. 6.

the 2004 medical drama “Shiroy Kyouto” (The Tall White Tower) (Fuji Television), although not set in law offices nonetheless deployed courtroom scenes for dramatic effect.<sup>5</sup> Even non-scripted television is invoking law for entertainment value. Consider, for example, the talk shows “Za Jajji” (The Judge) (Fuji Television, 2001–2004) and “Gyouretsu no Dekiru Houritsu Soudansho” (The Law Firm with the Long Queue) (Nihon Television, 2002–present), both featuring lawyers who give legal advice on actual or fictional cases respectively.

All this is not to suggest that law is an entirely new thematic preoccupation in Japanese prime-time television, or that it is saturating the airwaves to the exclusion of more conventional work-place romantic comedies, coming-of-age stories or family sagas. For example, “Shichinin no Onna Bengoshi” (Seven Female Lawyers), which has screened two series this century (Asahi Television, 2006 and 2008), is a remake of a 1990s show which screened three series (winter 1991, autumn 1991 and 1993) and a two-hour special (1997). Similarly, between April and October 1996, the government broadcaster NHK screened “Himawari” (Sunflower), its morning drama serial in the 8:15 am–8:30 am Monday to Saturday time-slot, about a law student who passes the bar examination and enters the Practical Legal Training Institute.<sup>6</sup> Equally, the rise in law-themed television shows in Japan in the last decade is not approximating the levels observable in the United States, where “lawyers and the like are over-represented occupations on prime-time TV”.<sup>7</sup>

But a trend towards a greater embrace of law by Japanese popular culture, especially network television, *is* discernible – if not a tsunami, then at least a strong under-current. And this merits analysis. As Carillo has argued, it is not enough to merely identify *that* there is a link between law and popular culture; scholars need to explain *how* that link operates in law and society.<sup>8</sup> Such is the purpose of this article – to explore the socio-legal significance of this newfound fascination with the legal players, institutions and processes by the television industry in Japan. In particular, this article investigates whether the silver screen’s burgeoning appetite for law indicates a broader shift towards a more favourable outlook about law and litigation among the general population.

By deploying popular culture to explicate Japanese legal consciousness, this article applies a novel analytical method to a long-standing research question in the socio-legal and comparative law literature on Japan. For over 40 years, scholars have debated the

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<sup>5</sup> Ishikawa, ‘Dorama...’, pp. 5–7.

<sup>6</sup> Anonymous, ‘Heroin-wa Bengoshi no Tamago’ [Heroin as an Egg for Lawyers], *Hōgaku Seminā* [Seminar of Law], Vol. 494, 1996, p. 127.

<sup>7</sup> Anthony Chase, ‘Lawyers and Popular Culture: A Review of Mass Media Portrayals of American Attorneys’, *American Bar Foundation Research Journal*, Vol. 28, 1986, p. 281. For a more recent and comprehensive review of the corpus of law-related film and television series in the United States, see Naomi Mezey and Mark C. Niles, ‘Screening the Law: Ideology and Law in American Popular Culture’, *Columbia Journal of Law & Arts*, Vol. 28, 1986, pp. 91–186. Even compared to other western nations, the United States has a particularly acute pre-occupation with law in popular culture. For example, in one survey of 190 films featuring courtroom scenes, 135 were American, whereas 34 were English and seven were Australian: see Kathy Laster with Krista Breckweg and John King, *The Drama of the Courtroom*, Sydney: Federation Press, 2000.

<sup>8</sup> Jo Carrillo, ‘Links and Choices: Popular Legal Culture in the Work of Lawrence M. Friedman’, *Southern California Interdisciplinary Law Journal*, Vol. 17, 2011, p. 3.

extent to which law matters in Japan. Deploying a wide range of empirical approaches and analytical techniques, including institutional history,<sup>9</sup> rational choice theory and regression analysis,<sup>10</sup> ethnography,<sup>11</sup> narrative analysis,<sup>12</sup> communitarianism<sup>13</sup> and neo-institutionalism,<sup>14</sup> successive generations of Japanese and non-Japanese experts, both in law and in other disciplines, have sought to explain whether or not – and, if so, how – legal rules, legal processes, legal professionals and legal actors play important roles in structuring and ordering society. This study is the first in the literature to address – or, more precisely, re-visit – the same question using popular culture as both a source of data (specifically, television shows) and as a research method (namely, a narrative analysis of the themes and concerns in these media texts).

This novelty carries real risks. In both the disciplines of Japanese Studies<sup>15</sup> and Law,<sup>16</sup> popular culture remains on the margins of scholarship. In Japanese Studies, for example, the bulk of scholarly interest, at least until the lost decade of economic stagnation in the 1990s, was on Japan's "hard" power: its economic might in the production and export of cars, electronics and other manufactured products.<sup>17</sup> In Law, "huge portions of legal scholarship... are devoted to the routine tasks of lawyers,"<sup>18</sup> premised on the assumption that law is a closed system of formal rules<sup>19</sup> with an "immanent rationality"<sup>20</sup> and its own "structure, substantive content, procedure and tradition".<sup>21</sup> Where law and popular culture

<sup>9</sup> John Owen Haley, *The Spirit of Japanese Law*, Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1998.

<sup>10</sup> J. Mark Ramseyer and Minoru Nakazato, *Japanese Law: An Economic Approach*, Boston: University of Chicago Press, 1999.

<sup>11</sup> David T Johnson, *The Japanese Way of Justice: Prosecuting Crime in Japan*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.

<sup>12</sup> Catherine Burns, *Sexual Violence and the Law in Japan*, London: Routledge Curzon, 2005.

<sup>13</sup> Takao Tanase (translated by Luke Nottage and Leon Wolff), *Community and the Law: A Critical Reassessment of American Liberalism and Japanese Modernity*, Cheltenham and Northampton: Edward Elgar, 2010.

<sup>14</sup> Mark West, *Law in Everyday Japan: Sex, Sumo, Suicide, and Statute*, Boston: University of Chicago Press, 2005.

<sup>15</sup> Matthew Allen and Rumi Sakamoto, 'Introduction: Inside-out Japan? Popular Culture and Globalization in the Context of Japan', in *Popular Culture, Globalization and Japan*, Matthew Allen and Rumi Sakamoto (eds.), London and New York: Routledge, 2006, p. 4; Tim Craig, 'Introduction', in *Japan Pop! Inside the World of Japanese Popular Culture*, Timothy J. Craig (ed.), Armonk, New York and London: ME Sharp, 2000, p. 5.

<sup>16</sup> Jo Carrillo, 'Links and Choices: Popular Legal Culture in the Work of Lawrence M. Friedman', *Southern California Interdisciplinary Law Journal*, Vol. 17, 2011, pp. 1–3; Steve Greenfield and Guy Osborn, 'Law, Legal Education and Popular Culture', in *Readings in Law and Popular Culture*, Steve Greenfield and Guy Osborn (eds.), London and New York: Routledge, 2006, pp. 1–12.

<sup>17</sup> Craig, 'Introduction...', p. 5.

<sup>18</sup> Richard A. Epstein, 'Let «The Fundamental Things Apply»: Necessary and Contingent Truths in Legal Scholarship', *Harvard Law Review*, Vol. 115, 2002, p. 1288.

<sup>19</sup> Ian Duncanson, 'Degrees of Law: Interdisciplinarity in the Law Discipline', *Griffith Law Review*, Vol. 5, 1996, pp. 78–79.

<sup>20</sup> W. Bradley Wendell, 'Explanation in Legal Scholarship: The Inferential Structure of Doctrinal Legal Analysis', *Cornell Law Review*, Vol. 96, 2011, p. 1073.

<sup>21</sup> Alan M. Dershowitz, 'The Interdisciplinary Study of Law: A Dedicatory Note on the Founding of the NILR', *Northwestern Interdisciplinary Law Review*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2008, p. 4.

do collide, at best, popular culture gets the law wrong;<sup>22</sup> at worst, it corrodes the legitimacy of law with its alternative “gratifying-based” logic that undermines the finality of judgement and the ability to pursue justice.<sup>23</sup>

These concerns, however, are relatively easy to address. First, the collapse in Japan’s “hard” economic prowess has shifted attention towards Japan’s “soft” cultural capital. Karaoke is now enjoyed world-wide; anime, such as the films of Hayao Miyazaki, are screened globally; character brands such as Hello Kitty and Pokemon are universally familiar; video games such as *Street Fighter* are played on Sony Play-Stations or Nintendo devices in living rooms everywhere; Japanese pop-songs and television dramas attract fans from across East Asia; and manga are read in translation the world over.<sup>24</sup> Japanese Studies scholars are beginning to take these trends seriously. Indeed, some are even advocating that the growing appeal of Japan’s cultural products should serve a geopolitical purpose, underpinning Japan’s regional diplomacy<sup>25</sup> and securing its continued relevance in international affairs.<sup>26</sup> Second, more and more legal scholars are exploring law in its social context. As Dershowitz puts it, “[l]aw without context is rules without meaning.”<sup>27</sup>

Law, by its very nature, must be interdisciplinary. It is impossible to understand a legal system without recourse to history, psychology, economics, philosophy, and other academic disciplines. Law provides the structure for decision-making, but the structure is dependent on substantive rules that reflect the deeper concerns of a society. It has long been debated whether the structure of law implicitly contains values or whether these values come entirely from the substantive laws. Whichever view one takes on this matter, the importance of disciplines outside of the law cannot be over-stated.<sup>28</sup>

At any rate, even if the wider discipline of law is still engaged in a tug-of-war between advocates of doctrinal and socio-legal research orientations,<sup>29</sup> the Japanese law research community overwhelmingly accepts (and engages in) contextual scholarship. After all, the question of litigiousness – or the “fondness” for law<sup>30</sup> – is a socio-cultural question: it concerns a society’s appetite for law; its preparedness to invoke formal law to articulate claims, defend rights and resolve disputes. As such, it is a socio-legal, not a doctrinal, issue.

The potential methodological and theoretical risks of using Japanese popular culture to excavate possible attitudinal changes towards law in Japan, however, present deeper challenges. The methodological problem involves using works of fiction to investigate

<sup>22</sup> Carrillo, ‘Links and Choices...’, p. 1.

<sup>23</sup> Sherwin, *When Law Goes Pop*, p. 12.

<sup>24</sup> Allen and Sakamoto, ‘Introduction...’, p. 2; Craig, ‘Introduction...’, pp. 4–5.

<sup>25</sup> Kazuo Ogura, ‘Kokusai-zai no Shin no Kachi Kousou Sekai ni Hasshin Shoo’ [Let’s Export the True Value of International Property], *Chuuou Kouron*, Vol. 1261, October 2004, pp. 210–217.

<sup>26</sup> Tamotsu Aoki, ‘Kuuru Pawaa Kokka Nihon no Souzou o!’ [Re-imaging Japan as a Cool Power State], *Chuuou Kouron*, Vol. 1261, October 2004, pp. 198–209.

<sup>27</sup> Dershowitz, ‘The Interdisciplinary Study of Law...’, p. 4.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>29</sup> Michael Salter and Julie Mason, *Writing Law Dissertations: An Introduction to the Conduct of Legal Research*, Harlow: Pearson Education, 2007, pp. 35–37.

<sup>30</sup> Kenneth Hayne, ‘Restricting Litigiousness’, *Australian Law Journal*, Vol. 78, 2004, p. 381.

socio-legal reality. The theoretical problem revolves around resurrecting culture as an explanatory variable in Japanese law and society when decades of socio-legal research have discounted, or at least expressed reservations over, its explanatory significance. These challenges merit more nuanced responses.

First, this article contends that popular culture is a witness to trends in a society; it is a window, however, not a mirror.<sup>31</sup> Although primarily works of imagination which engage the aesthetic and emotional senses of the audience,<sup>32</sup> they are only consumed if they resonate with the general population. It is this verisimilitude<sup>33</sup> – or truth-like quality – that strongly suggests that popular culture, as sub-art, parallels developments in society<sup>34</sup> and thereby offers clues to mass mentality in a society.<sup>35</sup>

Second, this article shares concerns about rehabilitating cultural arguments about a peculiarly Japanese aversion to law.<sup>36</sup> Proponents of a cultural theory of Japanese litigiousness depict Japanese society as inherently communitarian, privileging the group over the individual and concrete social relations over abstract individual rights. This outlook is attributable to Japan's long history of geographic isolation, its ethnic homogeneity and its religious thought.<sup>37</sup> Some champion this as ensuring a more socially cohesive and humane alternative to the Western-style obsession with aggressive rights-assertion;<sup>38</sup> others censure it for its pre-modernity<sup>39</sup> and illiberalism.<sup>40</sup> Critics, however, dismiss this cultural explanation as perpetuating a "persistent myth".<sup>41</sup> Rightly, they criticise cultural explanations for stereotyping,<sup>42</sup> essentialising<sup>43</sup> and time-locking<sup>44</sup> Japanese culture to its religious, historical and geographical conditions.

<sup>31</sup> Michael Asimov and Shannon Mader, *Law and Popular Culture: A Course Book*, New York: Peter Lang, 2004, p. 6; Lawrence Friedman, "Law, Lawyers and Popular Culture", *Yale Law Journal*, Vol. 98, 1989, pp. 1587–1588.

<sup>32</sup> Asimov and Mader, *Law and Popular Culture...*, pp. 11–12.

<sup>33</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>34</sup> Friedman, 'Law, Lawyers and Popular Culture', p. 1589.

<sup>35</sup> Allen and Sakamoto, 'Introduction...', p. 4.

<sup>36</sup> Kenneth L. Port, 'The Case for Teaching Japanese Law at American Law Schools', *DePaul Law Review*, Vol. 43, 1994, pp. 659–670.

<sup>37</sup> Chin Kim and Craig M. Lawson, 'The Law of the Subtle Mind: The Traditional Japanese Conception of Law', *International & Comparative Law Quarterly*, Vol. 28, 1979, p. 461.

<sup>38</sup> Tanase, *Community and the Law...*

<sup>39</sup> Takeyoshi Kawashima, 'Dispute Resolution in Contemporary Japan', in *Law in Japan: The Legal Order in a Changing Society*, Arthur von Mehren (ed.), Harvard University Press, 1963, p. 41.

<sup>40</sup> Tatsuo Inoue, 'The Poverty of Rights-Blind Communality: Looking Through the Window of Japan', 1993, *Brigham Young University Law Review*, p. 517.

<sup>41</sup> Veronica L. Taylor, 'Continuing Transactions and Persistent Myths: Contracts in Contemporary Japan', *Melbourne University Law Review*, Vol. 19, 1993, pp. 352, 355, 357–358. See also John O. Haley, 'The Myth of the Reluctant Litigant', *Journal of Japanese Studies*, Vol. 4, 1978, p. 359.

<sup>42</sup> James K. Sebenius, 'Caveats for Cross-Border Negotiators', *Negotiation Journal*, Vol. 18, No. 2, 2002, p. 121.

<sup>43</sup> Allen and Sakamoto, 'Introduction...', p. 5.

<sup>44</sup> Robert J. Janosik, 'Rethinking the Culture-Negotiation Link', *Negotiation Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 4, 1987, p. 385.

This article, however, does not seek to re-introduce culture – that is, “the universe of knowledge, behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes that circulate in a particular society”<sup>45</sup> – through the back door. Instead, it seeks to engage with Japanese popular culture to uncover the range of Japanese *emotions*, rather than Japanese *normative perspectives*, about the law. These emotions, this article contends, are complex, contradictory and fluid; yet an analysis of popular culture can discern some patterns among the diversity. And emotions matter. Despite the tendency in Western jurisprudence to dichotomise law and emotion,<sup>46</sup> Alfred North Whitehead had the foresight to question this false divide as far back as 1954: “Intellect is to emotion as our clothes are to our body; we could not very well have a civilised life without clothes, but we would be in a poor way if we had only clothes without bodies”.<sup>47</sup> In his work on emotional organisations, Fineman builds on this crucial insight.<sup>48</sup> “There are bland portraits of organizations,”<sup>49</sup> he writes, in what could easily apply to most positivist accounts of law. Just as study of workplaces focus on governance structures, hierarchies, resources and processes, law also focuses on substantive rules, procedures and outcomes. In organisational theory, real people are abstracted (‘human resources’, ‘human capital’); they are boxed and categorised into ‘variables’; and they are subsumed under larger categories such as entities, firms, production and profits.<sup>50</sup> So, too, law re-casts people into ‘parties’ to legal relationships; structures human interactions into ‘issues’ or ‘problems’; and subjugates individuals under larger legal concerns such as ‘the rule of law’ and ‘interests of justice’. This impoverishes understanding. After all, just as the workplace is a site rich with emotions,<sup>51</sup> so too is the law.

Finally, the time is ripe to re-open the debate about litigiousness in Japan. And fresh tools are needed to breathe new life into the scholarly conversation. Commentators note that litigation rates have recently been changing. Government reforms to the civil justice system are investing more legal capacity in the system by introducing post-graduate legal education and more generous pass rates to ensure more lawyers can serve the legal needs of business and the community. Large commercial law firms are taking root in large urban centres. Administrative law statutes have tightened procedural rules; public participation in the criminal justice system is being entrenched with a new system of lay judges; and a new corporate law code has been drafted. The Japanese government proclaims this as the ‘legalization’ of Japanese society.<sup>52</sup> Scholars nod their agreement. Not only does law “matter”,

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<sup>45</sup> Asimov and Mader, *Law and Popular Culture*..., p. 3.

<sup>46</sup> In a literature too voluminous to cite, critical theorists – from feminists and critical race scholars to postmodernists – have sharply rebuked law’s claims to neutrality and objectivity. The criticism is that this cloaks the law in a false universality when, in fact, it privileges the interests and world-view of dominant groups in society. See, e.g., Rosemary J Coombe, ‘Context, Tradition, and Convention: The Politics of Constructing Legal Cultures’, *APLA Newsletter*, Vol. 13, 1990, p. 15.

<sup>47</sup> Lucien Price, *Dalogues with Alfred North Whitehead*, Little Brown and Company, 1954, p. 231.

<sup>48</sup> Stephen Fineman, *Understanding Emotion at Work*, Sage, 1993.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1–2.

<sup>52</sup> Justice System Reform Council, ‘Recommendations of the Justice System Reform Council: For a Justice System to Support Japan in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century’ (2001) (available at <http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/judiciary/2001/0612report.html>).

they now write; it matters “even more”.<sup>53</sup> But why? Is it because of the ‘Americanisation’ of Japanese society?<sup>54</sup> Institutional reform to legal institutions as a result of government policy?<sup>55</sup> The collapse of community and the ideological turn to liberal law?<sup>56</sup> There is no consensus.

This article argues that a historical survey of popular culture about law in Japan evinces clear evidence of a growing popular interest in law. From portrayals of lawyers and the legal system that were sharply negative in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, the narrative has significantly warmed. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the law is depicted as central, not marginal, to everyday life; a career as a lawyer is depicted as a worthy, even a transformational, career destination; and litigation is seen as an effective way to correct injustice. At the same time, there is a noticeable counter-narrative that expresses reservations about the possibility of law to achieve justice, and re-asserts the power of common sense over formal rights as the preferred means to repair fractured relationships. All this points to a measured embrace of law in Japan – one that welcomes the role of formal law to eradicate social injustice, but also a healthy scepticism that law should not necessarily be the first point of call in a dispute.

### The litigiousness debate

The issue of Japanese litigiousness commands a significant corpus of comparative and socio-legal research attention. This is usually alongside the equally voluminous scholarship on legal consciousness in the United States,<sup>57</sup> no doubt because the conventional wisdom is that Japan and the United States represent the opposite extreme ends of the litigiousness scale. Thus, America represents excessive legalism:<sup>58</sup> “too much law, too many lawyers, and too little justice”<sup>59</sup> – a “law-drenched” society<sup>60</sup> where litigation is an “epidemic of bubonic plague proportions;”<sup>61</sup> where citizens are “gorged” on rights;<sup>62</sup> and where the impulse to sue is the new “secular religion”. The story on Japan is the opposite: The Japanese are “reluctant” to sue;<sup>63</sup> ambivalent about rights because of their ‘Western’

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<sup>53</sup> Tom Ginsburg & Glenn Hoetker, ‘The Unreluctant Litigant? An Empirical Analysis of Japan’s Turn to Litigation’, *Journal of Legal Studies*, Vol. 35, 2006, p. 31; R Daniel Keleman and Eric C. Sibbitt, ‘The Americanization of Japanese Law’, *University of Pennsylvania Journal of International Economic Law*, Vol. 23, 2002, p. 269; Curtis Milhaupt and Mark West, ‘Law’s Dominion and the Market for Legal Elites in Japan’, *Law and Policy in International Business*, Vol. 23, No. 2, 2003, p. 451.

<sup>54</sup> Keleman and Sibbitt, ‘The Americanization of Japanese Law’, p. 269.

<sup>55</sup> Ginsburg and Hoetker, ‘The Unreluctant Litigant?...', p. 31.

<sup>56</sup> Tanase, *Community and the Law...*

<sup>57</sup> Eric Feldman, *The Ritual of Rights in Japan: Law, Society, and Health Policy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 1–15.

<sup>58</sup> Deborah L. Rhode, ‘Legal Scholarship’, *Harvard Law Review*, Vol. 155, pp. 1327, 1350.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1348.

<sup>60</sup> Jethro Lieberman, *The Litigious Society*, New York: Basic Books, 1981, p. xi.

<sup>61</sup> Paul W. McCracken, ‘The Big Domestic Issues: Slow Growth’, *Wall St Journal*, 4 October 1991, p. A14.

<sup>62</sup> Feldman, *The Ritual of Rights in Japan*, p. 2.

<sup>63</sup> Kawashima, ‘Dispute Resolution...’, p. 41.

roots;<sup>64</sup> prefer informal resolution of their disputes;<sup>65</sup> and, “in a word, do not like law”.<sup>66</sup> Despite significant criticism,<sup>67</sup> these impressions endure. (By contrast, research on litigiousness in other countries is relatively slim. The question of Australian litigiousness, for example, despite a surge of attention<sup>68</sup> at the turn of the century, when tort law reform was high on the political agenda across the country, has not endured as a site of scholarly enquiry.<sup>69</sup>)

Litigiousness has important policy implications. After all, litigiousness – or a society’s willingness<sup>70</sup> to embrace the law to assert rights and resolve disputes<sup>71</sup> – raises important theoretical and policy issues. As a starting point, most agree that a robust civil justice system is a precondition to upholding fundamental values shared by most modern liberal orders. Politically, it is essential to the rule of law: it defends freedom and democracy while, at the same time, it directs optimum behaviour<sup>72</sup> in increasingly complex societies.<sup>73</sup> Socially, the ability to invoke the law for rights assertion is an “important symbol of active citizenship”.<sup>74</sup> Economically, it creates stability and predictability in defining and enforcing

<sup>64</sup> Kim and Lawson, ‘The Law of the Subtle Mind...’, p. 461.

<sup>65</sup> Port, ‘The Case for Teaching Japanese Law...’, pp. 659–670.

<sup>66</sup> Yoshiyuki Noda, *Introduction to Japanese Law* (trans. Anthony H Angelo), Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1976, p. 160.

<sup>67</sup> For criticisms of excessive legalism in the United States, see Marc Galanter, ‘Real World Torts: An Antidote to Anecdote’, *Maryland Law Review*, Vol. 55, 1993, pp. 1093, 1104–1106; Robert L Nelson, ‘Ideology, Scholarship, and Sociolegal Change: Lessons from Galanter and the ‘Litigation Crisis’’, *Law and Society Review*, Vol. 21, No. 5, 1998, p. 677. For criticisms of lack of legal consciousness in Japan, see Haley, ‘The Myth of the Reluctant Litigant’, p. 359; Ramseyer and Nakazato, ‘The Rational Litigant...’, p. 263; West, *Law in Everyday Japan...*; Frank K. Upham, *Law and Social Change in Postwar Japan*, Boston: Harvard University Press, 1987.

<sup>68</sup> Sharyn Roach Anleu and Wilfred Prest, ‘Litigation: Historical and Contemporary Dimensions’ in *Litigation: Past and Present*, Sharyn Roach Anleu and Wilfred Prest (eds.), Sydney: UNSW Press, 2004, pp. 2–23; Peter Cane, ‘Reforming Tort Law in Australia: A Personal Perspective’, *Melbourne University Law Review*, Vol. 27, 2003, p. 649; Caspar Conde, ‘The Foresight Saga: Risk, Litigiousness and Negligence Law Reforms’, *Policy*, Vol. 20, No. 3, 2004, p. 28; Rob Davies, ‘Exploring the Litigation Explosion Myth’, *Plaintiff*, Vol. 49, 2002, p. 4; Rob Davies, ‘The Tort Law Crisis’, *University of New South Wales Law Journal*, Vol. 25, No. 3, p. 865; Richard Refshauge, ‘Litigious Society’s Effect on the Public Sector’, *Canberra Bulletin of Public Administration*, Vol. 105, 2002, p. 1; Ted Wright and Angela Melville, ‘Hey, but Who’s Counting? The Metrics and Politics of Trends in Civil Litigation’ in *Litigation: Past and Present*, Sharyn Roach Anleu and Wilfred Prest (eds.), UNSW Press, 2004, pp. 96–121.

<sup>69</sup> See, for example, Kylie Burns, ‘Distorting the Law: Politics, Media and the Litigation Crisis: An Australian Perspective’, *Torts Law Journal*, Vol. 15, 2007, p. 195; Bobette Wolski, ‘Reform of the Civil Justice System Two Decades Past – Implications for the Legal Profession and for Law Teachers’, *Bond Law Review*, Vol. 21, No. 3, 2009, pp. 192–195.

<sup>70</sup> Hayne, ‘Restricting Litigiousness’, p. 381.

<sup>71</sup> John O. Haley, ‘Litigation in Japan: A New Look at Old Problems’, *Williamette Journal of International Law & Dispute Resolution*, Vol. 10, 2002, p. 121.

<sup>72</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>73</sup> Anleu and Prest, ‘Litigation’, p. 2; Kawashima, ‘Dispute Resolution...’, p. 41.

<sup>74</sup> Margaret Thornton, ‘Citizenship, Race and Adjudication’, in *Judicial Power, Democracy and Legal Positivism*, Tom Campbell and Jeffrey Goldsworthy (eds.), Dartmouth: Ashgate, 2000, p. 337.

bargains and property rights, imperative for modern-day market-led economies.<sup>75</sup> However, *too much* – or *too little* – litigation can risk the political, social and economic benefits of civil justice.<sup>76</sup> This explains the emphasis in the litigiousness literature on the jurisdictions of the United States and Japan. Thus, in the United States the concern is whether Americans sue *too readily*. In Japan, it is that Japanese people are *too reluctant* to invoke the law to protect their rights.<sup>77</sup>

So what is the basis for concern about the possible under-utilisation of the legal system by the Japanese? Consider the data. Currently, 30,516 lawyers serve a population of 127 million people, about 1 for every 4,000 citizens.<sup>78</sup> Nearly 30% of Japan's court districts have one lawyer (or none) practising in the region. Large commercial law firms have (until recently) been uncommon.<sup>79</sup> With so few lawyers, litigation rates are very low. In the mid-1990s, for example, there were only 9.3 cases per 1000 people in Japan compared to 123.2 cases in Germany, 74.5 in the United States, 64.4 in the United Kingdom and 40.3 in France.<sup>80</sup> Even by Asian standards, this rate is low. Based on statistics for new civil cases filed for trial in district courts in Japan, South Korea and Taiwan in 1995–1996, South Korea had five times as many filings and Taiwan about twice as many.<sup>81</sup> Some commentators are claiming that litigation rates have steadily been increasing, especially since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>82</sup> However, others explain that most of the increase is attributable to the surge in expedited debt recovery cases following the bursting of the economic bubble; ordinary contested cases – a better barometer of litigiousness – still remain at relatively low levels.<sup>83</sup> Why is litigation so much lower in Japan compared to other modern democratic economies? One of the more popular explanations is the cultural model of Japanese civil justice. This model attributes low levels of litigation to Japanese national traits of harmony and groupism.<sup>84</sup> As far back as the 1960s, the Japanese socio-legal scholar Takeyoshi Kawashima argued that Japanese 'pre-modern' culture meant a low demand for legal professional services. As Japan modernises, Kawashima predicted, more Japanese would eventually accept litigation as a means to resolve their disputes.<sup>85</sup> Several scholars have endorsed Kawashima's thesis, although with different normative conclusions. For example, Chin and

<sup>75</sup> Kanishka Jayasuriya, 'Introduction: A Framework for Analysis of Legal Institutions in East Asia', in *Law, Capitalism and Power in East Asia: The Rule of Law and Legal Institutions*, Kanishka Jayasuriya (ed.), London: Routledge, 1999, pp. 3–7.

<sup>76</sup> Hayne, 'Restricting Litigiousness', p. 381.

<sup>77</sup> Feldman, *The Ritual of Rights in Japan*, pp. 1–15; Haley, 'Litigation in Japan...', p. 121.

<sup>78</sup> 'Too Many Lawyers in Japan, Says Ministry of Internal Affairs', *Majirox News* (online), 23 April 2012 <http://www.majiroxnews.com/2012/04/23/too-many-lawyers-in-japan-says-ministry-of-internal-affairs/>.

<sup>79</sup> Bruce Aronson, 'The Brave New World of Lawyers in Japan', *Columbia Journal of Asian Law*, Vol. 21, 2007, p. 45.

<sup>80</sup> Iwao Sato, 'Judicial Reform in Japan in the 1990s: Increase of the Legal Profession, Reinforcement of Judicial Functions and Expansion of the Rule of Law', *Social Science Japan Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2002, p. 71.

<sup>81</sup> Haley, 'Litigation in Japan...', p. 124.

<sup>82</sup> Ginsburg and Hoetker, 'The Unreluctant Litigant?...', p. 31.

<sup>83</sup> Tanase, *Community and the Law...*, p. 158.

<sup>84</sup> Port, 'The Case for Teaching Japanese Law...', pp. 659–670.

<sup>85</sup> Kawashima, 'Dispute Resolution...', p. 41.

Lawson<sup>86</sup> agree that Japanese are culturally averse to law. Japanese attitudes to law have been shaped by geographic isolation, ethnic homogeneity and religious thought. Instead of law, the authors submit, non-legal forces ensure social order. Like Kawashima, the authors suggest that only social change will bring about a change of legal consciousness; but, whether change happens or not, they evaluate Japanese attitudes to law quite positively as “law of the subtle mind”. By contrast, Inoue assesses Japanese legal culture more darkly. The communitarian ethic – which carries with it an aversion to the individualism of rights-talk – carries real social costs, Inoue warns.<sup>87</sup> Comparative law researchers have strongly criticised the cultural model and offered alternative explanations. One of the first counter-explanations stresses institutional factors over cultural attributes. Specifically, this model points to a number of institutional disincentives in the legal system which deter litigation.<sup>88</sup> For example Hayley, while acknowledging that Japanese file proportionately fewer civil suits compared to citizens in other industrialised countries, points to evidence that the Japanese are not reticent about asserting their legal rights. Rather, institutional incapacity — few lawyers and judges, the discontinuous nature of trials, and an inadequate range of remedies and enforcement powers — sets up a barrier to bringing suit in Japan.<sup>89</sup> Other institutional barriers include a lack of pre-trial discovery procedures, high contingency fees, prohibitive court costs and the absence of a jury system.<sup>90</sup>

Yet another counter-explanation is that the Japanese civil justice system is politically manipulated. Under this view, political elites – notably, the bureaucracy – manage the pace and direction of social change by channelling disputes away from the courts and into the hands of government-annexed informal dispute resolution facilities. Adherents of this view submit that lower levels of litigation in Japan have nothing to do with a cultural aversion to law; it is more a result of deliberate conservative government policy.<sup>91</sup> Japanese political conservatives prefer informal resolution of disputes because, it is submitted, they view litigation as a threat to the political and social status quo, and therefore take calculated steps to discourage litigation.<sup>92</sup>

A more controversial explanation for low litigation rates in Japan is advanced by economic rationalists. They advance economic rationales for Japanese litigating behaviour. Under this view, Japanese prefer to settle because damages verdicts are predictable and it is cheaper – or economically “rational” – to bargain in the shadow of the law rather than pursue litigation. A cultural aversion to law, argue economic rationalists, is pure myth.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Kim and Lawson, ‘The Law of the Subtle Mind...’, p. 461.

<sup>87</sup> Inoue, ‘The Poverty of Rights-Blind Communitarity...’, p. 517.

<sup>88</sup> Port, ‘The Case for Teaching Japanese Law...’, pp. 659–670.

<sup>89</sup> Haley, ‘The Myth...’, p. 359.

<sup>90</sup> Nobutoshi Yamanouchi and Samuel J. Cohen, ‘Understanding the Incidence of Litigation in Japan: A Structural Analysis’, *Southern University Law Review*, Vol. 17, 1990, p. 171. Japan introduced a quasi-jury system in 2009; however, this is more accurately described as a ‘lay judge’ system where citizens join professional judges in deciding questions of fact and law and, at any rate, is restricted to serious criminal matters: see Douglas G Levin, ‘*Saiban-in Seido* (Judicial System): Lost in Translation? How the Source of Power Underlying Japan’s Proposed Lay Assessor System May Determine its Fate’, *Asia-Pacific Law & Policy Journal*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2011, p. 199.

<sup>91</sup> Port, ‘The Case for Teaching Japanese Law...’, pp. 661–662, 669–670.

<sup>92</sup> Upham, *Law and Social Change...*, pp. 16–27, 124–165.

<sup>93</sup> Port, ‘The Case for Teaching Japanese Law...’, pp. 661–662, 668–669.

Ramseyer and Nakazato, for example, contend that the Japanese preference to settle cases out of court is not culturally pre-determined nor compelled by structural impediments in the legal system.<sup>94</sup> Japanese settle because they can predict what damages they might get if they pursued their dispute in court, and therefore, they simply bargain “in the shadow of the law”. Settling is cheaper and quicker than pursuing a court case. This shows that the Japanese are bound by rationality, not culture, because they will maximise – not forsake – their self-interest. And it proves that the Japanese legal system works because, if disputants are settling their disputes in light of the expected litigated outcomes, then clearly law is structuring behaviour.<sup>95</sup> Consider, for example, noise pollution from karaoke machines, a big problem in congested Japan.<sup>96</sup> According to case law databases, only about 40 disputes result in litigation brought before Japanese courts. By contrast, nearly 100,000 cases are heard each year by pollution complaint counsellors, an informal dispute resolution service established by the Dispute Law. Under the law, counsellors have strong, judge-like powers to consult with residents, investigate pollution incidents, and provide guidance and advice. Filing a complaint involves no direct monetary cost, does not preclude filing a concurrent (or subsequent) law suit, and allows complaints to be heard and dealt with relatively swiftly due to the lack of formalities.

### Litigiousness in 21<sup>st</sup>-century Japan

In 21<sup>st</sup>-century Japan, policy-makers are engineering a new future for the Japanese civil justice system. This signals a new turn in the litigiousness debate, which now revolves less about why litigation rates remain *low*, and more around whether or not Japanese society should embrace *more* litigation. Indeed, this is not so much a debate but a *fait accompli*. The Japanese government has accepted that more lawyers, more litigation – that is, a more robust civil justice system – is key to Japan’s economic recovery. This much is clear from the 2001 report by the Justice System Reform Council (“Recommendations of the Justice System Reform Council – For a Justice System to Support Japan in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, the Justice System Reform Council”). In the opening chapter, for example, the Report highlights Japan’s “difficult conditions”, especially in the management of the political economy, and the need to restore “rich creativity and vitality to this country.” The Report goes on to suggest that state-based economic planning must give way to a more participatory market economy built on open and transparent rules. “The justice system,” the Report submits, “should be positioned as the ‘final linchpin’ of a series of various reforms concerning the restructuring of the shape of our country”.<sup>97</sup>

Lawyer numbers and legal education are strongly positioned within this agenda to kick-start economic growth through law. The objective is obvious: to expand the pool of

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<sup>94</sup> Ramseyer and Nakazato, ‘The Rational Litigant...’, p. 263.

<sup>95</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>96</sup> West, *Law in Everyday Japan...*, pp. 90–91. See also Mark West, ‘The Pricing of Shareholder Derivative Actions in Japan and the United States’, *Northwestern University Law Review*, Vol. 88, 1994, p. 1436.

<sup>97</sup> For a summary of the Justice System Reform Council report, see Daniel H. Foote, ‘Introduction and Overview: Japanese Law at a Turning Point’, in *Law in Japan: A Turning Point*, Daniel H. Foote (ed.), Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007, p. xix.

talent capable of working through the complexities wrought by Japan's integration into a global economic order. Thus, the proposals envision a more rigorous training in law in graduate law schools, as opposed to the current system of undergraduate interdisciplinary education in politics, economics, languages and law. Graduates of law schools would then sit for a revised bar examination, and substantially more – as many as 70–80%, although numbers are currently capped at closer to 30% – would be allowed to pass. The Legal Research and Training Institute, the legal training arm of the Supreme Court of Japan, would grow in institutional capacity to groom those successful in the bar examination for careers in private practice, the judiciary or the procuracy. The end result would be an expanded population of technical experts proficient in the art of complex problem-solving.

This cuts against prevailing orthodoxy. Most economists argue that lawyers *inhibit* economic growth. Indeed, empirical studies have shown an inverse relationship between the number of lawyers and the vibrancy of the economy. Lawyers, many economists conclude, are a drag on the economy. Unlike entrepreneurs and engineers, lawyers do not generate wealth; they are rent-seekers who contribute complexity and other costs to completing transactions.<sup>98</sup>

At any rate, this new government policy is having an effect. There is now empirical evidence of the “unreluctant” Japanese litigant.<sup>99</sup> With a struggling economy and greater political competition, Japanese seem to be more prepared to fight for their slice of a shrinking pie. Government policies aimed at liberalising the economy and the legal system are facilitating access to the judicial system.<sup>100</sup> The modern conception of law, premised on conceptions of party autonomy and universally applicable objective legal standards, is challenging the traditional Japanese orthodoxy of communitarianism.<sup>101</sup>

### Why popular culture?

Quantitative data, however, only tells part of the story. For one, reliable statistics on litigation in Japan (or, indeed, elsewhere) are hard to come by and even more difficult to compare meaningfully across time or jurisdictions.<sup>102</sup> For example, it is an open question whether litigiousness is indicated by simply filing legal proceedings, proceeding to trial or concluding a dispute with a final judgment.<sup>103</sup> Further, “variations in institutional conditions, including court and professional structures, procedural and substantive rules, as well as recording practices, make it extremely difficult to compare litigation rates across national boundaries in a valid and meaningful fashion”.<sup>104</sup> More fundamentally, quantitative data cannot answer qualitative questions. Litigiousness, after all, is a socio-cultural issue; it interrogates the extent to which people are *conscious* of the law and prepared to engage formal legal processes. Thus, a litigious people are those who frame their disputes in legal, adversarial terms; non-litigious people are those who prefer to resolve their complaints

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<sup>98</sup> Milhaupt and West, ‘Law’s Dominion...’, p. 451.

<sup>99</sup> Ginsburg and Hoetker, ‘The Unreluctant Litigant?...’, p. 31.

<sup>100</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>101</sup> Tanase, *Community and the Law...*

<sup>102</sup> Anleu and Prest, ‘Litigation’, pp. 8–10.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

through informal means, such as negotiations or discussions, because they prefer to preserve rather than rupture relationships.

Enter popular culture. Japanese popular culture is, I submit, a useful – yet under-developed – methodological tool for illuminating law's functions in Japanese society, especially the issue of Japanese litigiousness. Yet despite the growing body of work in the interdisciplinary connections between law and popular culture,<sup>105</sup> popular culture studies in the legal academy have not fully tapped this socio-legal potential. First, popular culture remains marginalised in a legal academy where the “hegemony” of black-letter doctrinal analysis still anchors legal education and research.<sup>106</sup> Second, where legal scholars have engaged with popular culture, they have largely employed humanities-style textual analysis – focusing on the semiotic,<sup>107</sup> ideological<sup>108</sup> or jurisprudential<sup>109</sup> messages embedded in its texts – and largely ignored its socio-cultural potential for capturing citizens' perspectives on the desirability of invoking formal law to frame rights and settle disputes.<sup>110</sup>

At first glance, law and popular culture seem poles apart. As Kamir notes, law is a system of power; popular culture is an industry of pleasure: “Law is an authoritative, normative, centralistic, coercive system; film a world of amusing, escapist, emotionally gratifying popular-cultural artifacts”.<sup>111</sup> Yet both share a narrative tradition:<sup>112</sup>

As societal discourses, law and film both create meaning through storytelling, performance and ritualistic patterning, envisioning, and constructing human subjects, social groups, individuals, and worlds. Indeed, both discourses are extraordinarily powerful. Law and film both discursively constitute ‘imagined communities’, to use Benedict Anderson's term. Each invites participants – viewers, legal professionals, parties to legal proceedings, and/or members of the public – to share its vision, logic, rhetoric, and values. Law and film both demand adherence to rules and norms in exchange for order, stability, security, and significance. Each facilitates – and requires – concomitant and continuous creation of personal and collective identity, language, memory, history, mythology, social roles, and a shared future. It thus stands to reason that an interdisciplinary approach to these two fields would offer lively and intriguing insights.

The interdisciplinary potential of law and popular culture lies in this nexus of narratives. To be sure, stories are just that – stories. They are not empirical truth. In particular, popular

<sup>105</sup> For a review of recent literature, see Douglas J Goodman, ‘Approaches to Law and Popular Culture’, *Law & Social Inquiry*, Vol. 31, No. 7, 2006, p. 757.

<sup>106</sup> Steve Greenfield and Guy Osborn, ‘Law, Legal Education and Popular Culture’, in *Readings in Law and Popular Culture*, Steve Greenfield and Guy Osborn (eds.), London and New York: Routledge, 2006, pp. 1–3.

<sup>107</sup> Goodman, ‘Approaches...’, pp. 758–774.

<sup>108</sup> Mezey and Niles, ‘Screening the Law...’, p. 91.

<sup>109</sup> William P. MacNeil, *Lex Populi: The Jurisprudence of Popular Culture*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007, p. 5.

<sup>110</sup> For an excellent analysis of the socio-legal relevance of popular culture, see Friedman, ‘Law, Lawyers, and Popular Culture’, p. 1579.

<sup>111</sup> Orit Kamir, ‘Honor and Dignity in the Film *Unforgiven*: Implications for Sociolegal Theory’, *Law & Society Review*, Vol. 40, No. 1, 2006, p. 207.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 208.

culture is “entertainment and not social science”.<sup>113</sup> American popular culture about the law, for example, exaggerates the extent of crime in the United States, over-represents murders and drug offences compared to more typical street crimes; glorifies lawyers as master advocates in court yet neglects their more mundane tasks (such as contract drafting); and ignores certain pre-trial processes (such as jury selection and interlocutory applications).<sup>114</sup> To achieve certain aesthetic effects, such as drama, comedy or horror, popular culture caricatures legal actors, processes and institutions.<sup>115</sup>

But that misses the point. Stories matter to social scientists because they offer insights into how people understand and experience the world.<sup>116</sup> As Cronon explains:<sup>117</sup>

Narrators create plots from disordered experience, give reality a unity that neither nature nor the past possess so clearly. In so doing, we move well beyond nature into the intensely human realm of value.

As such, narrative methods are more useful for constructivist research questions (what an experience means to subjects) rather than realist questions (what is the state of reality).<sup>118</sup> Narrators necessarily distort reality because they are making sense of, rather than reporting on, the real world.

At the same time, the power of narrative analysis is said to come from the authenticity of respondents being empowered to tell their own stories in their own words.<sup>119</sup> In the social sciences, data typically comes from oral sources, such as interviews,<sup>120</sup> observations of conversations in self-help groups,<sup>121</sup> oral histories and sermons;<sup>122</sup> but written sources may also reveal narratives, such as diaries,<sup>123</sup> letters,<sup>124</sup> trial transcripts<sup>125</sup> and newspaper

<sup>113</sup> Stewart Macauley, ‘Images of Law in Everyday Life: The Lessons of School, Entertainment and Spectator Sports’, *Law and Society Review*, Vol. 21, 1987, p. 197.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 197–199.

<sup>115</sup> Michael Asimow, ‘Introduction to Papers from UCLA’s Law and Popular Culture Seminar’, *UCLA Entertainment Law Review*, Vol. 9, No. 1, 2001, p. 87.

<sup>116</sup> Lewis P. Hinchman and Sandra K. Hinchman, ‘Introduction’, in *Memory, Identity, Community: The Idea of Narrative in the Human Sciences*, Lewis P. Hinchman and Sandra K. Hinchman (eds.), New York: State University of New York, 1997, p. xvi; Catherine Kohler Riessman, *Narrative Analysis*, Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1993, p. 2.

<sup>117</sup> William Cronon, ‘A Place for Stories: Nature, History, and Narrative’, *Journal of American History*, Vol. 78, No. 4, 1992, p. 1349.

<sup>118</sup> Jane Elliott, *Using Narrative in Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, London: Sage, 2006, pp. 24–27.

<sup>119</sup> Keith Punch, *Introduction to Social Research: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*, London: Sage, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2005, p. 217.

<sup>120</sup> Elliott, *Using Narrative...*, p. 5.

<sup>121</sup> Phoebe Morgan, ‘Risking Relationships: Understanding the Litigation Choices of Sexually Harassed Women’, *Law and Society Review*, Vol. 33, 1999, p. 67.

<sup>122</sup> Punch, *Introduction to Social Research...*, p. 217.

<sup>123</sup> Patricia Williams, *The Alchemy of Race and Rights: Diary of a Law Professor*, Boston: Harvard University Press, 1991.

<sup>124</sup> Riessman, *Narrative Analysis*, p. 69.

<sup>125</sup> Catherine Burns, ‘Constructing Rape: Judicial Narratives on Trial’, *Japanese Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 1, 2004, pp. 81–96; Burns, *Sexual Violence and the Law in Japan*; Richard Delgado, ‘Storytelling

accounts. Is this authenticity lost when the narrator is not an ordinary person but the mass media industry, and their stories are audio-visual materials? Put differently, is law-themed popular culture more indicative of the *mass media's* view of the law than that of the general population?<sup>126</sup> A significant body of work in popular culture theory is concerned with the power of the mass media industry to transmit certain ideological messages to society.<sup>127</sup> According to this scholarship, the mass media does more than portray actual or idealised social conditions; it also contributes to acceptance of new social roles<sup>128</sup> or an understanding of social processes.<sup>129</sup>

Asimov and Mader<sup>130</sup> provide an answer. The authenticity of popular culture lies in its verisimilitude – its ability to emotionally resonate with the audience to allow for the suspension of disbelief and to generate the desired affective response. The characters must be credible; the plots must replicate real, lived experience; and the settings must be immediately familiar. Further, as reader response theory acknowledges, audiences are not passive recipients but active “readers” in the interpretation of popular culture.<sup>131</sup> An analysis of popular culture, therefore, must allow for multiple potential readings, given the heterogeneity of the interpretative community, and not simply privilege authorial intent.

Popular culture, in short, is not a “mirror” of the actual operation of the law (a realist question) but a “window” into how people feel about it (a constructivist question).<sup>132</sup> It taps into “a reservoir of mass mentality”.<sup>133</sup> Yet, equally, since it is also a swirl of multiple

for Oppositionists and Others: A Plea for Narrative’, *Michigan Law Review*, Vol. 87, 1987, p. 2411; Richard Delgado, ‘Beyond Critique: Law, Culture, and the Politics of Form’, *Texas Law Review*, Vol. 69, 1991, p. 1929; Richard Delgado, ‘Campus Antiracism Rules: Constitutional Narratives in Collision’, *Northwestern University Law Review*, Vol. 85, 1991, p. 343; Richard Delgado, ‘Rodrigo’s Final Chronicle: Cultural Power, the Law Reviews, and the Attack on Narrative Jurisprudence’, *Southern California Law Review*, Vol. 68, 1995, p. 545; Richard Delgado, ‘Making Pets: Social Workers, «Problem Groups», and the Role of the SPACA – Getting a Little More Precise about Racialized Narratives’, *Texas Law Review*, Vol. 77, 1995, p. 1571; Kim Lane Scheppele, ‘The Re-vision of Rape Law’, *University of Chicago Law Review*, Vol. 54, 1987, p. 1095; Kim Lane Scheppele, ‘Foreword: Telling Stories’, *Michigan Law Review*, Vol. 87, 1988, p. 2073; Kim Lane Scheppele, ‘«Just the Facts, Ma’am»: Sexualized Violence, Evidentiary Habits, and the Revision of Truth’, *New York Law School Law Review*, Vol. 37, 1992, p. 123.

<sup>126</sup> Sarah Welker, ‘Law and Popular Culture’, *Alternative Law Journal*, Vol. 22, 1997, p. 110; Peter Robson and Jessica Silbey, ‘Introduction’, in *Law and Justice on the Small Screen*, Peter Robson and Jessica Silbey (eds.), Oxford and Portland: Hart, 2012, p. 1; Chase, ‘Lawyers and Popular Culture’, p. 281.

<sup>127</sup> For a comprehensive literature review, see Mezey and Niles, ‘Screening the Law...’, p. 91.

<sup>128</sup> Hilaria M. Gossmann, ‘New Role Models for Men and Women? Gender in Japanese TV Dramas’, in *Japan Pop! Inside the World of Japanese Popular Culture*, Timothy J. Craig (ed.), Armonk and London: ME Sharp, 2000, p. 207.

<sup>129</sup> Welker, ‘Law and Popular Culture’, p. 10; Macauley, ‘Images of Law...’, p. 197.

<sup>130</sup> Asimov and Mader, *Law and Popular Culture*..., pp. 11–12.

<sup>131</sup> John Fiske, *Television Culture*, London and New York: Routledge, 1987, p. 16; Henry Jenkins, *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture*, London and New York: Routledge, 1992.

<sup>132</sup> Friedman, ‘Law, Lawyers and Popular Culture’, p. 1588; Craig, ‘Introduction...’, p. 17.

<sup>133</sup> Allen and Sakamoto, ‘Introduction...’, p. 5.

and mixed interpretative possibilities, popular culture presents a range of possible affective states in a society; as such, its analysis does not lead us into the trap of essentialising or unifying a single national culture.<sup>134</sup>

### **Japanese popular culture about the law**

So what does Japanese popular culture about the law reveal about ordinary people's feelings about the legal system? The data set here is a random selection of network television shows featuring lawyers, prosecutors, law students or legal processes, focusing in particular on those that have screened since the turn of the century. The analysis of the texts borrows from the narrative method, involving interpreting the messages embedded in the character portrayals, plot developments, settings, filming techniques and even background music. Necessarily, the data set is selective and the analytical approach is broad-brushed. But as an initial foray into the interdisciplinary and socio-legal possibilities of law-and-popular culture, the purpose here is to sketch out thematic trends rather than paint a precise portrait.

Prior to the 2000s, Japanese network television rarely resorted to lawyers as characters or court-rooms as dramatic settings. The popular dramas of the 1980s and 1990s, such as "3-Nen B-Gumi Kinpachi-Sensei" (Mr Kinpachi of Class 3B) (TBS, seven series and 15 made-for-TV movies, 1979–2011), "Oshin" (NHK, 1983–84), "Mama wa Aidoru" (My Mother the Celebrity) (TBS, 1987), "Tokyo Rabu Sutoorii" (Tokyo Love Story) (Fuji Television, 1991) and "Rongu Bakeeshon" (Long Vacation) (Fuji Television 1996), were family sagas, coming-of-age stories or office-based romantic comedies. Law simply did not register in the popular imagination prior to the much-touted civil justice reforms in 2001.

However, Law was not completely absent. But in the few television shows that did portray lawyers or the courts, the representations were overwhelmingly unflattering. In the popular family drama "Kita no Kuni-kara" (From a Northern Country) (Fuji Television 1981–1982, with made-for-TV specials in 1983, 1984, 1987, 1989, 1992, 1995, 1998 and 2002), the hero, unhappy with his life in Tokyo, takes his two young children, an eight-year old daughter and a ten-year old son, to his birthplace in the northern island of Hokkaido after his marriage breaks down. In episode four of the original series, the character of a lawyer makes a brief appearance. As the hero works happily on a farm, reminiscing happily with his co-workers about the "good old days", the farm owner's wife calls for the hero. With a look of noticeable concern on her face, she informs the hero that a guest has come for him. "A lawyer," she whispers, and then adds hesitantly: "from Tokyo; a woman." She hands him the lawyer's business card. The camera takes a close-up shot of the business card with "lawyer" marked prominently. The next scene is a lingering establishment shot of the female lawyer. She is wearing a heavy fur coat, the urban wear of a successful professional, which is juxtaposed ironically with her standing among the lumber and dilapidated buildings of a small-town farm. As the camera moves to a close-up, her face is stern and heavily made-up; her hair is pulled tightly into a bun. The lawyer is thus painted as an interloper, an alien, an urbanite who stands uncomfortably among the more natural surroundings of the farm. This is reinforced in a conversation between the farm owner and his wife. "A lawyer from Tokyo?" the owner asks. "A woman," replies his wife. "What does she want?"

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<sup>134</sup> Ibidem.

the husband muses. A shot of their faces show them wearing expressions of clear concern. Interestingly, the farmer's wife seems to make much of the fact that the lawyer is a woman. In a telling contrast, the farmer's wife plays a traditional nurturing role of wife and mother, a kind and gentle figure also beloved by the rest of the small-town community; the lawyer – incredulously, judging by the quizzical look on the farmer's wife as she talks about her – plays against established gender expectations by appearing fierce and unpleasant. The message here is clear: law is a threat; law is not a nurturer; law runs contrary to traditional community norms.

“Shichinin no Onna Bengoshi” (Seven Female Lawyers), a show about an all-female law firm which ran for three seasons in the early 1990s before being remade for two additional seasons in the mid-2000s, makes slightly different, but equally negative, claims about Japanese law. In one episode in the first season, for example, one of the younger lawyers represents an accused rapist. The judge presiding over the trial is in his mid-fifties and with a short temper. To the defence lawyer's increasing frustration, the judge seems to side with the prosecution, overruling all the defence's objections to the admissibility of prosecution evidence. When the defence lawyer, barely able to control her rage, is about to stand and make another objection, she is controlled by her more senior colleague with a touch of her arm and a firm shake of her head. In the next scene, which takes place back at the law firm, the senior colleague explains that the judge had recently served a term in the procuracy. This was a relatively common practice, she added. Rather than reflect on the policy objectives of rotating judges to the prosecutors' office, private law firms or government departments, namely to expose them to other fields of legal practice, the characters in the story focus on the negative impact this has on the impartiality of the criminal justice system. As such, the show offers a withering criticism of the quality of Japanese justice.

Fast-forward now to the 2000s. Legal dramas, once invisible, have gained in sufficient number to constitute a new genre in Japanese television. The heroes are lawyers (eg, “*Riigaru Hai*” (Legal High), (2012–13, Fuji Television), prosecutors (“*Hero*”, 2001, Fuji Television), legal trainees (“*Beginaa*” (Beginners), 2003, Fuji Television) or judges (“*Jajji*” (The Judge), 2007, NHK); the settings are law firms (“*Legal High*”), prosecutor offices (“*Hero*”) or the Japan Legal Training and Research Institute (“*Beginners*”). Even light entertainment talk shows draw on law-themed skits and cast lawyers as celebrities (“*Za Jajji*” (The Judge), Fuji Television, 2001–2004) and “*Gyouretsu no Dekiru Houritsu Soudansho*” (The Law Firm with the Long Queue), Nihon Television, 2002–present.)

Not only has there been a quantitative increase in law-themed shows; there has been a noticeable qualitative difference in their narratives about the law. Law has become hip. Consider, for example, the titles of many law-themed shows. Either they use English (“*Hero*”) or Anglicised loan words (“*Jajji*”, “*Beginaa*”, “*Riigaru Hai*”), connoting something modern, trendy and *kuuru* (“cool”).<sup>135</sup> The title sequence of “*Hero*” (2001, Fuji Television) makes this point abundantly clear. The hero is played by Takuya Kimura, a pop star and sex symbol. To amplify his status as trend-setter, the title sequence sees him dressed in a fashionable leather jacket and jeans where his cast-mates, his colleagues in a Tokyo prosecutor's office, wear dark suits and have serious expressions. He appears in colour; his colleagues, in black-and-white. The theme music is up-tempo and the sequence is

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<sup>135</sup> See Aoki, ‘*Kuuru...*’.

captured in a series of stop-start takes. The preferred, cutting-edge career destination for young people, the show seems to suggest, is no longer the public service but the law.<sup>136</sup>

The same idea is conveyed in “*Beginaa*” (Beginners, 2003, Fuji Television). The opening scene shows the young heroine making her way hesitantly into a large lecture theatre. A sub-title appears making it clear that she is entering the Legal Research and Training Institute, an educational arm of the Supreme Court which prepares successful takers of the bar exam for a future career either in private practice, the judiciary or the procuracy. As she takes her seat while dreamy music plays in the background, there is a flashback to her days working as a pink-collar secretary in a busy work-office. The message is that her legal training is about to transform her life from the drudgery of office administration to a more exciting career in the law. To reinforce this message, the other key characters in the drama are identified in the opening few minutes of the first episode, all with their own flashback stories: a violent thug, a high-profile bureaucrat ruined by a scandal, a spoilt rich girl, a bored housewife, a retrenched worker in his mid-fifties, a hapless casual worker, a mobster’s mistress – all who have successfully sat for, and passed, the bar examination with the promise of beginning a new chapter in their lives. Law, in short, brings hope.

Both “*Hero*” and “*Beginaa*” feature weekly episodes in which the law is championed as a tool to correct a social injustice. But in other television shows, the law is depicted as balancing competing, often immensurable, interests. In an episode from the second season of the comedy “*Riigaru Hai*” (Legal High, 2013, Fuji Television), for example, a law firm is retained by a cartoonist and a blogger to defend them from defamation suits brought by a litigious business entrepreneur. The court room is the main theatre of action, with competing narratives about the right of privacy in the information age and the primacy of freedom of speech.

In other shows, the law is openly mocked. A good example of this is the talk-show “*Gyouretsu no Dekiru Houritsu Soudansho*” (The Law Firm with the Long Queue, Nihon Television, 2002–present.) The show is skit-based light entertainment. Hosted by a comedian, a panel of celebrities (actors, singers, comedians and sports stars) discuss the various skits before the host turns to the four lawyers for their legal analysis. The skits are intended to be humorous, mostly because the scenarios are unlikely if not outright ridiculous. Examples include: a wife who, in her petition for divorce, seeks damages for the costs of a personal detective to uncover her soon-to-be-ex-husband’s acts of infidelity; a young woman whose broken-down car is fixed by a kindly stranger who later presents her with a mechanic’s repair bill; and an office worker who wants to stop her colleague, who claims to see ghosts, foretelling the failure of her future marriage. If one message from the entertainment industry is that law is a powerful and attractive tool to correct a social injustice, there is a counter-narrative that law is not the answer when there is personal conflict in every-day life.

## Conclusion

This brief survey of Japanese law-related popular culture offers some intriguing insights into Japanese feelings about the legal system. Certainly, based on the emergence of law as a new genre in television, interest in the law is growing; equally, with strong narratives

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<sup>136</sup> Milhaupt and West, ‘Law’s Dominion...’, p. 451.

about the desirability of law as a career and its promise as a tool to protect the vulnerable, attitudes to the law are warming. This suggests a shift from an ambivalence about law and lawyers, most noticeable in the farmer wife's reaction to the visiting lawyer from Tokyo in "Kita no Kuni-kara", to one that is open to engaging with lawyers, legal careers and legal processes. This attitudinal shift might go some way to explaining the upswing in litigation rates since the turn of the century.

At the same time, the embrace is a cautious one. As much as popular culture valorises the law as a tool to protect the weak, it criticises it if it is allowed to infiltrate too deeply into everyday life and become the first point of call in inter-personal conflict. "Riigaru Hai", for example, demonstrates that law cannot provide simple answers to life's contentious political issues; and "Gyouretsu no Dekiru Houristsu Soudansho" illustrates that those who resort too readily to the law expose themselves to ridicule.

The implications for the debate about Japanese litigiousness are mixed. The varied messages about law from popular culture, for example, do reinforce the criticism of cultural explanations of Japanese litigiousness insofar as socio-cultural attitudes are not fixed and universal but fluid, diverse and unfolding. At the same time, to the extent that counter-explanations of Japanese litigiousness emphasise that litigation patterns are simply a rational response to the institutional environment, government policy or simply personal self-maximising behaviour, they fail to capture how Japanese subjective perceptions about the law also seem to be changing.

This suggests, albeit tentatively, some new possible directions for future research into Japanese law and popular culture. As a matter of data and method, future research efforts could fruitfully expand the corpus of works subject to analysis, not only to other television shows not covered in this article but also to other media texts such as film, manga and anime. Second, as a matter of theory, litigiousness scholars need to explore a theoretical framework that marries the material and the culture (or, more precisely, the rational and the emotional) to develop a more convincing multi-factor analysis of Japanese litigiousness and legal consciousness.



## BOOK REVIEWS

**Patrick Hein, *How the Japanese Became Foreign to Themselves. The Impact of Globalization on the Private and Public Spheres in Japan*, Wien; Zürich; Berlin; Münster: Lit, 2009, 234 pp.**

This book was written in English by Patrick Hein, and published by Lit Publishing House in 2009. It consists of three chapters and closes with conclusions and a forecast. The title refers to the very current issue of globalization and its influence on Japanese society. The author is a young researcher who gained a scholarship to Japanese and German universities (Marburg and Waseda). He says that the question of whether Arendt's distinction of the private, public and society can be applied to the Japanese cultural context will be examined in the book.

The introduction to the first chapter is a very good overview of the globalization problem in numerous dimensions. The author presents the fear which has arisen in Japan that globalization would destroy the country, and the feeling that it is wrong to follow the US and its policy blindly (p. 12). Hein also presents globalization as a two-way process of mutual learning and change (p. 15). He emphasises that his study aims to analyse the historical relationship between the public and private spheres. Hein introduces such notions as the state, self-interest, civil participation and globalization itself. The author also presents notions characteristic of Japan, such as shame, superiority, excellence, honour and fame, and introduces the samurai culture. A broad introduction to Japanese society and culture is also provided. Basically, the whole chapter offers the reader a great deal of knowledge on Japan from the samurai period until now, which can be considered as a good introduction to the problem under consideration.

The second chapter, entitled 'The invisible impact of globalization on psychopathology and mental health', takes an unusual approach to the problem with an interesting description of the role of mental health in the making of modern Japan and the globalization issue. Social problems such as family patterns, the *hikikomori* issue, of teenagers who stay closed in their rooms without any interaction with the surrounding world; *amae*, the coddling of children, confusions of ethnic identity and suicides are discussed. This chapter can be treated as a perfect synthesis of social issues in contemporary Japan, in the context of psychopathology and other medical questions. In comparison to the first chapter, the following two are relatively short, but synthetic.

The third chapter concerns the ecological utopia in Japan and a discussion of the role of NGOs and NPOs in opening the doors to a vision of ecology after the Kyoto Protocol. We

can find an overview through different non-governmental and non-profit organizations dealing with environmental problems. Questions concerning energy are also examined although it should be remembered that this publication was completed before the Fukushima nuclear disaster. The author also raises the problem of court decisions and compensation for victims regarding various incidents of petrochemical pollution or governmental mistakes which caused serious health problems to citizens.

To summarize, this book is a good compendium of knowledge regarding modern Japanese society and different social issues in Japan. Moreover, the whole analysis is conducted in the light of globalization, which provides a perfect overview. Furthermore, in the appendices we can find the full text of a briefing on Japan's anti-global warming policy, an interview with Marutei Tsutunen from the DP and Yukiko Koike from the LPD, which also gives the reader an interesting approach to the problem's analysis. This book can definitely be recommended to those interested in Japanese contemporary society, and also as a supplement for researchers and students of social sciences.

Olga Barbasiewicz

**Osamu Hattori, Viktoria Eschnach-Szabo, Martina Ebi (editors), *Japan and Japanese People. Views from a Transcultural Perspective. A Joint Project of Doshisha University and Eberhard Karls University Tübingen*, Wien; Zürich; Berlin; Münster: Lit, 2010, 155 pp.**

This book is a collection of essays from Doshisha University and the Eberhard Karls University in Tübingen, written in English and edited by Osamu Hattori, Viktoria Eschnach-Szabo and Martina Ebi, which was published by Lit Publishing House in 2010. This series of articles written by exceptional scholars who specialize in Japanese culture and society is based on the workshop entitled 'Japanese People and Culture: Views from a Transcultural Perspective' which was held at the Eberhard Karls University Tübingen in 2009.

As emphasized in the preface to this book, foreigners' views of Japan have changed dramatically over the past century (p. 1). This was the starting point for analyzing Japanese culture from a transcultural perception, which is a very interesting approach to a culture considered as unique.

The first essay, titled *Traditionalism and Japanese Acceptance of Foreign Culture*, by Yukuji Okita, describes the history of Japan's discoveries by foreigners. He shows the departure by Japanese scholars from Confucian values to study Western culture and philosophy in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Sakuma Shōzan), which is important as there are not many publications about Confucian schools and teaching in the context of Western impact on the Japanese culture after the Meiji Restoration. The majority of the text is dedicated to Yokoi Shōnan, an intellectual who reacted to the threat of the West.

The essay by Viktoria Eschbach-Szabo, *Philipp Franz von Siebold's Transcultural Research Methods*, is dedicated to the 19<sup>th</sup>-century specialist in Japanese studies. He was able to collect information on Japan despite the shogunate's prohibition on foreigners doing so. He studied Japanese names and signs, finding their universal functions, which gave a firm basis to Japanese culture studies in the West.

The next issue undertaken by Osamu Hatori in this volume is the cooperation between a German doctor, Heribert Schmidt, and Japanese doctors who cooperated in the field of acupuncture in the post-war era. Hatori describes Schmidt, his lectures, and the history of acupuncture in Japan and Germany. He emphasizes the role of Schmidt's arrival in Japan and the build-up of a friendly attitude between Westerns and Japanese.

A very short essay by Hiroshi Okabayashi from the Doshisha University is focused on the person of Shūzō Kūki and the question of aesthetics. The transcription of long syllables in this essay differs from these in previous texts, which in my opinion should be unified in all essays.

In her article Michaela Oberwinkler describes the *otaku* issue in the context of the *Trainman* story. The author pays special attention to the Japanese language (both spoken and written) as used by *otaku* who play with pronunciation, and shows the different points of this idiolect to make the reader understand its peculiarity.

The next short essay is by Junko Saeki, in which she analyzes the idealization of 'boys' love' based on two stories, Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice* and Hagio Moto's *The Heart of Thomas*. The author undertakes an interesting case of the fascination among Japanese girls with 'boys' love' and introduces it in the context of the gender issue in modern Japan and Germany.

The subject of trans-cultural cooperation and dialogue is examined in two essays by Karin Moser von Filseck and Akemi Hamada. From these articles we learn about the German–East Asian Forum of Sciences and Humanities and its activity, as well as about Japanese students in Germany and the cultural exchange between those nations.

Important questions such as judicial reforms in Japan are also raised in this publication by Hans-Peter Marutschke. These problems are relevant because of the social changes towards which the new judicial system leads. It should be considered as a vital problem while analyzing social issues in this country.

Linguistic matters are also brought up in this collection of essays, in the English letters of Shimeta Neesima and a discussion of new loanwords in Japanese and German.

To summarize this publication, different, interdisciplinary approaches regarding Japanese society are emphasized. The book shows the condition of Japanese studies in Germany, but also the cooperation between European (specifically German) universities and Japanese ones. It is very important to show such problems to the wider audience, and to encourage people to follow such paths in researching Japanese culture and society.

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# ACTA ASIATICA VARSOVIENSIA

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1. Ivor Wilks, *Wa and Wala. Islam and Polity in North-Western Ghana*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 70.
2. Giacomo Luciani (ed.), *The Arab State*, London: Routledge, 1990, p. 124.
3. Kareen Pfeifer, 'Is There an Islamic Economics?', in *Political Islam. Essays from Middle East Report*, Joel Beinin and Joe Stork (eds.), Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977, p. 155.
4. Zygmunt Komorowski, *Kultury Afryki Czarnej* [Cultures of Black Africa], Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1994, pp. 89–90.
5. L. Dimond, 'Rethinking of Civil Society', *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 5, No. 3, July 1994, p. 4.
6. Tafsir of Ibn Kathir: <http://www.qtafsir.com> (accessed 20.11.2011).

When notes to the same work follow after interruption, use the author's last name and a shortened title of the book or article.

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7. Pfeifer, 'Is There an Islamic...', pp. 154, 156.
8. Ibid., p. 186.
9. Ibidem.

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