**HIROTA MASAKI AND THE LIMITS OF THE NATION:**

**AN ANNOTATED EXCERPT FROM *BUNMEI KAIKAI TO MINSHÛ ISHIKI***

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ABSTRACT


This annotated translation of an excerpt by Hirota Masaki makes available in English Hirota's discussion, in *Bunmei kaika to minshû ishiki* (Civilization and enlightenment and the people's consciousness), of the development of the people's political subjectivity during Japan's transformation from *bakuhan* bureaucracy to modern imperial state. The translation is preceded by a brief translator's introduction, which places Hirota's work into its historiographical context and directs the reader's attention to key points in the excerpt.

In this excerpt, one of Hirota's primary concerns is the role that non-elites themselves played in the construction of the new polity. He argues that, far from being a monolithic entity, the village communities (which comprised the large majority of Japan's population at the time) were composed of three different social strata, each with its own distinctive relation to *bunmei kaika*. For Hirota, the interactions among these different layers of society were instrumental in shaping the character of, and the tensions within, the modern Japanese nation.

In the first half of the excerpt, Hirota analyzes the ruling class's motivations for creating a national polity, and examines the uneasy combination of Enlightenment and Emperor ideologies that underpinned the *kaika* policies used to control the populace and harness its energies in service of the state. In the second half of the excerpt, Hirota examines the political subjectivities that were slowly beginning to emerge under the tumultuous political and social conditions of the late-Tokugawa and early-Meiji eras. He shows how these conditions, combined with the civilizational logic of the *kaika* policies, empowered some groups and disempowered others; and how the process of nation-building led to new forms of "degradation and discrimination" for the lower social strata. The result, he argues, was ultimately a "homogeneous nation" that, to this day, remains self-alienated and unequal.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH


Christopher C. Ahn is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Asian Studies at Cornell University and holds a JD degree from Cornell Law School. His research interests include constructions of race and nation in imperial and postwar Japan, citizenship in comparative perspective, and critical theory. He is currently at work on a dissertation entitled *The Kim Hui-ro Trial: Language, Law, and National Belonging in Postwar Japan*.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

The annotated translation that follows is an excerpt from *Bunmei kaika to minshû ishiki* (Civilization and enlightenment and the people's consciousness) by Hirota Masaki.[1] Hirota is one of the key figures of the *minshûshi*, or people's history, school that came to prominence in Japan during the 1960s and 1970s and offered a radically new paradigm for historical research. The *minshûshi* historians treated "the people" of the Tokugawa (1603–1868) and Meiji (1868–1912) eras as active subjects of social and political change; and in doing so, they introduced new topics and methods that have had a profound and lasting impact upon Japanese historiography.

Hirota's book, a paradigmatic example of *minshûshi* scholarship, is concerned with the development of the people's political subjectivity during Japan's transformation from *bakuhan* bureaucracy to modern imperial state. The phrase *bunmei kaika* in the book's title— usually translated as "civilization and enlightenment," and often shortened to *kaika*—was used during the period as a slogan and shorthand for the new Meiji government's aggressive policies of modernization and Westernization, as well as for the radical changes in institutions, values, and social relations that these policies brought about. In particular, as a means to preserve Japan's independence, the *kaika* policies abolished the caste system of the Tokugawa period and instituted a modern national polity based upon Western Enlightenment ideals.

In the excerpt presented here, one of Hirota's primary concerns is the role that non-elites themselves played in the construction of the new polity. He argues that, far from being a

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[1] Hirota Masaki, *Bunmei kaika to minshû ishiki*, Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, 1980. (広田昌希『文明開化と民衆意識』青木書店.) The translated excerpt comes from pp. 50–88 in Chapter II.
Hirota (b. 1934) was born in Kôbe and graduated from Kyôto University in 1963. He held teaching positions at Hokkaidô Educational University, Okayama University, Ôsaka University, Kôshien University, and Kyôto Tachibana University. Though recently retired from teaching, he remains an active researcher and continues to address issues of gender, social discrimination, and nationalism in his publications and other scholarly activities.

monolithic entity, the village communities (which comprised the large majority of Japan's population at the time) were composed of three different social strata—the wealthy farming class; the lower stratum; and the social outcasts and outsiders—each with its own distinctive relation to *bunmei kaika*. For Hirota, the interactions among these different layers of society were instrumental in shaping the character of, and the tensions within, the modern Japanese nation.

In the first half of the excerpt, Hirota analyzes the ruling class's motivations for creating a national polity, and examines the uneasy combination of Enlightenment and Emperor ideologies that underpinned the *kaika* policies used to control the populace and harness its energies in service of the state. Because their objective was overcoming the Western threat, rather than the cultivation of a democratic citizenry, the elites often failed to recognize or acknowledge the growing self-awareness of non-elites. In the second half of the excerpt, Hirota examines the new political subjectivities nevertheless beginning to emerge under the tumultuous political and social conditions of the late-Tokugawa and early-Meiji eras.[2] He shows how these conditions, combined with the civilizational logic of the *kaika* policies, empowered some groups and disempowered others; and how the process of nation-building led to new forms of "degradation and discrimination" for the lower social strata. The result, he argues, was ultimately a "homogeneous nation" that, to this day, remains self-alienated and unequal.

*1. The minshûshi school's intervention in historiography*

In the early 1960s, Irokawa Daikichi began articulating his thesis that non-elites in Japanese society were not only aware of the momentous social and political changes taking

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[2] The term most frequently used by Hirota is *seiji shutai* (政治主体), literally "political subject," and sometimes *shutaisei* (主体性), or "subjectivity." The terms have taken on a variety of (related) connotations in Japanese intellectual thought. For a brief and concise discussion of the various connotations, see J. Victor Koschmann, *Revolution and Subjectivity in Postwar Japan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 2–3.

place during the late-nineteenth century, but were responding to these changes as active subjects. In two articles written in 1960 and 1961 for The Historical Society of Japan, he argued that the formation of the Poor People's Party and the Freedom and People's Rights Party, the peasant riots of the 1880s, and various ideological struggles among the masses were evidence for the appearance of political subjectivities, not only in samurai and wealthy farmers, but also in craftspersons, tenant farmers, and other commoners.[3] As he wrote in the English-language preface to *The Culture of the Meiji Period*:

> It was my aim to discredit the prevailing mode of Japanese cultural history, which was centered on intellectual elites—great thinkers, scholars, educators, and men of arts and letters. In its place I sought to produce a cultural history conceived from the standpoint of the common people—a deep social stratum that was in basic opposition to intellectual elites—by exploiting methods used by Japanese folklorists and historians of popular thought. My goal was nothing less than a paradigmatic change in the field of Japanese cultural history.[4]

Over the next two decades, other *minshûshi* historians, including Kano Masanao, Yasumaru Yoshio, and Hirota Masaki, developed these themes and methods in various ways. For example, their projects included Kano's evaluation of how social relations in rural villages during the early Meiji might lead to the establishment of capitalism; Yasumaru's argument that indigenous thought formations, especially popular morality, generated an "energy" in the people that manifested itself in revolutionary social movements, and then lost its revolutionary potential as its values were co-opted by bureaucratic institutions; and Hirota's careful analysis, given here, of the distinct and often-conflicting subjectivities that existed among various social strata of the people.

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[3] See "Konmintô to jiyûtô (The poor people's party and the liberal party)" (1960) and "Jiyûminken undô no chikasui o kumumono (Drawing from the underground stream of the freedom and people's rights movement)" (1961) published in the Society's journal. See also, *Meiji seishin shi* (*The Spirit of Meiji*), Kôga Shobô, 1964).

[4] Daikichi Irokawa, *The Culture of the Meiji Period*, translation edited by Marius B. Jansen (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), p. vii. This preface was written expressly for the English-language translation of *Meiji no bunka* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1970).

The topics and methodologies introduced by *minshûshi* scholars have become so much a part of mainstream Japanese historiography—both in Japan and elsewhere—that the newness of their approach can sometimes be lost from view. But at the time, their perspective constituted an important break from contemporary mainstream Marxist, modernist, and modernization theory approaches.[5]

In the first few years after Japan's defeat in 1945, intellectuals from across the political spectrum saw themselves, to use Maruyama Masao's frequently quoted phrase, as members of a "community of contrition" (悔恨共同体, *kaikon kyôdôtai*), who felt compelled to ask how it was that they had either failed to anticipate, or failed to resist, the Japanese government's turn to fascism.[6] For the two most influential postwar approaches, Marxism and modernism, this meant revisiting the questions (and answers) that each had posed before the war, and testing out how their projects could be reframed in the fraught new context of Japan's post-imperial "rehabilitation" under the American Occupation.

Marxist social science and historiography, institutionally dominant in Japan from the 1920s until its wartime suppression in the late-1930s, is perhaps best known for the fierce debate on capitalism, begun in 1927, between the Kôza-ha (Lecture faction) and Rônô-ha (Labor-Farmer faction) over Japan's stage of economic and political development. Their dispute concerned whether Japan was ready for a one-stage proletarian socialist revolution, or still needed to undergo a two-stage process, first a bourgeois-democratic revolution and then a socialist revolution. At the heart of this sophisticated (and often esoteric) debate lay a fundamental disagreement: the Kôza-ha claimed that the Japan's governance structures and agrarian sector were still pre-capitalist because of "feudal remnants" that were an impediment

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[5] For descriptions of the *minshûshi* school, in English, see Carol Gluck, "The People in History: Recent Trends in Japanese Historiography," *Journal of Asian Studies* 38 (1): 25–50 (Nov 1978); Takashi Fujitani, "*Minshûshi* as Critique of Orientalist Knowledges," *positions* 6 (2): 303–322 (Fall 1998). In Japanese, see Hirota Masaki, "Pandora no hako" in *Nashonaru hisutorii o manabisuteru,* ed. Naoki Sakai (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 2006), 3–41.
[6] Maruyama Masao, "Kindai nihon no chishikijin (Modern Japanese intellectuals)" in *Kôei no ichi kara: "gendai seiji no shisô to kôdô" tsuihô* (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1982), 117.

to capitalist development; the Rônô-ha argued that the peasantry was a capitalist formation whose semi-feudal characteristics were an effect of Japan's latecomer status in the world system of capitalism.[7]

The wartime censorship and suppression of Marxism cut short this debate, but many of the same themes and questions were articulated in the postwar context by a revitalized Marxist school. In the postwar, Marxist academics and activists once again began to quarrel over the nature of Japanese capitalism, debating whether socialism should aim for revolution or should proceed slowly through parliamentary means. In addition, new issues about the meaning and impact of the American Occupation, how to theorize and incorporate on-going labor unrest and workers' protests, and other issues encouraged both factionalisms and new and influential theoretical work. Nonetheless, for most Marxist thinkers in both the prewar and the postwar contexts, the central question remained the revolutionary potential of the people.[8]

The second postwar approach, *kindaishugi*, or modernism, was concerned with the democratization and modernization of the Japanese state; and in particular, how to create Japanese subjects who would internalize these values. Many of the modernists, including Ôtsuka Hisao (1907–1996) and Maruyama Masao (1914–1996), acknowledged explicit debts to Marxist theory, but they could not accept what they saw as its failure to theorize political subjectivity. They looked to varieties of liberal theory to address this problem and, in so doing, turned partly or wholly away from the question of class struggle either within, or against, the state.

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[7] See Germaine A. Hoston, *Marxism and the Crisis of Development in Prewar Japan* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), for a comprehensive study of this prewar debate between the Kôza-ha and Rônô-ha.

[8] Postwar Marxist theory was not monolithic, however, and some Marxist scholars were sensitive to the questions of subjectivity and political action. See, for example, Koschmann, *Revolution and Subjectivity in Postwar Japan*, 95–110, for a discussion of Umemoto Katsumi's efforts to create a materialist theory of subjectivity that included a theory of human ethicality.

Like the *minshûshi* scholars, the modernists criticized Marxism for ignoring the question of individual human autonomy. However, and this distinguishes them from the *minshûshi* scholars, the modernists associated this autonomy with capitalism and modern liberal democracy; and, crucially, they also believed that Japan had failed to become modern. Maruyama, in particular, believed that Japanese society and traditions were stagnant, and he identified the "patriarchal authority" of the emperor system as the cause of Japan's thwarted development. As a consequence, the Japanese lacked the modern consciousness necessary for political subjectivity. They were still caught up in pre-modern ethnic and "community"-based forms of social organization; the goal of postwar social science was to finally destroy the emperor system ideology and develop genuine liberal democracy in Japan.[9]

A third approach, *kindaika*, or modernization theory, which was closely linked to *kindaishugi*, began to appear in the mid-1950s as a response to the growing desire, in both Japan and the US, for Japan's rehabilitation as a Cold War ally. The 1960 Hakone Conference, a meeting convened by American academics—notably including Edwin O. Reischauer, the new ambassador to Japan—is now widely viewed as propelling the acceptance of modernization theory in Japan as both an object of intellectual study and as a framework for national policymaking.[10]

Unlike the modernists, *kindaika* promoters, such as Reischauer and the American and Japanese policymakers who helped to shape economic policy during the Occupation period and beyond, did not grapple at all with the category of class, which they regarded and dismissed class as a feature of Communist ideology. Nonetheless, the concept of modern liberal democratic subjectivity associated with *kindaishugi*, and the industrialization and

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[9] See Andrew E. Barshay, *The Social Sciences in Modern Japan: the Marxian and Modernist Traditions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), especially Chapter 7, 197–239.
[10] See J. Victor Koschmann, "Modernization and Democratic Values: The 'Japanese Model' in the 1960s" in *Staging Growth*, ed. David C. Engerman, et al. (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003); and Sebastian Conrad, "'The Colonial Ties are Liquidated': Modernization Theory, Post-War Japan and the Global Cold War," *Past and Present* 216 (2012): 181–214.

economic policies of *kindaika*, were both concerned with the relationship between the state and its citizens. Both modernists and modernization theorists shared a desire to transform the peasantry into model citizens and productive industrial workers who would conform to, and obey, the needs of the state and the requirements of the global capitalist system.

From the point of view of the *minshûshi* historians, missing from all of these approaches was a recognition of the subjectivity of the people as it actually existed and manifested itself. All three approaches were interested in harnessing the people's energy for their respective political projects, but none placed fundamental value on understanding the people's *own* perspectives, desires, or agency. While Marxists assigned a central role to the proletariat in revolutionary theory, it was the proletariat's class position rather than their subjectivity that made them the motor force of history. Although modernists and modernization theorists assigned a central role to the development of the people's subjectivity, this was future-oriented project, and it was to make them suitable objects of regulation by top-down forces of industry and production. Thus, despite their conflicting political aims, Marxist and liberal approaches shared an instrumentalizing view of the people.

In addition, both Marxist and liberal ideologies were guilty of presupposing a universalistic framework, based on Western political and cultural ideals, in which Japan was defined (depending upon the context) as backward, deficient, anomalous, or late. As Irokawa stated in a sharp rebuke to Maruyama Masao for idealizing Western thought:

> What modernists have done is to take European civil society and extract a superior ideal type from it, whereas from the Japanese village *kyôdôtai* they educe an inferior ideal type. …[By comparing Japan and Europe in this way] we will continue to repeat the distortions of Weber and others who, being Europeans, pronounced arbitrarily from a Western perspective on the stagnation of Asian society.[11]

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[11] Irokawa, *The Culture of the Meiji Period*, 279-80. See also Sebastian Conrad, "What Time is Japan? Problems of Comparative (Intercultural) Historiography," *History and Theory* 38 (1): 67–83 (1999), for a discussion of the "hermeneutic priority of the West" in modernization theory.

The *minshûshi* historians, in contrast, argued for the emergence of a modern subjectivity based upon the energy of the people themselves. In doing so, they attributed an important role not only to the self-consciousness of the people in the formation of Japan's modernity, but gave new scholarly significance to indigenous practices and grassroots social movements as well. This was neither a denial of external influences during the Meiji period, nor a total rejection of Marxist and modernization theory analyses. But placing "the people," as active agents, at the center of Japan's transformation marked a profound shift in perspective and method.

## 2. The limits of the nation

*Minshûshi* scholarship has thus forever changed the practice of Japanese historiography, directly and indirectly influencing the introduction of analytical methods from fields such as cultural anthropology and sociology, and legitimizing an ever-wider field of historical study that poses broad social and cultural questions about ordinary citizens, laborers, women, minorities, and immigrants.[12] Hirota's work has played an important role in this process. Of all the *minshûshi* scholars, he has done the most to problematize the concept of "the people." And he has been the most interested in rectifying what he sees as a failure of Marxism, modernism, and even *minshûshi* itself: namely, the exclusion of the perspectives of the Ainu, Okinawans, and other marginalized groups and persons.[13]

In the excerpt, Hirota offers an explanation for how exclusionary mechanisms may work against such groups. In his analysis of how the nation was constructed at its inception, he argues that *bunmei kaika* provided the wealthy farming class with a new political space in which to rearticulate its own interests as part of a universalistic, nationalist discourse. But the wealthy farming class itself continued to rule over the lower stratum, through appeals to

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[12] See Nagahara Keiji, "Reflections on Recent Trends in Japanese Historiography." *Journal of Japanese Studies* 10 (1): 167–183 (1984).
[13] Hirota, *pandora no hako*, 13, 31.

popular morality and traditional religious authority. This lower stratum, in turn, felt increasingly besieged and alienated by the *kaika* policies that were forcing them to adopt the ways of the barbaric West and destroying the world they knew. In response, the lower stratum came to view the very lowest stratum as a buffer between itself and the influence of the West, such that, even though the lowest stratum was formally a part of the nation, its members were marked them out as targets of exclusion and discrimination.

What Hirota has done is, in a sense, to produce an example of what Naoki Sakai has called "configuration": the process by which a national community represents itself "only by making visible the figure of an other with which it engages in a translational relationship."[14] He has also left us with an empirical question: do the same unequal relations exist in contemporary Japanese society? And if so, can Hirota's explanatory mechanism be used to understand the marginalization of various groups today? It is tempting to, at the very least, to pursue the thought experiment, especially since many of the groups that Hirota identifies as part of the lowest stratum during the late-Tokugawa and early-Meiji periods remain as part of the lowest stratum today.

The irony of this particular example of configuration is that both the lower and the lowest strata are purportedly members of the same national community. This may point to a limitation of Hirota's approach—and perhaps a contradiction embedded within the concept of the "nation" itself. Hirota wants the common people to represent the Japanese nation, and at the same time he always retains the distinction between the common people and the lowest stratum, so that the latter is both part of, and yet always apart from, the national body. This is why Katsuya Hirano claims that "*minshushi*, initiated by a sense of mission to rewrite history from below, has in fact worked to deny the most marginalized people their place in history."[15]

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[14] Naoki Sakai, *Translation and Subjectivity: On "Japan" and Cultural Nationalism* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 15–16.

[15] Katsuya Hirano, "Postcolonial Turn and Unlearning the History of People (*Minshushi*)," paper presented at the Digital Archive and the Future of Transpacific Studies Conference at Cornell University, September 14, 2008, 2–3.

For Hirano, so long as *minshûshi* historians continue to use terms like "center" and "periphery," or "lower" and "lowest," to frame the relationship between, for example, Ainu/Okinawans and Japanese, the "fiction" of national belonging remains in place as a mechanism of exclusion rather than inclusion.

Thus, while *minshûshi* scholarship has transformed and expanded the scope of Japanese historiography, it also comes up against its own limits: it remains a national history discourse that marks the "other" as disfavored and separate. How might such a limitation be overcome? As a final remark, it may be worth noting that a glaring omission in Hirota's account, and in *minshûshi* scholarship generally, is the role that Japanese imperialism and colonialism has played in creating territorial and psychic borders and assigning groups to the margins of Japanese society. Japan's own imperialism and colonialism haunt the entire historical period from the late Tokugawa through the Meiji period and beyond to the present day, and yet remain unanalyzed in Hirota's work. I hope to critically address this omission in a paper-length version of this introduction, but for now would urge the reader of Hirota's excerpt to ask how the visibility of Japan's colonies changes the calculus in which the lower stratum's discrimination toward the lowest stratum is a product only of the former's fear of "the West."

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***BUNMEI KAIKA TO MINSHÛ ISHIKI***

**(CIVILIZATION AND ENLIGHTENMENT AND THE PEOPLE'S CONSCIOUSNESS)**

**BY HIROTA MASAKI**

CHAPTER II: ENLIGHTENMENT THOUGHT AND *BUNMEI KAIKA*

Section 1: The Development of Enlightenment Thought

*The character of nationalism* [16]

Because the Enlightenment thinkers[17] did not view the people (民衆) as political subjects (政治主体), they could not attempt the political mobilization of public sentiment. For these thinkers, who were aligned with the government's perspective, it was sufficient to urge the nation's (国民の) voluntary cooperation with the civilizing policies, because they saw Japan's Westernization (西洋化) as the way to extinguish the threat from abroad. Although they sometimes praised the "national polity as one with the emperor" (皇統一系の国体) as the sign of a distinctive Japanese superiority over the West, they did not see the origin of this distinctiveness as the national polity itself, but only used it to advance the unique authority and function of the sovereign, who was propelling Westernization forward. For intellectuals of this period, the first principle of Westernization was to weaken anxiety about the Great Powers of the West. For example, they made numerous proposals concerning the issue of national language. But more than an interest in creating a common language for expressing

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[16] *The character of nationalism* is the fifth subsection from Part 1, Chapter II, section 1 of the book. The full monograph includes two parts: "Part 1. *Bunmei kaika* and the people" and "Part 2. Various forms of people's consciousness."

[17] Hirota is referring to the members of the *Meirokusha* (the Meiji 6 Society), named after the year (1873) in which the society was proposed by Mori Arinori. The society was officially founded in 1874 and produced the highly influential journal, *Meiroku zasshi*, which introduced Western institutions and ideas to its readership. Fukuzawa Yukichi, Katô Hiroyuki, Mitsukuri Rinshô, Mitsukuri Shûhei, Mori Arinori, Nishimura Shigeki, Nakamura Masanao, Nishi Amane, Sugi Kôji, and Tsuda Mamichi were its founding members.

the common will of the nation, such proposals were an effective means of Westernization. This is why they came up with ideas such as English-ization and roman letter-ization, which were a complete break with Japan's popular traditions (民族的伝統).

Fukuzawa[18] was the Enlightenment thinker most sensitive to nationalism. He used the slogan "independence of persons, independence of country" to effect a theory of natural rights in international relations for the "unrestrained rights of both persons and country based upon the reason of Heaven." His theory of transparent nationalism is crystallized in the following:[i]

> So, according to the reason of Heaven and the ways of man, a nation should hold mutual intercourse with all the others, and when reason is against it, it should bow even before the black natives of Africa, and when reason is on its side, it should stand in defiance of the mighty warships of England and America, or when the honor of the country is at stake, every man in the whole nation should throw down his life to defend the glory of the country. Such should be the picture of a free and independent country. (*An encouragement of learning* (学問のすすめ, *Gakumon no susume*)) [19]

Fukuzawa is here expounding the rule of reason in the international community, harshly criticizing xenophobic self-righteousness, and making "personal independence" as rational subjectivity the central theme of nationalism.

Recognition of the rule of reason within the international community came about through the severance of traditional ties to the Sino-centered model that had been cultivated under Japanese isolationist policies for two centuries and some-odd decades. Sino-centered thought complemented and extended a view of the feudalistic domestic order as the moral order in which the *bakuhan* system was superior to all other systems. Furthermore, this moral

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[18] Fukuzawa Yukichi, 福澤諭吉, 1835–1901, scholar, writer, founder of Keio University, who wrote widely on education, civilizational theory, and Western thought and institutions. He was one of the most influential leaders of the Meiji Restoration.

[19] *An encouragement of learning* was a series of seventeen essays, written between 1872 and 1876. This quote is taken from Appendix II of Fukuzawa Yukichi, *The Autobiography of Yukichi Fukuzawa*, Revised Translation by Eiichi Kiyooka, Foreword by Carmen Blacker (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1966), p. 394.

order was guaranteed through military power, so that domination of the populace (人民) by the ruling class was supported by morality and military power; and in the same way, domination of the barbarians (夷狄) was also authorized on these grounds. Since the medieval period, the ideology of the divine land of Japan (神国思想) has had, as a supplement, the particular characteristics of enigma and self-righteousness. For this reason, if the view of the domestic order and the view of the international order are two sides of the same coin, the failure of one immediately extends to the other. For example, when Shiba Kôkan[20] stated that, from the perspective of Confucian morality, both the Shogun and the lowest outcaste (非人) are considered human beings, he also recognized the commonality of a moral sense of "family devotion, loyalty, and humanity" in Western societies (*Dutch nativism* (和蘭天説, *Oranda tensetsu*)).[ii] And we can see examples such as Watanabe Kazan[21] and Takano Chôei[22] who, because they were concerned with the people's hardships, were aware of the question of the West's "exceptional sympathy for the people (人民)" (*Tale of the bojutsu dream* (戌成夢物語, *Bojutsu yume monogatari*))[iii].

With the arrival of Perry's ships, the promotion of Mitogaku xenophobia rapidly went bankrupt, as no one could deny the superiority of Western military power. The reform elements of the ruling class began upon the path of attempting to overcome the foreign threat by developing a rich country and strong army[23] (富国強兵) through Westernization. At this time, they began to realize that military power and morality, which until then they had thought

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[20] Shiba Kôkan, 司馬江漢, 1747–1818, painter and scholar of European studies, who produced both Western-style paintings and *ukiyo-e* prints. He also studied Western astronomy and published an illustrated volume on Copernican cosmology.

[21] Watanabe Kazan, 渡辺華山, 1793–1841, painter and scholar, influenced by Western art, science, and politics. He was a member of the samurai class and served as a retainer in the Tahara Domain. In 1839, he was imprisoned for criticisms of the shogunate and exiled to Tahara the next year.

[22] Takano Chôei, 高野長英, 1804–1850, physician, scholar, and practitioner of Dutch-style medicine. His book, *Tale of the bojutsu dream* (1838), was critical of the shogunate's isolationist policies. In 1839, he was arrested and given a life sentence. He escaped after five years, and was captured by the police in 1850. He died while resisting arrest.

[23] "Rich country and strong army" was one of the principal slogans used by the Meiji government in its campaign to westernize Japan.

of as a unit, could be divided. From their perspective, the international community was the site of a power struggle for the survival of the fittest and they recognized Western military superiority; but even as they contemplated the Westernization of [Japan's] military forces, they saw Japan as morally superior, and therefore grew determined that this was where they could secure a unique position for it. At the same time, they perceived that, in the international community, morality and  the rule of reason were equated, and they sought to use negotiation to make up for a deficiency in military power. Because the reform elements were aware of the duality in the international community of the rule of force and the rule of reason, they had no choice but to aim at Westernization. A position that placed emphasis on the former can be seen in Yoshida Shôin's[24] view, with its limitless convergence toward the authority of the emperor as the source of morality. A position that placed emphasis on the latter can be seen in Shônan's[25] path toward Western assimilation.[iv] Although Shônan was unable to produce a foundational critique of feudal control because he understood reason in the international community in terms of Confucian morality, the Enlightenment thinkers that belonged to his intellectual genealogy were able to mediate the disorder of the Meiji Restoration; and by dismantling Confucianism and organizing the activity of people in the domestic order through the concepts of independence and autonomy, they were able to come to an understanding of the international community according to the logic of Western civilization. Consequently, for the Enlightenment thinkers as well, the international context of "the strong eat the weak" was critical for Japan. Because they realized that this was regarded as a confrontation between the civilized and the uncivilized, and that confrontations among civilized nations were settled according to international public law, they put trust in the civilizing policies of the new government to quickly alleviate the international crisis. Within

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[24] Yoshida Shôin, 吉田松陰, 1830–1859, scholar, teacher of Itô Hirobumi, the first Prime Minister of Japan. (Itô served as Prime Minster four times; 1885–88, 1892–96, 1898, 1900–1901).
[25] Yokoi Shônan, 横井小楠, 1809–1869, Confucian scholar, statesman. He called for government reforms and was placed under house arrest in Kumamoto in 1862, then freed by the Meiji government in 1868 and given a government post. He was assassinated in 1869.

this, the strength of Fukuzawa's nationalism was to look not only at the civilizing forces directed by the government, but to make an equal demand for a national (国民的) ethos of personal independence.

Because, for Fukuzawa, personal independence and the independence of the country were directly related, the logic of the practical science of social standing was deployed in international relations as well. Continuing the quote from above: "The Qing were unaware of the true international standing of their country; without taking measure of their own power and recklessly attempting to expel the foreigners, they instead found themselves being tormented by those barbarians (夷狄)." Fukuzawa's criticism of the Qing Dynasty locates a state's (国家) status in its power; and at the same time, he approves of annulling the rule of reason in dealing with those who overreach their status. Just as a despotic government is the fault of the people, aggression against Asia by the Western powers is, in the end, the responsibility of an invaded Asia because of its lack of civilization. This logic only increased Fukuzawa's impulse toward Westernization, and conversely, strengthened his contempt for Asia. Thus, for him, status among states exists as a hierarchy in which the degree of civilization equals power; meaning that the rule of reason and the rule of force coincide in the international community. In his practical philosophy, the call for personal independence was precisely a call for a nationalism that competed with the equation of reason and force within the international community. However, I would argue that this personal independence was not something that presupposed the form of a communal will for the sake of national independence; rather, the independent energy of individuals had, *as an effect*, the character of actualizing the civilization and independence of the state (国家). In reality, what this meant was that every individual was to entrust the country's fate to the government, and cultivate their energy in service of this. This issue is also deeply interconnected with Fukuzawa's attitude, which set the destiny of the whole nation (国全体) on a course solely oriented toward

Westernization but neglected to unearth an independent role for Japan within the international community that would allow for an interrogation of the meaning of nationalism.

*The decline of Enlightenment logic*

The January 1874 (Meiji 7) petition[26] to establish an elected parliament was the first test for the Enlightenment thinkers. They had not offered political education to the people, nor had they anticipated that political subjectivity would appear in the governed. Of course, they had introduced Western constitutionalism, but had done so only as something envisioned for the future. The petition thus came as a great shock, and they uniformly opposed it as premature, on the grounds that civilization was only partially achieved and that the people were ignorant. However, it was precisely the advent of this political subjectivity that upset the authority of the prematurity thesis; and when day by day the influence of the petition increasingly shaped public opinion about freedom and people's rights (自由民権), what had originally been for the Enlightenment thinkers nothing more than the politicization of the Enlightenment theory of the Rights of Man, could not help but engender a sense of crisis for Enlightenment theory itself to surmount, and they were eventually forced to reexamine their theories. Nishimura[27] expressed his approval for an Itagaki-style[28] elected parliament, and

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[26] The "Petition for the Establishment of a Popularly Elected Assembly" was submitted by the newly formed *Aikoku Kôtô* (Patriots Political Party). The *Aikoku Kôtô* was created by ex-government officials, including Saigô Takamori, Itagaki Taisuke, and Etô Shimpei, who had resigned from office following the Meiji 6 (1873) Political Crisis concerning the split in the government over Saigô's proposal to invade Korea.
The petition is generally considered to have launched the highly influential freedom and people's rights movement (自由民権運動, *Jiyûminkenundô*), which called for parliamentary-style government, tax reductions, and civil rights such as freedom of speech and assembly. This movement, which had enormous support across class lines, lasted until the establishment of the Imperial Diet in 1890.
[27] Nishimura Shigeki, 西村茂樹, 1828–1902, founding member of *Meirokusha*, appointed to the Upper House of the Imperial Diet in 1890.
[28] Itagaki Taisuke, 板垣退助, 1837–1919, a leader of the freedom and people's rights movement, a founding member of the *Aikoku Kôtô*, Home Minister in Ito Hirobumi's second administration. "Itagaki-style" refers to a popularly elected assembly, as proposed in the January 1874 petition by Itagaki and others (see fn l above).

although Fukuzawa did not participate in the debate, both he and Nishimura joined others in setting a tone of gradualism with respect to the perspective of the ignorant masses (愚民観). As people's rights theory gradually elevated the level of critique against despotic government, they began to realize the limits of their own Enlightenment-influenced training. The controversy over an elected parliament thus can be said to have marked the beginning of the decline of their Enlightenment logic.

It is ironic that *Meiroku zasshi* (Meiji 6 Journal) was launched in March, just as this decline was beginning. At the January 1875 (Meiji 8) Osaka Conference, the government, feeling a sense of crisis about the euphoria of people's rights theory, embraced Itagaki and his associates. Then in June of the same year it announced the "Libel Law" and "Publication Regulations" and began suppressing the speech of the people's rights faction. Confronting this rise in tension, Fukuzawa proposed a "Bill to halt the publication of *Meiroku zasshi*." That is, if the journal continued to publish under existing conditions, it would either need to "bend a little" or "become a government offender." Since neither possibility was amenable to the journal, he proposed that the publication be discontinued, saying that "people must face their own responsibility." As might be expected, when compared to the case for continuing publication made by Mori[29] and Nishi,[30] who were content with their bureaucratic positions, it was the issue as posed by Fukuzawa, who was outside of government, that got to the essence of the problem. In addition, he renounced the project, which had been loudly proclaimed by the Enlightenment thinkers, of maintaining, through shared responsibility, a completely unfettered spirit. This displayed exactly the Fukuzawa-style approach to independence that is expressed in the phrase, "face your own responsibility." *Meiroku zasshi* ceased publication

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[29] Mori Arinori, 森有礼, 1847–1889, founding member of Meirokusha; holder of several posts in the Meiji government including the first Minister of Education, ambassador to the United States, the Qing Dynasty, and Great Britain. He was also the founder of Hitotsubashi University.

[30] Nishi Amane, 西周, 1829–1897, founding member of *Meirokusha*, appointed to the Upper House of the Imperial Diet in 1890.

with volume 43 in November 1875. This incident surely reveals the Enlightenment thinkers' awareness that the universality of Enlightenment logic was disappearing.

In this way, inevitably, the Enlightenment thinkers who had entrusted politics to power (権力) were engulfed by politics; and in this process, little by little they forfeited their faith in natural rights theory and were forced to retreat from their Enlightenment enthusiasms. They were beset by the question of whether to seek a new theory from the advanced West, or to create their own theory by returning to Japan's history and reality ( 現実).

In the early period of *An encouragement of learning*, Fukuzawa emphasized "the equality of persons (人)" and "the equality of states (国)." In the later period bounded by Meiji 7, from the sixth volume forward, he emphasized axioms for the maintenance of order, such as "the preciousness of state law" and "the duties of the nation (国民)," and at the same time he criticized political overzealousness. Moreover, in order to re-examine a situation that he had not entirely anticipated, and pressed by the necessity of "detailing the Japanese situation," he embarked upon the writing of *An outline of a theory of civilization* (文明論の概略, *Bunmeiron no gairyaku*). *An outline of a theory of civilization* was the most important product of Japanese Enlightenment Thought (啓蒙思想) for arguing that even though Western civilization was not perfect, it was advanced in terms of its level of historical development, and therefore Japan ought to have Western civilization as its objective. And while the source of Western civilization's development was the unrestricted evolution of "numerous elements," *An outline of a theory of civilization* criticized Asia's stagnation as resting on the suppression of freedom through "overemphasis on things" (事物) and "overemphasis on authority (権力)." From this perspective Fukuzawa criticized those who were completely devoted to Western studies [as well as] the eclectic Sinologists and the National Learning scholars, claiming that rights for the warrior class were also manifestations of old customs that overemphasized the political. What is significant is that, when compared to the discussion that he developed in the early period of *An encouragement of learning* around the absolute affirmation of natural rights

theory, Fukuzawa is here stressing the importance of relative value judgments, thus already revealing a shift in Enlightenment logic. This was necessitated precisely by the very idea of trying to discover the primary civilizing sources in Japan's history and reality; and from these he uncovered the inheritance of the samurai's "strength of heart and mind" and the farmer's and merchant's "economic strength," leading him to assert that the active exchange between these was unmistakably the path to civilization. It is here, concerning the issue of *kaika* for the general public (国民一般) , that Enlightenment logic continues to be relevant. But by situating these hierarchical features historically, he generated factors that allowed them gradually to be solidified. That is, *An outline of a theory of civilization* became the classic work of transition from the logic of the Enlightenment to the logic of realism.

   After this, Fukuzawa gradually fixated on *the reality that he observed*. Starting from, "Human wisdom is equivalent to physical strength; if this is not transmitted through the generations, progress is not possible" (*A theory of sovereign division* (国権可分之説, *Kokken kabun no setsu*)), he proceeded to develop a theory of determinism through inherited wisdom and folly, which claimed that, "With respect to people who have social rank, or so-called worldly honor, it is possible for one to become their equal by means of a sudden change; but with respect to people who have inherited intelligence, or so-called natural merit, one cannot become their equal through swift promotion" (*A theory of genealogy* (系統論, *Keitôron*)). Quickly losing confidence in the Enlightenment enthusiasm toward the lower stratum of society (底辺民衆), he stated that, "Encouraging the vulgar people [lit. farmers and rickshaw drivers] to study and waiting for them to generate the will to do so is like planting a cedar seedling in pursuit of a sailing mast" (*A theory of sovereign division*); and he restricted himself to the civilizing force of the "ethics" "unique to the samurai class" (*Decentralization theory* (分権論, *Bunkenron*)). Fukuzawa, who had presupposed the ignorant masses (愚民) in the initial development of his theory of the common people (万人) and his theory of natural rights (天賦人権), confronted the reality of those pressing for samurai-class rights, those

engaging in samurai-class riots, and the self-assertion of those from below who were rioting against the new government and who were thereby intensifying opposition to the government. The false Enlightenment consciousness was ripped away from him, and he came to embrace reality from the standpoint of the government's civilizing path and to depend on a reality that was based upon power (権力的現実). This also meant that he pushed to the forefront the fact of the natural inequality that had been in the background during the Enlightenment period. It was at the height of the people's rights movement that Fukuzawa eventually declared that, "Although the theory of natural democratic rights is the right path, the theory of man-made sovereign right is expedient…we must be persons who obey the expedient" (*Lecture on current events* (時事小言, *Jiji shôgen*) 1881).[v]

Even Nishi, who had optimistically presented the image of the ideal utilitarian person in his "Lectures on the three principles of life" (人世三宝説, *Jinsei sanpôsetsu*) and criticized the ethos of "loyalty of spirit"  ("Theory of the national ethos" (国民気風論, *Kokumin kifûron*))[vi] for having a servile character, emphasized in the Meiji teens that "loyalty of spirit," a "unique feature of the Japanese nature" ("Warrior virtue" (兵家徳行, *Heika tokkô*)), was the basis of the army's "samurai ethos." He claimed that "although we should rely upon international law, what gives that law its effectiveness is, without exception, the force of bullets" ("Discourse on military service" (兵賦論, *Heifuron*)); and calling for military reinforcement and independent command authority, he participated in the drafting of the "Imperial Rescript." Nishimura, also, in 1877 (Meiji 10), began expounding the necessity of Confucian morality in elementary education ("Inspection report" (巡視報告書, *Junshi hôkokusho*)). Katô[31] as well, beginning in the Meiji teens, elucidated the idea of the survival of the fittest. In 1881 (Meiji 14), he announced that Enlightenment works written up to that time would go out of print, and the following year he published *A new human rights theory* (

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[31] Katô Hiroyuki, 加藤弘之, 1836–1916, political scientist, founding member of *Meirokusha*, appointed to the Upper House of the Imperial Diet in 1890.

人権新設, *Jinken shinsetsu*) in which he claimed that natural rights theory was a "deluded theory," and as he attacked people's rights theory he developed survival-of-the-fittest social Darwinism.

In this way, the Enlightenment thinkers used the Parliament disputes as an opportunity to begin bringing about the decline of Enlightenment logic and ambitions; and to completely abandon them in the even more intense confrontations during the middle of the Meiji 10 decade. They reappeared with a new logic—a logic firmly situated in a reality based on power (権力的現実). The stable balance they had maintained, by means of a fiction, between ideals and reality decisively collapsed; the logic of the superiority of actual power inside the country became a logic about the confrontations of stark power in the international community, and was perhaps a *precocious* version of imperialist thinking. We know that throughout this period they were consistent in their orientation toward the idea of a rich country and strong army.

Section 2: Various aspects of *bunmei kaika* and the people

Enlightenment Thought, seen earlier as the representative ideology of "*bunmei kaika*," was not the only means by which the Meiji government sought to unify the nation (国民統合). The government's "*bunmei kaika*" policies for an entire system of centralized authority, industrialization, and national education were put forward with the goal of attaining a rich country and strong army through Westernization, in order to confront the Great Powers of the West. These policies, which maintained and bureaucratized the former elements of rule, had to accommodate various complications and ideological elements. In particular, Emperor Thought (天皇思想), which had a low status in Enlightenment Thought, played an important role in carving out a point of departure for modern Emperor System ideology (近代天皇制イデオロギー). Therefore, by focusing here on the government's national education policies, I want to examine Enlightenment Thought and Emperor Thought as two pillars of the

government's *kaika* ideology and, in addition, to think about the various issues concerning the Japanese people (日本民衆) that accompany these policies.

Recently, the relationship between *bunmei kaika* and the people has finally begun to receive notice, though there are still many challenges to a full grasp of the subject. More than anything, "*bunmei kaika*" produced inevitable tensions with existing traditions; but it is not always clear how we should understand these traditions, or how we should understand the people's various forms of existence taken together as a whole. We have gathered a fair amount of research on the ideas of the wealthy farming class (豪農層), but there is much to be done on topics concerning the lower stratum (底辺民衆). The lower stratum (subsistence farmers, impoverished peasants, semi-proletariats) were, on the one hand, being subsumed under the ideologies of the wealthy farming class; on the other hand, at the same time they were just starting to become aware of the differences of their particular world, and certainly, they developed distinctive responses to *bunmei kaika*. These unique issues must be examined. However, under the *bakuhan* system, the common people (一般民衆) were able to construct a common world only by discriminating against and using as a stepping stone those whom we must assign to the very lowest stratum, consisting of people from the abyss and the borderlands (最底辺の奈落と辺境の民衆). The process of constructing a homogeneous nation (均一的な国民化), through *bunmei kaika* that came from above, created new problems between these two groups. Thus, in order to grasp the connection to the overall construction of the people, here I will assume that the people can be organized into three layers: the wealthy farming class, the lower stratum of society, and groups who belong to the abyss and the borderlands. And then I wish to investigate this assumption. Of course, because the various responses of the people also included regional and qualitative differences, some problems cannot be unconditionally assessed using the three-layer structure, and in addition, at present much is not well understood about the group consciousness of those from the abyss

and the borderlands. At least, by positioning the people from the abyss and the borderlands within our field of vision, I believe we will be able to uncover new issues.*

*I would like to note a few points. (1) Although I do not problematize the distinction here, the special meaning of "*bunmei kaika*" with respect to city dwellers is important. I hope to address this in the future. (2) The concept of the "lower stratum" may be ambiguous. For example, a semi-proletariat existence may fulfill a special role by bearing the impulse to destroy the community, or by creating a broader perspective or independent behavior within the community, and so forth. However, because the tendency of the semi-proletariat is not to create a unique worldview, but always to converge around the worldview of the small producer, here the semi-proletariat is included in the concept of the "lower stratum." Thus, "lower stratum" *as it is used here*, refers to the existence of the workers and tenant farmers created by society through the process of primitive accumulation, up to the time of their distinctive last rebellion, the Chichibu Incident.[32] (3) The "three-layer structure" is fundamentally the same as the one presented in my "*bunmei kaika* and the people (文明開化と民衆)," (in *History of the Japanese People* (日本民衆の歴史, *Nihonminshû no rekishi*), v. 6, Sanseido, 1974) and on some points reiterates what I stated there. This chapter attempts to tidy up some of the ambiguities from the previous version in anticipation of their future development. The study of Buraku history, as well as Ainu history, Okinawan history and so on, began in earnest in the 1960s and there has been a rich accumulation of research in various fields, but there has been no comprehensive attempt to understand them in relation to *bunmei kaika*. This chapter's attempt must await further critique. (4) Again, while the samurai class and its special rights continued to persist, the great majority [of those with samurai-class background] uniquely expressed the transitional character of gradually becoming commoners in this enlightenment period. This trend was discussed in detail in the previous chapter, so I will only mention two or three points here. First, with the exception of one portion that was preserved in the

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[32] The Chichibu Incident occurred in October 31–November 9, 1884 in Chichibu, Saitama Prefecture. It was one of the largest peasant uprisings of the period, and the government response to it was particularly harsh. Thousands of revolutionaries were killed, many thousands more arrested, and its ringleaders were sentenced to death.

*kaika* policies, the great majority of special rights for the samurai class were revoked. Dissatisfaction and opposition toward the *kaika* thus churned within them, exploding in the form of samurai rebellions. These rebellions were, however, completely different from the anti-*bunmei* tendencies of the people, which will be discussed below. The samurai rebellions were aimed at the restoration of their special rights, and had no bearing on the people's discovery of subjectivity (主体性); moreover, they produced no new perspective on the relativization of the "*bunmei kaika*." Second, because their dissatisfaction and opposition were expressed using the idea of people's rights, they at least broke through the limits of Enlightenment Thought and offered a perspective that relativized the government's version of *kaika*. Nevertheless, because they could not transcend their consciousness of special rights for the samurai class, a new thought formation could not be expected. After losing the foundation for the distinctiveness of the samurai, the people's rights faction of the samurai class was no longer able to assert itself, other than by joining a different class as members of the intelligentsia. Third, however, we are still left with questions that should be investigated regarding the dispersal of the "warrior spirit" (武士的精神) that was brought about by the samurai becoming commoners. The so-called warrior spirit, which was already a mere shadow of itself by the Edo Period, was invigorated and politicized through emperor worship during the Bakumatsu. If we want to postulate that a definite continuity existed until this period, we must take into consideration the various ideas offered because of the new self-assertion of the wealthy farming class, along with the wicked inheritance of various concepts such as a contempt for the people and a spiritualism that are called to mind by a later nationalism. The "souls" of the warriors, which as Fukuzawa observed during the Satsuma Rebellion had become "spirits opposed to the Japanese people," could provide no guidance whatsoever to themselves, and had to wait for the formation of a new subjectivity, like that of Uchimura Kanzô,[33] to acquire a character that held some amount of significance.

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[33] Uchimura Kanzô, 内村鑑三, 1861–1930, literary scholar, Christian evangelist, pacifist, founder of the Mukyôkai (Non-church Movement).

*Bunmei kaika policies and their ideology*

The *kaika* policies were extensively developed as a result of the abolishment of feudal domains and the establishment of prefectures. They were enacted in swift succession: in 1871 (Meiji 4), the formation of the family register, the declaration making the four classes equal, abolition of the "*eta-hinin*" class, freedom to switch designated rice fields to cash crops, abolition of compulsory registration at temples, and the freedom to cut topknots; in 1872 (Meiji 5), release of land from prohibitions against selling, establishment of uniform schooling, prohibition against the sale and purchase of persons, freedom of occupation and residence, and adoption of the solar calendar; in 1873 (Meiji 6), dissemination of the "Conscription Ordinance," "Land Tax Reform Law," and so on. These policies released the entire populace (人民) from bondage to the domain system and created a system of direct control through a centralized authority, constructed the basic conditions for a capitalist system of production, transplanted various culturally Western systems, and along with an awareness of the Great Western Powers, attempted to align the entire populace with *bunmei kaika* and the ideal of a rich country and strong army.

The school system, which was considered the most enlightened of the *kaika* policies, was put into operation by temporarily abolishing the existing school system and dividing the country into eight university districts, 356 middle schools, and 53,760 elementary schools, modeled on the centralized system in France; while expressing the idealistic ambition that "there should be no uneducated family in the village, and no uneducated person in the family." At the time, Fukuzawa's influence on the Ministry of Education was substantial enough to produce the expression, "the Minister of Education is in Mita." His "Government directive concerning the encouragement of learning" criticized conventional learning as "ideological fiction." And his logic that appealed to utilitarianism by endorsing "learning as capital for one's success" while also explicating the necessity of practical science, along with

his theory that learning is everything and his logic that responsibility lies with the individual, were completely in line with his views in *Gakumon no susume*.

Both the notion that public education should be established at the primary level and an awareness of the importance of educating the general public were already recognized at the end of the Tokugawa Era, and planning had been done by the shogunate; but in the end they were never realized. The new government was keenly aware of the need to pacify the general public (人心) during this time of upheaval, and for this reason, it had an unprecedented enthusiasm for enhancing the authority of the emperor. But because it could not devise a principle for regulating the people's daily existence from imperial authority and Shintô in and of themselves, in the same way that the "Five Public Notices"[34] reemphasized the "five Confucian filial-piety relationships" and reaffirmed the prohibition on Christianity, the government called for the preservation of traditional Confucian morality. The content of the "Directive for administering the prefectures" set forth in 1869 (Meiji 2) for systematically establishing the first elementary schools also attempted to instill the element of national consciousness (国家意識). Along with reading, writing, and calculation, it included "the necessity of instructing people to understand the circumstances of the national body (国体) and to know the way of loyalty and filial piety, and to genuinely care for the citizens' lives." But the real emphasis was on Confucian morality for the maintenance of public stability and order. If we compare them, we can say that the school system signaled a ground-breaking policy change for the government.[vii] Already in 1870 (Meiji 3), Iwakura Tomomi,[35] in "Plans for founding the nation" (建国策, *Kenkokusaku*),[viii] written because of his impatience that "government authority has not been established at all," emphasized that "in order to guide the

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[34] These were the first Meiji government prohibitions and were published throughout the country on April 7, 1868, the day after the Meiji Emperor's enthronement and the promulgation of the Five Charter Oath that set out the aims of the Meiji government.

[35] Iwakura Tomomi, 岩倉具視, 1825–1883, Minister of the Right in the Meiji government; led the 1871–1872 Iwakura Mission, a diplomatic tour of Europe and the United States, soon after his appointment as Minister.

nation toward enlightenment and for it to grow in wealth and power" it is necessary that "no person in the country be uneducated." This indicated a new direction for controlling the people. From around 1870 onward, the notable appearance of concepts such as "the equality of the four social classes," "freedom," and "equality" in the statements of bureaucrats, and in remarks such as Kido's[36] that:

> when the common people (一般人民) are released from the shackles that have bound them until now, and made to grasp the power of every kind of freedom, and the political power of the Imperial Court naturally manifests itself; finally, it will be impossible to maintain the various domains and the old customs, and therefore they will finally acquiesce to the Imperial Court (Letter to Sanjô (三条宛書簡, *Sanjô ate shokan*),[ix]1870)

certainly appeared as conceptual tools for rejecting the intermediary governing authority of the various domains and other institutions. Again, this was not simply a means for amassing direct authority over the populace (人民); it was a sign of the rise in awareness among statesmen that they were restructuring the very populace itself.

In other words, the school system was established to repudiate Confucian ethics, which until then had been used in combination with imperial authority (Shintô) to pacify and attract public sentiment (民心). The school system was set out as a foundational undertaking for constructing a national polity (国民) for whom the idea of "managing production and promoting industry" would be compatible with the idea that Westernization equaled a rich country and strong army. For that reason, the government stressed the idea that "considerable weight will be placed upon elementary schools." Nevertheless, this was perhaps the first time in Japanese history that power (権力) openly desired in this way to arouse utilitarian desires in the people (人民). The "Proclamation of Conscription" as well as the "path of granting equality and human rights to both the high and the low" emphasized uniform service to the state (国家) and attempted to directly create a utilitarian orientation toward it by declaring that

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[36] Kido Takayoshi, also known as Kido Kôin, 木戸孝允, 1833–1877, leader of the Meiji Restoration, statesman, member of the Iwakura Mission.

"protecting the state from disaster is the basis of protecting oneself from disaster." This certainly represented an epoch-making emergence from the feudal Confucian state, and indicated that government officials saw in these things the true essence of Western capitalist civilization (just as the Enlightenment thinkers did), but they were able to attend only to its utilitarian aspects. Along with the poverty of their vision of the people (民衆), this revealed their lack of new principles for the formation of the common will (共通意志). With respect to the educational content of the school system, the government limited itself to providing examples of curricula and textbooks. The system was very unrestrictive when compared to the later nationalistic Emperor-System-centered education. Among the textbooks were many by Enlightenment thinkers, beginning with Fukuzawa's *All the countries of the world* (世界国尽, *Sekai kunizukushi*) and *An encouragement of learning*; and the Ministry of Education also translated and published European and North American textbooks. The content specified by the government for higher education at levels above middle school relied entirely on the assimilation of the fruits of Western textbooks as well. Although we must recognize here the atmosphere of freedom and the ambitions regarding the inclination toward Westernization (文明へ), these did not signify the cultivation of individuals with liberal subjectivities, nor did it indicate any consideration of the traditions or current realities of the people. Rather, it signified an intellectual temperament concerned with Western civilization. In this educational system, the educational content was not only at a remove from the lives of the people; the enterprise itself had an extremely violent character because the expenses for establishing and operating the schools were imposed upon the people, on the principle that they were the beneficiaries of the system. As will be discussed below, this generated tremendous resistance in the people, and *kaika*-era education reached a point of stagnation. The violence of the *kaika* policies toward the people was thoroughgoing; even the numbers under the "Conscription Ordinance," the 19,000 soldiers who served in 1876 (Meiji 9) and the 32,000 known draft resisters, tell the story of the size of the people's resistance. There were numerous revisions to

the schooling system and the "Conscription Ordinance" in the Meiji teens, and analogous to the Enlightenment thinkers' trajectory of conversion, there was a gradual reorganization in the direction of Emperor-System nationalism (天皇制国家主義). Nevertheless, we can say that during the *kaika* period the people's desire for their own emancipation produced a desire for education; and we must not overlook the passion with which the people absorbed, from their standpoint, Enlightenment Thought and Western civilization (西洋文明). Because the main currents of this sprang from the younger generations of the samurai class and the wealthy farming and business classes, attention must be paid to the development of what can be called a civilian (民間) *bunmei kaika*, through such things as the appearance of a cluster of private schools, including Keiô Gijuku,[37] for Western learning, and the promotion of a movement by the wealthy farming class to establish local schools.[x]

Looked at in this way, the ideology of the *kaika* policies seems to embody the very character of Enlightenment thinking. However, on the other hand, we must take into account how these policies were saturated with Emperor Thought, which had not been given a central position in Enlightenment Thought. Above all, it was always under the name of the emperor that the various civilizing policies were implemented.

The Meiji government began as an imperial state based on the authority of the emperor; but needless to say, because it originated with a fragile base of authority as "a government without military forces and without power," it was at all times hard-pressed by the danger of "utter collapse." Because [the imperial faction's] military attacks on the shogunate had not relied upon any particular army, the government had to politically engage with a variety of different expectations, ranging from those of nobles and daimyo who had participated in attacks against the shogunate to those of the various strata among the people. Moreover, the government was aware that the aims of popular upheavals, which had begun with uprisings and riots from the Bakumatsu period forward, remained coiled around the

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[37] This school, established in 1858 by Fukuzawa Yukichi, was the precursor to Keio University.

government as an extremely uncanny presence. Because of the immaturity of the absolutist holders of power, the government officials' "establishment of authority" (天下創業) had to begin with a swift gathering of various powers into a unified power base, and at the same time the establishment of an overweening political authority that transcended those other powers. The solution came in the form of imperial authority, which was possessed of a just cause earned through the process of overthrowing the shogunate and restoring the emperor. Kido, Ôkubo,[38] and other government officials made full use of this authority. However, although their use of it was certainly Machiavellian, this also meant that they themselves could not embody their own political power as something completely separate from the traditional authority of the emperor. They, too, possessed the attribute of being limited by imperial authority (and the practices that supported it such as Shintô ideology).

In this way, the exaltation of the new government's imperial authority inevitably carried an ambiguous value.[xi] In the decree for the restoration of the emperor, the emphasis on "establishing Emperor Jinmu" as the founding emperor was an assertion of the emperor's legitimacy as a conqueror and ruler who transcended the shogun's authority. In public notices, the emphasis on continuity with Amaterasu underscored the legitimacy of ethicists, religious leaders, and the proprietors of the "land of the gods," while at the same time it usurped the traditional beliefs of the people. In effect, the emperor was promoted variously as an emancipator who was rescuing "people from their misery," a virtuous ruler who bestowed blessings, a deeply compassionate patriarch, the possessor of the authority and capacity to enlarge his "imperial authority" by "confronting the nations of the world," and moreover, an enlightened ruler who promoted the absorption of Western civilization by looking for consensus on state affairs, abolishing evil customs, and supporting universal justice. Since the dawn of history, sovereigns have directly appealed to the populace (人民) in this manner for

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[38] Ôkubo Toshimichi, 大久保利通, 1830–1878, leader of the Meiji Restoration, member of the Iwakura Mission, appointed Finance Minister in 1871, appointed Home Lord in 1873.

their legitimacy and authority. On the one hand, this is a means to reject completely the existing political authority and to establish an authority that transcends it, and on the other to indicate the direction in which the sovereign wishes to directly organize the energy of the people (民衆的イネルギー). But, in this case, because the traditional authority of the emperor was not self-supporting, that authority could not help but have an ambiguous value, and therefore had to be systematically incorporated by the government into the ideological basis of Shintô as it became the state religion. Nevertheless, the policy to adopt Shintô as the state religion was forcibly carried out through the 1868 (Meiji 1) proclamation of the unity of church and state, the proclamation of the revival of the Department of Divinities, and the edict separating Shintô and Buddhism; and again through the 1870 promulgation of the Imperial edict for the establishment of Shintô, and the 1871 policies that investigated and forced parishioners to convert to State Shintôism. This produced anti-Buddhist-movement riots and counter-riots, and these gradually came to provide a new space for the people's self-assertion, revealing the impossibility of establishing the emperor's authority through Shintô alone, or of controlling the inner life of the people.

In 1872 (Meiji 5), the Ministry of Religious Education was established, replacing the Ministry of Divinities and abolishing the unity of church and state. The "Three principles of instruction" (三条教則, *Sanjô kyôsoku)*[39] were promulgated and the propagation of a synthesis of Shintô and Buddhism was undertaken, with approximately 100,000 Shintô priests, Buddhist monks, and Confucian scholars mobilized as instructors of this synthesis. The "Three principles of instruction" and their embodiment in the "Seventeen themes" emphasized "Shintô and the Imperial Way" as well as instruction on *bunmei kaika* and the theme of a rich country and strong army. At the beginning of the Meiji Restoration, the authority of the emperor, which strove to transcend the various values that had risen from

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[39] The three principles that teachers were supposed to instill in students were: (1) reverence for the gods and love of country, (2) right conduct, and (3) loyalty to the emperor.

below by absorbing them, came to hold a position of absolute superiority over other forms of power by monopolizing the aggressively promoted superior values of advanced civilization. Thus, the emperor's authority had the confidence to realize itself without taking into account the situation of the people. Along with the adoption of the solar calendar, it abolished the people's five traditional festivals and established a system of national holidays for the imperial state, including Empire Day and the Emperor's birthday. In addition, in an attempt to place established religion within the framework of the emperor system, the authorities instituted repressive measures to treat folk religion (民衆宗教) as "heretical" and its prayers and rituals as barbaric. Ogawa Tameji's "Questions and answers about *kaika*" (開化問答, *Kaika mondô*), which appears to be a text by a governmental religion instructor of the time, is a text written in colloquial style that explains *kaika* policies about such things as the abolition of feudal domains and the establishment of prefectures, the equalization of the four social classes, conscription, taxes, and foreign relations. In the text, in addition to explaining the progressiveness and rationality of the *kaika* policies, everything is linked to the emperor's authority through examples such as the equality of the social classes that stems from "the emperor's beneficence," or regarding the consumption of meat, that "the emperor and others have, since ancient times, partaken of it." That is, *bunmei kaika* ideology was a combination of imperial authority and the various values of *bunmei*; it was a combination of Emperor Thought and Enlightenment Thought.  However, in fact, the more that Emperor Thought embraced Enlightenment Thought, the more likely it was that the policies that had made Shintô the state religion would fail, because Enlightenment Thought touted the separation of government from ethics and religion, and the internal freedom of individuals. On the receiving end of criticism from Enlightenment thinkers such as Mori Arinori and members of a group of Buddhist reformers surrounding the monk Shimaji Mokurai,[40] and more important,

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[40] Shimaji Mokurai, 島地黙雷, 1838–1911, influential priest of the Honganji sect of Jôdô Shinshu (Pure Land Buddhism).

pressed by the failure of religious instructors to propagate their policies, the Ministry of Religious Education was abolished in 1877 (Meiji 10). But because imperial authority existed side by side with *bunmei kaika*, so long as the fundamental path of *bunmei kaika* (capitalism) did not change, it was difficult to break down the communal illusion that constituted the Emperor-System state (天皇制国家). Nonetheless, placing cosmopolitan Enlightenment Thought, with its enthusiasm for a utilitarian spirit, at the forefront was a rejection of the Shintô elements of Emperor Thought, and made it possible for Fukuzawa to press forward with his rationalization for an idealized British monarchy. However, the public disorder caused by such things as democratic rights, samurai-class rebellions, and rebellions by the lower stratum could not be contained through natural human rights or a utilitarian spirit. And since Emperor Thought could not radiate a logic for constructing the daily life of the people, Confucianism was here called back into service. Thus, in developments from Meiji 10 forward, the formative processes of Emperor-System ideology can be traced to the union of Emperor Thought, Confucianism, and Enlightenment Thought, as they underwent various transformations. Consequently, *kaika* policies after Meiji 10 changed rapidly, and it would be fitting to consider them as having a new aspect because of the "Meiji 14 Political Crisis."[41]

*Enlightenment of the wealthy farmer class*

       The wealthy farming class, who made their appearance as distinct political subjects by the decade beginning with Meiji 10, had already begun to develop as leaders by the middle of the Edo Period in order to overcome the ruin of the villages. With the opening of the ports, they gradually awakened to the political order; and during the *kaika* period, with

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[41] The Meiji 14 Political Crisis (明治十四年の政変), also known as the 1881 Political Crisis, was a decisive event in Japan's modernization. On October 11, 1881, Ôkuma Shigenobu (大隈重信) was ousted from his position as Minister of Finance over disputes involving the sale of government property in Hokkaidô and, more fundamentally, his advocacy for the institution of a British-style parliament. Itô Hirobumi, Iwakura Tomomi, and other government officials who favored a Prussian-style parliament engineered Ôkuma's removal from office.

Enlightenment Thought as the intermediary, they seem to have made a great leap into the era of people's rights as they absorbed modern Western thought. From the middle of the Edo Period forward, exploitation based on feudal power and usurious commercial capital gradually caused the ruin of the villages. In order to overcome this devastation, the wealthy farming class that controlled the villages worked diligently to provide leadership. Their principal methods consisted of instruction provided by *Shingaku*[42] (心学) and other folk religions（民衆宗教), as well as subjective practices of popular morality (通俗道徳) based upon the central virtues of "diligence, economy, deference" espoused by elders such as Ninomiya Sontoku.[xii,43] While the lower half of the wealthy farming class had an impulse to increase its own wealth, the upper half had a two-sided character: providing the terminus of authority as the dominant class in the village order, and representing the village community. Often, the impulse of the lower half was to accumulate wealth through such methods as embezzlement, fraud, and usurious lending, which utilized the mechanisms and authority of power. For this reason, they had to have been the frequent target of riots. And, in turn, they were compelled to provide leadership in overcoming the devastation of the villages. Because it was impossible for embezzlement and fraud to become social norms, the more the wealthy farming class posited itself（自己の定立) in terms of the fate of the community, the more it had to guide the lower stratum by setting an example through the practice of popular morality. And at that moment it was precisely through the ideology of popular morality that it justified its wealth. In objective terms, by reducing all of the feudal contradictions to matters of the heart, this so-called ideology of popular morality performed the function of supporting the feudal order from below. But in this context, the idealistic worldview (唯心論的世界観) that

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[42] *Shingaku*, also known as *sekimon shingaku* (石門心学), was a popular religious movement founded by Ishida Baigan (石田梅岩), 1685–1744, during the Edo Period; its teachings consisted of a blend of Shintô, Confucianism, and Buddhism.
[43] Ninomiya Sontoku, 二宮尊徳, 1787–1856, Edo Period intellectual, economist, agricultural leader. His teachings formed the basis of "moral requital" thought (報徳思想, *hôtoku shisô*), which guided the moral requital association movement of the 1880s.

regarded "all things [as coming] from the heart" (Ishida Baigan)[44] had a form critical of the subservient, serf mentality that had existed until that time. Instead, it established a spiritual authority which proposed that "rich and poor, high and low, do not exist in heaven…but in the hearts of individuals" (Sontoku), and resulted in a view of spiritual equality that advocated "universal brotherhood through sincerity" (Kurozumi Munetada[45]).

The growth in confidence towards this extremely abstract spiritual authority occurred within the framework of the small universe of the village, but gave birth to the discovery of an "artificiality" and "way of humanity"[46] (Sontoku) that were different from the "Way of Heaven"; and along with fostering the power to criticize such illogical aspects of everyday life as superstitious belief, it also turned a critical eye toward existing scholarship (the prevailing ideologies). Sontoku stated that, "The Way is not written, but lived." Miura Meisuke, the leader of the Nambu-domain peasant uprising, also commented that, "Even if someone is a renowned Confucian scholar, we do not need to fear him." And he left behind what might be called a model of a practical folk science (民衆的実学), which used experiential cognition to recognize rules that were inherent in their objects and to apply these in daily life to such matters as household financial planning, farming methods, and techniques for making medicine (Prison Diaries[xiii]). Because this practical folk science (民衆的実学) was fundamentally bound to morality and religion, it is no mistake to view it as a "practical science of '*Ethics*'" that stood in contrast to Fukuzawa's "practical science of '*Physics*,'" and to evaluate it as an historical leap in Fukuzawa's practical science and as the fruit of the modern spirit.[xiv] Nonetheless, in Meisuke, for example, there existed an independent sense of self-confidence based upon practical folk science that claimed, "Even without rice fields, one

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[44] Ishida Baigan, 石田梅岩, 1685–1744, founder of the *Shingaku* religion. *Shingaku* had its beginnings in a series of public lectures given by Ishida in Kyoto in 1729.
[45] Kurozumi Munetada, 黒住宗忠, 1780–1850, Shintô priest, founder of the Kurozumi religion in the late Tokugawa period.
[46] This is a reference to Sontoku's admonition that heaven is eternal, but the way of humanity is artificial and thus falls apart if neglected. (From the fifth talk in *Ninomiya-ô yawa* (*Sage Ninomiya's Evening Talks*), 二宮翁夜話、第五話：人道作為の道の諭し, various Japanese editions are available.)

can survive if one works daily." Once exposed to modern science, this self-confidence had a character that allowed it to be transformed easily into the "practical science of '*Physics*.'" It is precisely the very fact that this possibility had already been widely established among the wealthy farmers, if no one else, which suggests it provided the historical foundation that greatly magnified the influence of Fukuzawa's practical science.

However, on the other hand, unless we presuppose a certain level of household financial stability and a broad perspective, Fukuzawa-style independence is not easy to come by. In fact, if anything, the special characteristic of practical folk science is that it cannot be separated from ethics and religion. That is, in the background of practical folk science is the solidarity and cooperation that connect people. If Fukuzawa's practical science is a system of utility and individualism, then practical folk science, with its so-called idealistic worldview, is a system of abstinence and cooperation that is fundamentally different from Fukuzawa's. Or to put it the other way around, those who could abandon the system of abstinence and cooperation were persons above a certain level within either the wealthy farming class or the middle-class city dwellers. For those in the lower stratum and for wealthy farmers who were greatly restricted by the community, this was not an easy thing to do.

Given that the ideology of popular morality asserted obedience as a premise of the *bakuhan* system and repudiated rioting and destruction, no more than an anemic idea of the conception of a unique common order (民衆的秩序) was available to it. At the moment when the *bakufu* rapidly lost its authority through the opening of the country, and within the political void created by attacks on the shogunate, the wealthy farming class, which had directly confronted the energy of the lower stratum's riots and destruction, desired the emergence of a strong authority to guarantee their own village systems, and thus for the first time they began to have their own political aspirations. For the majority, the Mito School's

and National Learning School's idea of *sonjô* was a conceptual key.[47]  Meisuke repudiated the Nambu domain and wished for direct control by the *bakufu*, and furthermore, turned to imperial authority. Kanno Hachirô,[48] because of his awareness of the crisis in the villages, participated in the *sonjô* movement, in riots, and in criticism of the *bakufu*; and ultimately he foresaw "early signs of the country's impending destruction" in the Aizu and Sendai domains. Furuhashi Terunori[49] of Mikawa, who had participated in the pacification of peasant revolts, also reached the point of cooperating with the *sonjô* movement. These phenomena indicate a beginning awareness on the part of the wealthy farming class that they could posit themselves by raising issues at the national level. Eventually, some even began to express hints of a concept of world renewal (世直し),[50] such as when Akagi Tadaharu[51] (Kurozumi Munetada's top student), a wealthy farmer from Mimasaka, stated, "Let us sweep away the troubles of the country and restore it to the ancient age of the gods, to the times of simplicity and honesty."

For this wealthy farming class, the Meiji Restoration invited great expectations that were the equivalent of a fantasy; and viewed in terms of their acquiescence to the idea of *sonjô*, the new government's policies toward opening the country and its posture of state power gradually gave way to disillusionment. Many of the wealthy farmers viewed the crisis of their own economic base and the renewed crisis of the failure of the village system as a result of the opening of the country. They looked to the emperor as the center of their concept of the national, and were no different from the *sonjô*-faction supporters in attempting to locate

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[47] *Sonjô* is an abbreviation for *sonnôjôi* (尊王攘夷), which means "revere the emperor and expel the barbarians."

[48] Kanno Hachirô, 菅野八郎, 1813–1888, farmer, intellectual, writer from Iwashiro Province.

[49] Furuhashi Terunori, 古橋暉皃, 1827–1892, wealthy farmer and agricultural business leader from Mikawa province.

[50] *Yonaoshi*, meaning world renewal or world rectification, was a term that became popular in the 1860s, used by peasants (from what Hirota designates as the lower stratum) in uprisings against corruption, high taxes, and other social and economic changes taking place in village communities during the Bakumatsu and early Meiji periods. These uprisings were often millenarian in character and sometimes successful in producing local changes; but did create any lasting class consolidation of the lower stratum. See in the translation, p. 49ff.

[51] Akagi Tadaharu, 赤木忠春, 1816–1865, Mimasaka landowner and follower of Shintô.

Japan's unique superiority there. But the fact that their base was in the villages and was strongly tied to farming life distinguishes them from [*sonjô*-faction] supporters. However, after the Meiji Restoration, the wealthy farming class in Kumamoto, which had espoused practical science under the influence of Shônan since the Bakumatsu period, quickly took up the formation of the political order. They reversed their support of the Shônan school of practical science and its attempt to achieve a rich country and strong army under the leadership of feudal lords. Through their own initiative, in order to ensure the prosperity of the people (民富形成) they experimented with abolishing special rights for feudal lords and with issuing declarations that reduced taxes; they conceived of the Kumamoto Upper and Lower Houses, with a Lower House that provided for "the equality of the four classes" and "a bidding system"; and in effect, created (in 1870) what was most likely the most advanced regional political power based upon the wealthy farming class. This was immediately crushed by the central government. But even after, the Kumamoto farmers organized the Cultivating Society (耕転社). Stating that, "Our country is based on the production of grain, which will inevitably lead us in the coming years into poverty; silkworm cultivation and tea manufacture are at this time the appropriate industries for our country," (定約書, "Jôyakusho" (agreement)), they sought a way out of difficulty through the promotion of new industries; and the purchase of an American "machine for seeding fields" was undertaken for a test farm that was a family-style cooperative venture of the Tokutomi[52] and other families. Eventually, their entrepreneurial spirit was displayed in the founding of a silk-spinning factory, a tea company, and a silk-weaving factory. This is a very special example, but it illustrates the prescience of the wealthy farming class; and it also represents the application of Fukuzawa's practical science. However, the difference between these farmers and Fukuzawa's practical

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[52] A prominent farming family in Higo Province (Kumamoto Prefecture). The family patriarch, Tokutomi Ikkei (1822–1914), was a student of Yokoi Shônan; he was also the father of Tokutomi Sohô (1863–1957), journalist and historian who was an initial supporter of the freedom and people's rights movement, and Tokutomi Roka (1868–1929), a noted author.

science is that their entrepreneurial spirit saw the barriers created by the *kaika* policies of a government that was "fighting for its own interests" and had forgotten the principle of "correcting public virtue, making effective use of public goods, and enriching public life." In order to break these barriers down, they had no choice but to generalize their class advantages by advancing from a demand for tax reductions to a demand for the establishment of the National Diet. In the process, they formulated the idea of a system that proclaimed, "Leave it to citizens to work on distribution and the prices of things; all that the government officers who handle this need to do is the task of bookkeeping" (Petition by Yajima Naokata,[53] tax discussion).[xv] While a majority of the wealthy farming class tasted a momentary disillusionment with the Meiji Restoration, and some turned their backs on the world of *bunmei kaika* in their despair, the general tendency was to grope for new ideas within *kaika* for reorganizing the villages. Kôno Banshû's[54] famous turning point, prompted by his reading of Mill's *Jiyû no kotowari* [a translation of J.S. Mill's *On Liberty*], impelled him toward the movement for establishing local councils. Furuhashi Terunori, who wanted to use popular morality to reconstruct the villages that had entrusted their aspirations to *sonjô* thought, took optimistic scientism as his turning point and came to advocate *kaika* for farming communities.[xvi] In all likelihood, for the wealthy farming class this *bunmei kaika* period reflected the emergence of a new world in which they could display their political and economic leadership. Learning activities for these things (directed not only at Western thought, but also at Confucianism, Buddhism, and National Learning) gained a stronghold in associations and cram schools; and activities geared toward local councils and industries of every kind were developed. This was the overture played before the leap ahead in the decade of Meiji 10.

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[53] Yajima Naokata, 矢島直方, 1823–1885, from Kumamoto Prefecture, a student of Yokoi Shônan.
[54] Kôno Hironaka (aka Kôno Banshû) 河野広中, 1849–1923, elected member of the Lower House of the Imperial Diet, Speaker of the 10th session in the House of Representatives.

Thus, if we look at the central conceptual discoveries of the wealthy farming class, first, we must confirm, in terms of pre-*kaika* history, the establishment of an idealistic worldview and the accumulation of a standardized practical folk science under the auspices of the ideology of popular morality; and furthermore, the potential contained in the Bakumatsu and Meiji Restoration periods for groping toward a new political order. Second, because *bunmei kaika* identified the right to private property and rationalized the utilitarian person, the impulse toward wealth on the part of the lower half [of the wealthy farming class] secured civic rights here, both legally and morally. This was the framework of the Meiji state, with its prospects set out upon a grand scale; and for this reason Western civilization appeared to the wealthy farming class as if garbed in brilliant light. Third, however, *bunmei* had various implications for the relationship [of the wealthy farming class] to the village system that was bound to its upper half. In the view of those such as Nakamura Naozô[55] and Funatsu Denjibei,[56] who partially adopted Western farming methods during the *kaika* period but attempted a thoroughly labor-intensive method of farming while at the same time fundamentally depending upon popular morality, the most pressing need above all was aid for the entire community. Thus, even if they partially studied Fukuzawa-style practical science at that time, they must have fundamentally regarded it with suspicion as something that played havoc with the system of abstinence and cooperation. In fact, businesses that adopted Western farming methods in the *kaika* period were going bankrupt by the middle of the decade of Meiji 10; and even those like Furuhashi Terunori, who had declared their complete trust in *bunmei*, once again returned to the methods of the ideology of popular morality. A representative example is the rapid proliferation of the moral requital association movement (報徳社運動) before and after Meiji 20. However, in the later half of the Meiji teens, the enormous advances in primitive accumulation greatly changed the structure of the cooperative

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[55] Nakamura Naozô, 中村直三, 1819–1882, agricultural leader from Nara Prefecture.
[56] Funatsu Denjibei, 船津伝次平, 1832–1989, agricultural leader from Gunma Prefecture.

system; and the wealthy farming class as well was forced to become self-aware of the limits of popular morality. Okada Ryôichirô's [57] claim that the majority of the poor were lazy and extravagant, and therefore did not need to be given aid ("Discourse on family governance by the moral requital school" (報徳学斉家談, *Hôtokugaku seikadan*)), indicates a partial discarding of popular morality and an attempt to reorganize the ideology of popular morality upon the presupposition of the capitalistic reality of the survival of the fittest. Fourth, the demand for prosperity for the people ran up against the limits of Enlightenment Thought and began to orient itself toward the formation of a new political system to replace the government's *kaika* policies. From the time of the Bakumatsu forward, Confucian and National Learning School concepts became a substantial stepping-stone in the emergence within the wealthy farming class of a political subjectivity that was fortified by the idea of democratic rights. But the issue is whether this contained "a path unrelated to 'Westernizing modernism' to which they, as people's rights activists from the East, could avail themselves." [xvii] The traditional ideas of Confucianism and the National Learning School undoubtedly aided their politicization, but at the same time, they gradually became captive to a public-minded virtue consciousness (志士仁人意識)[58] such that, even as they valued the energy of the lower stratum, they were hindered from trusting this stratum as subjects with whom to ally themselves. From this perspective, it is doubtful whether the wealthy farming class learned anything about the basis of "Eastern modes" of being from the actual people (現実の民衆). Thus, the task of the creation of a democratic community in which the lower stratum participated as subjects was given little attention, and the wealthy farming class remained, as before, the ruling class with respect to the lower stratum. While mediated by traditional ideas, they saw superior value in Western civilization and they were caught up, within the same

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[57] Okada Ryôichirô, 岡田良一郎, 1839–1915, industrialist, politician, member of the House of Representatives.
[58] The term *shishi* (志士), meaning patriot or public-minded person, was often used during this period to refer to *sonjô* activists.

arena as Enlightenment theory, by civilizational logic. In this civilization framework, they thrust the democratic order before the government's iron-fisted *kaika* policies. The fruits of the ideology of freedom and people's rights are to be highly evaluated as the summit of the bourgeois democracy attained by the Japanese populace (日本人民). But we must pay attention to the fact that these activists were unable to posit themselves as overcoming the Meiji state, and were sharing in the communal fantasy of a national destiny based on the civilizational logic of a rich country and strong army (on this point, the wealthy farming class associated with the moral requital association, which was different from the people's rights faction of the wealthy farming class, required an even stronger Meiji state framework for their own development). Thus, the people's rights faction of the wealthy farming class also disdained the lower stratum for being at a remove from civilization, and at the same time wanted to bring into question solidarity with a backward Asia.[xviii] Only a tiny minority, including for example Nakae Chômin,[59] Kitamura Tôkoku,[60] and Sunaga Renzô,[61] gradually attempted, in the course of the people's rights movement, to take on the hardship of the lower stratum as their own. In so doing, they labored to discover a new ideological wellspring, one in which the seeds of the potential for a people's rights movement in Asia are just barely visible.

*Rebellion of the lower stratum*

If the wealthy farming class began theorizing itself, from the perspective of *bunmei kaika*, as standing at the summit of the village community, and transcending the village while at the same time controlling it; the lower stratum, which had to manage their own lives while being bound to the narrow perspective of the small universe of the village and its

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[59] Nakae Chômin, 中江兆民, 1847–1901, intellectual, journalist, statesman.
[60] Kitamura Tôkoku, 北村透谷, 1868–1894, literary critic, poet.
[61] Sunaga Renzô, 須長蓮造, (b. 1852), a central member of the 1884 convention to create the *Konmintô* (Poor People's Party).

complementary community cooperation and rules, began to assert themselves precisely through that community. Various expressions of self-assertion in the lower stratum, though overwhelmingly a part of the ideological framework of the wealthy farming class, had gradually come to flourish from the middle of the Edo Period onward, with the conditions for world renewal ultimately emerging during the Bakumatsu and Meiji Restoration periods; but in confronting "*bunmei kaika*," this self-assertion took a further qualitative leap or turn. The direct effect was riots against the new government, or what I call resistance against Westernization (文明), and the elevation of folk religions. But before investigating these developments, I would like to examine, as background history, the characteristics of the ideological formation (思想形成) of the lower stratum.

First, the maxims of the ideology of popular morality (通俗道徳的イデオロギー). It is difficult to extract the unique characteristics of the lower stratum from these maxims that were shaped by the guidance of the wealthy farming class. But because they appealed for the reform of people's traditional attitudes (人々の旧来の生活態度) and self-consciously attempted to reorganize community practices, even in the lower stratum that was steeped in a world of abject serf mentality, an image, founded upon an idealistic worldview, of humans as autonomous and struggling beings took hold; and the eyes of some members of the lower stratum were opened to such phenomena as the concept of equality and the self-aware administration of their communities. Of course, the ideology of popular morality took the *bakuhan* system as its premise; and when compared to the enormous physical labor and mental strain it imposed on the people, it was altogether powerless to relieve their hardships. Thus, as an escape from these hardships, the people were seduced by idleness and gambling, or looked to new religious movements and pilgrimages to Ise Shrine for a temporary escape. Furthermore, there was a gradual increase in the number of those who were overcome by hardship and left home or fled to the city. Although these [responses] were not self-conscious critiques of the feudal system, they were an objective measure of a certain amount of energy

that disturbed the system and they contained an *opportunity* for relativizing the feudal order. However, this was not the place from which heretical ideas emerged; rather, it was through the everyday moral critique of idleness, gambling, leaving home for the city, and so on, as the pursuits of society's losers, that the ideology of popular morality as a social norm gradually began to control people. It is likely that the means by which the lower stratum—who did not possess the assets and authority, or the broad perspective and the cultivation of the wealthy farming class—escaped their crisis was by appealing to the narrow perspective of an even harsher system of abstinence, industriousness, and cooperation; this gradually became the mainstream of everyday thinking.

And thus, second, the mounting crises—which were within the realm of the system of *bakuhan* authority that was originally supposed to provide security, and were also due to the utter ineffectiveness of popular morality—over such things as annual tax increases, natural disasters, and the opening of the country to the barbarians, gradually increased anxiety and mistrust toward power. The lower stratum began to rely on traditional religious authority, as well as on the illusion of world renewal, rather than on the authority of their own power. Above all, during the Bakumatsu and Meiji Restoration periods, a particular kind of utopian image appeared—in the Kurozumi, Tenri, and Konkô folk religions, as well as in the riots and uprisings that were the lower stratum's most extreme expression of self-assertiveness—as the prevailing basis of the desire for world renewal that was visible in [phenomena such as] the new religious movements and "*eejanaika*" gatherings.[62] Although this was not a direct negation of existing power, it symbolized a desire for a free, equal, and abundant communal society of small producers. We can recognize in their fantasies a self-awareness that was

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[62] *eejanaika* gatherings were a phenomenon occurring in various places throughout western Japan, spreading as far north as Tôhoku and as far southwest as Shikoku, during July 1867-April 1868. In response to a series of national disasters and political crises, though without any clear political agenda or aims, people wearing festival costumes danced and sang through city streets in communal celebrations that could sometimes last for days. The name of the phenomenon comes from a song, sung by the protesters, which contained the phrase "*eejanaika* (what's so bad about that?)."

certain to view its self-liberation through a dimension of the national; and the wealthy farming class sought to assimilate these fantasies into *sonjô* ideology through such things as military troops consisting of farmer soldiers.

Third, these fantasies, however, did not mature through popular struggle into a conception of political power unique to the people. Folk religions promised world renewal through their particular conceptions of god, but were unable to imagine a new order; likewise, there was no linkage to the riots and uprisings. The riots and uprisings gradually led to outright requests for reduction of taxes and reclamation of pawned lands and goods, and even requests for an "equal-field system of benevolent governance"[63] (均田徳政) and so forth; but without a conception of power, there was, at best, democratization of the village order, with such things as the public election of village officials. Nonetheless, these conflicts resulted in the rapid development of leaders of fierce emotional strength, feelings of widespread solidarity among the people, organizations and tactics, and so on. And the demand for the public election of village officials signified the escape of the lower stratum from the control of the wealthy farming class and their self-awareness of their power to construct their own community. That is, the self-assertion of the lower stratum gradually began to awaken them to a world that was distinct from and antagonistic to the wealthy farming class. This was probably a world that shared, in common with China's Taiping Rebellion, a community in which small producers were liberated. However, because ultimately they were unable to produce a conception of power, we have no choice but to describe them as having been saddled with an immaturity that was far inferior to the Taiping Rebellion.

In any case, for the lower stratum engaged in this process of growth, "*bunmei kaika*" was utterly different from their world, and made its appearance as a hostile and eerie world that completely engulfed them with its overwhelming power. More than anything else,

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[63] The equal-field system, originating in the Northern Wei Dynasty (386–534) in northern China, was a system of land distribution in which the government owned all land and assigned shares to individual families for use. A similar system was adopted in 7th-century Japan.

"*bunmei kaika*" assailed them, as *kaika* policy supported by the new government, through the full-scale expansion of the educational system, the conscription law, and revisions to land taxes, all of which arose from accession to opening the country, privileging Shintô as the state religion, and additionally, the abolition of the domain system. For the lower stratum, the policy of opening the country meant pandering to the barbarians and was the source of rising prices. The incorporation of Shintô as the state religion was misunderstood as constituting a fundamental upheaval of existing beliefs, and even as the enforcement of Christianity. The abolition of feudal domains and the establishment of prefectures was a complete repudiation of the existing world; the new world that the government was attempting to make was something beyond imagination; and such things as the organization of the family register, the education system, and the conscription law were obligations that completely disregarded existing customs. Moreover, if such things were seen as assimilations to the West, which until then had been viewed as barbaric, then along with being completely incomprehensible and giving rise to anxiety and dread, it was inevitable that they would have been received as attempts to completely deny the existential basis of the lower stratum's already existing selfhood. Riots against the new government had been seen previously, but it was after the abolition of the domain system that they began in earnest. Beginning with the Aki Rebellion, which originated to prevent the removal of its feudal lord, there were rebellions in Mimasaka, Aki, Hôki, Sanuki, and Chikuzen[64] in 1873 (Meiji 6). Rebellions such as the Mie Rebellion in 1876 (Meiji 9) mark the peak of their widespread expansion, and this genealogy culminates with the Chichibu Rebellion in 1884 (Meiji 17).

The affidavit of Fudeyasu Utarô,[65] a leader of the Mimasaka Rebellion, demonstrates the antipathy that existed toward all of the *kaika* policies: "Although we are reluctant to say

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[64] Mimasaka Province became part of Okayama Prefecture; Aki Province became part of Hiroshima Prefecture; Hôki Province became part of Tottori Prefecture; Sanuki is now Kagawa Prefecture; Chikuzen Province became part of Fukuoka Prefecture.

[65] Fudeyasu Utarô, 筆保卯太郎, 1843–1873, farmer and a leader of the Mimasaka Rebellion who was executed in July of that same year for his role in the rebellion.

so, recent ordinances have been *disheartening and unsatisfying in every way*; we indeed cannot accept, in particular, the conscription law, title deeds, education, slaughterhouses, the prohibition of topknots, the abolition of the designation of *eta*." Furthermore, Fudeyasu could not help but conclude that, "Although we considered submitting a grievance letter regarding those points, *under the present conditions*, we realized that no matter how sincerely we asked, there would be no approval." And because of this, he [and his followers] were determined to force the revocation of the *kaika* policies by "joining with co-conspirators, stirring rebellion, and ending villainy." Proud of their overwhelming position of dominance here, they intuitively grasped the steadfast will of the powers that were attempting to force them to carry out the *kaika* policies; and they therefore believed that in order to resist, they must invest every fiber of their will and being. In these rebellions, a variety of wild rumors—such as "they will wring the blood from our veins," "they will snatch out our livers," "telegraph machines are sorcery," "women, oxen, and chickens will be carried to foreign countries," and "foreigners rule over us"—created a constant social atmosphere that intensified the anxiety of the lower stratum and frequently became an impetus for rebellion. These rumors were all misunderstandings; but they expressed just how sinister and foreign of an entity Westernization (文明的なもの) was for the lower stratum, and how much it was perceived to be a fearsomely large opponent that jeopardized the very foundation of their existing world. Consequently, these rebellions against Westernization had in common that the things they destroyed were strictly differentiated into categories such as government mechanisms that forcibly delivered Westernization and various Westernization phenomena (town halls, places for public notices, primary schools, telephone poles, people in Western dress…). During the Mie rebellion, as well, it was declared that, "Broadly speaking, things associated with the government are to be completely destroyed."

However, there was no clear emphasis in these rebellions. In Mimasaka, a group prepared a list of demands, but no movement developed as a whole. In this, we must surely

see the magnitude of the rebelling lower stratum's psychological panic toward their fearsome opponent,[xix] and based on the lower stratum's newfound awareness of a head-on confrontation with power, the leap away from a rebellion aimed at social reform. In other words, the lower stratum, standing nakedly exposed before Meiji political authority and the enormous power of Western civilization behind this authority, could not determine the effectiveness of their organization and tactics in the conventional uprisings they had cultivated; that is, for the first time they were forced to recognize the fundamental difference between their own world (自らの民衆的世界) and the world of *bunmei* (文明世界). At least in the case of Mimasaka, the leaders met often in order to prepare for rebellion, but in the end they could not discover an effective and clear-sighted method. Nonetheless, that their awareness of their own world was not a simplistic return to feudalism is clear from the fact that the demands prepared by the Mimasaka group contained the *complete* repudiation of feudal exploitation and an opposition to the new government. Thus, their rebellion was not merely a spontaneous outbreak, but was substantially self-aware; though the question must remain concerning the extent to which they planned a social order of their own in organizing the populace at large.

Apart from the Chichibu Incident, which underwent the baptism of a determinate concept of the people's rights, generally we do not see the idea of social order expressed in these rebellions. However, it is possible that the idea was reflected in the expressions of the founders of the Tenri and Maruyama sects. Nakayama Miki[66] of the Tenri sect equated the Meiji government with Western civilization (西洋文明) in her statement that, "The true pillar of the high peak [the emperor] is a foreigner, this above all angers the gods." She also directed her hatred toward the *kaika* policies in remarking that, "Those who govern us treat the world according to their whims." And she adopted a stance of total opposition to an equivalence of the Meiji state with the Western world (文明世界), stating that, "From now on, we must contrast the power of the gods with the power of those who rule over us." At the

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[66] Nakayama Miki, 中山みき, 1798–1887, founder of the Tenri religion in the Tokugawa era.

same time, she clearly imagined a communal society of diligent and sincere small producers: "*In this world*, there will be bountiful harvests everywhere," "Take heart: we shall not fall ill, die, or weaken," "In the world, we are all brothers; there is no such thing as a stranger" (おふでさき, *ofudesaki*, 1874).[67] Furthermore, Itô Rokurobê[68] of the Maruyama sect, who saw the end of the world in the process of ferocious primitive accumulation that was occurring in the latter half of the decade of the Meiji teens, hurled the curse that "Westernization is the downfall of the people," and repudiated the entirety of Westernizing phenomena (文明化的なもの), from the Emperor as a symbol of Westernization (文明) to the National Diet and the Liberal Party. He stated that, "The rulers have turned to irrationality......unless reason comes from below, then nothing can take shape." Declaring that he was taking a stand with the "lower classes" (下等人民), he championed their complete salvation. It must also be noted that this was in complete opposition to the inclination of the wealthy farming class during this period, who demonstrated through the ideology of popular morality a reality defined in terms of the survival of the fittest, and at the same time abandoned the poor.[xx]

If we look at these rebellions by the lower stratum against Westernization from the perspective of world history, there are differences, beginning with their developmental stages, that come from variations in historical conditions. But, the worlds of small producers in the lower stratum during the period in which modern society emerged had in common their self-assertions against capitalist civilization (資本主義文明). The most advanced example appears in the rebellions of the English Luddites, and the Lazzaretti revolt[69] in Italy resembles a similar stage in Japan. Also, in rebellions such as the Boxer Rebellion in China and the

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[67] *Ofudesaki* is one of the three founding scriptural texts of the Tenri sect, composed in waka style between Meiji 2 and Meiji 15 (1869–1882) by Nakayama Miki. (The other two are *mikagura uta* and *osashizu*.)

[68] Itô Rokurobê, 伊藤六郎兵衛, 1829–1894, founder of the Maruyama religion in the Bakumatsu period of the Tokugawa era.

[69] The Lazzarettist Movement was a millenarian movement supported by the Tuscan peasantry during a period of wrenching social changes brought about by the industrial revolution and the unification of Italy near the end of the 19th century. Its charismatic leader Davide Lazzaretti was gunned down by gendarmerie in 1878.

Donghak Rebellion in Korea, which occurred at the stage in which modern civilization was making its assault through imperialism, we can recognize a shared character at their foundations. In the case of the Luddites, the fact that we can perceive a modern rights consciousness suggests that they used a part of capitalist civilization (文明) as a weapon; but the small producers' own world was asserted in religious terms against the whole of Westernization with its system of industrial production, private ownership, and such. For the exceedingly superstitious Boxers, their conception of social order was so premature, when compared to the *Tenchôdenposei*[70] (天朝田畝制) of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, that it does not warrant discussion. However, this is the difference between a stage in which Western civilization has not been designated as an adversary, and a stage in which an intensely evil culture has to be challenged despite the futility of doing so. If we *presume to* abstract various factors and make a comparison, I believe we can identify the stage of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom with uprisings for reform of the Bakumatsu; and the stage of the Boxers with uprisings against the new government.[xxi] These rebellions against Westernization were forced to admit defeat in the face of the overwhelming power and logic of Westernization, and had to swallow their resentment and let it permeate the very depths of their being. Furthermore, for that very reason, the later entanglement of the character of the rebellions with the particular character of the advance of Westernization (文明の開化) is unsurprising. The Luddites, the Lazzarettists, and the Boxers were each bolstered by a religious worldview, and their rebellions continued for several years. In the case of Japan, the rebellions were non-religious (that is, they did not have the weapon of a worldview that was in opposition to Westernization) and dissipated within one week at most. One can theorize about the sparseness of traditions of heterodox thinking, the authority of state power, and so on. But the slenderness of the Japanese people's (日本民衆) rebellions against Westernization (文明), as

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[70] An 1853 document, concerning the land system and administrative affairs, which served as a kind of constitution for the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom (1851–1864).

compared to others, surely posed a major limitation to precipitating a stance in the lower stratum against Western capitalist civilization. These resentments against Westernization were inherited by the Ômoto sect that was established in the Meiji mid-twenties, and emerged at times as strange eruptions. Subsequently, however, the Ômoto sect and the Maruyama sect quickly acquiesced to and merged with Emperor-System ideology, furnishing powerful energy through support from below. In light of this, we must inquire further about such issues as the weakness and self-complacency in the worldviews of these folk religions that had advocated fundamental dissent against Western civilization (partial dissent stirred up any number of -isms, including ultranationalism (国粋主義)).

*The perspective from the abyss and the borderlands*

Various people (民衆), beginning with "social outcasts" (賤民) who had been forced into the abyss of society, as well as peoples from the borderlands, including the Ainu, Okinawans, and remote islanders, had not in most cases made sufficient progress to assert themselves in the manner of the lower stratum's rebellions against Westernization (文明). While these peoples each had different histories and had been placed in different conditions under the *bakuhan* system, in terms of the ruling structure and its ideology, they can be thought of as sharing a certain kind of reason to exist that was conferred upon them from the outside. The *bakuhan* system, in relation to the general population of farmers, craftsmen, and merchants, was a society characterized by its public posture (タテマエ) of guaranteeing a completed moral order, which was called a world of "benevolent rule," by means of the transcendent morality and military strength of the ruling class. In addition, because *bakuhan* power enforced the removal (exclusion from the country (鎖国)) of barbarians (夷狄) and such peripheral groups as the Christians and *fuju-fuse*,[71] as well as the elimination of famine,

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[71] The *fuju-fuse* (不受不施) was a Nichiren Buddhist sect characterized by the belief that no offerings could be received from, or given to, those from other religions. These beliefs led to continual clashes

banditry, spiritual pollution, and so forth, it impressed upon the people (民衆) that it was able to maintain a stable, purified, communal world. As a result, the people were under the illusion that they could achieve stability in their own world through the benevolence of the *bakuhan's* power.[xxii] Thus, the medium for expelling, or the buffer against, the otherness of the barbarian, the marginalized (異端), the starving, the thieving, the polluted, and so on, was the existence of the lowest stratum (最底辺の民衆) of the abyss and the borderlands. This organizational structure was established by the end of the 17th century, and the ideology that demonstrated this structure became dominant as well. The Ainu and Ryûkyû peoples, along with Korea, served as mediators, forming the outer wall of a double-layered, international boundary consisting of Ainu-Matsumae/Korea-Tsushima/Ryûkyû-Kagoshima, established so that *bakuhan* power could avoid assuming direct diplomatic responsibility in the outside world; and by demonstrating the capacity of its power to expel barbarians, served as a springboard for increasing the *bakuhan's* authority over its own people (国内民衆).[xxiii] As *bakuhan* power placed these peripheral peoples (辺境民衆) under its own rule, it increased and supplemented the authority of its power by presenting them as "outside peoples" (化外の民) and "alien peoples" (異邦の民) to its own people (国内民衆). However, because it was not necessary for power to show benevolence toward these peripheral populations, [the *bakuhan's*] rule appeared as a matter of sheer military force that had cast aside any moral character. Economically, as well, these populations were disconnected from the system of feudal land rents, and for that reason could be treated as possible sources of revenue that could be forcibly extricated, outside of general systemic constraints. The "social outcasts" who were forced to the abyss were, on the one hand, forced into practices at the far edges of power for eliminating otherness, for example, as banditry officers; and at the same time, they were used as mediators who, as executioners and tanners, maintained an undefiled communal

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with the *bakufu* throughout the Tokugawa period. (Two splinter sects of *fuju-fuse* exist in Japan in the present day.)

world. In this sense, even though many other arguments may be made about them, it can be said that the pleasure quarters had also been given the mediating function of guaranteeing the purity of lineages and family structures. As the crisis of the *bakuhan* system gradually deepened, the policies that regulated and discriminated against the people in the lowest stratum were uniformly intensifying, and were linked to this mediating characteristic.

If we are to position, in this manner, the existence of the people of the abyss and borderlands under the *bakuhan* system, then the national unification that resulted from the abolition of feudal domains and the establishment of prefectures—in short, "*bunmei kaika*"—signified an effort at intermixing and assimilating the barbarians, i.e., the West, who until then had been excluded as constituting otherness, and it called for even the lowest stratum of the populace (最底辺民衆) to be incorporated into the state as equal members of the nation (国民の一員). Because of the necessity both of establishing national borders and defending them, the peripheral populations who formed a buffer against the outside world had to be transformed from "outside peoples" and "alien peoples" into "imperial subjects (皇民)." And there was the fear of being criticized as uncivilized and uncouth by the civilized nations because of the existence of "social outcasts" and practically enslaved courtesans. Both a public posture (タテマエ) about the theory of natural human rights and diplomatic vulnerability were emphasized in the reasons for Katô Hiroyuki's declaration that "the use of the terms *eta* and *hinin* shall be abolished." In fact, criticism from other nations regarding the selling and buying of courtesans, stemming from the María Luz Incident, placed tremendous pressure on the government, sensitive as it was to the dispositions of Western nations. In domestic terms, the equalization of national subjects (国民) was carried out not only for the purpose of abolishing the special rights of the warrior class and thereby eliminating intermediary powers, but was essential for ensuring equality before the law so that the uniform enforcement of duties to the state (such as paying taxes and serving in the military) and a system of private ownership could be realized. The Meiji government thus dealt with

the peoples of the abyss and borderlands through the "Liberation Edict" (解放令) and assimilation policies. However, there was no financial support underpinning these policies. Moreover, they were seldom accompanied by reforms of political and social conditions to support liberation. Therefore, on the one hand, these groups pinned great hopes on the "Liberation Edict" and assimilation policies in their fight for liberation; on the other hand, they were destined to be flung, naked, from the existing traditional world into the civilized world (文明世界).

Among the members of the lowest stratum, the *hisabetsu buraku*[72] populace was the largest in number, and the most advanced in terms of subject formation. During the stage of the Bakumatsu, in cases such as the Tenpô-era Chôshû uprising, they were exploited through discrimination and separation policies, and as a result were antagonistic toward the general populace. At other times, such as in the Shibuzome uprising, they rose up against increased discrimination; and in situations such as the Tenpô-era Banshû uprising and the Keiô-era Tsuyama Reform uprising,[73] they showed their maturity in collaborative actions undertaken with the general populace. In response to the "Liberation Edict" they were deeply moved, saying, "We know not when we can repay heaven's grace," and "We have come to know the depth of the emperor's benevolence." It was probably due to this kind of maturity at the end of the Bakumatsu that they were able to strive toward self-liberation by means of such actions as petitioning the villagers that they would "like to refuse all formerly accepted orders to serve as pursuers of thieves, scatterers of beggars, and discarders of cattle and horse carcasses." The Ainu as well must have felt, however momentarily, a sense of emancipation at

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[72] The terms *hisabetsu buraku* (被差別部落, lit. "discriminated hamlet(s)") and *hisabetsu burakumin* (被差別部落民, lit. "discriminated-hamlet people") historically refer to feudal-era outcast communities. Persons descended from these communities continue to face significant social discrimination in Japan today. The terms *buraku* and *burakumin*, used in reference to contemporary issues, carry pejorative connotations. The terms *dôwa* and *dôwa mondai* (同和, 同和問題, assimilation, assimilation issue) are now generally preferred.

[73] Hirota is referring to various uprisings that occurred during the Tokugawa-period eras of Tenpô (1830–1843) and Keiô (1865–1868). Their dates are: Chôshû (1844), Shibuzome (1856), Banshû (1833), Tsuyama Reform (1866).

the abolishment of the trading post system (場所請負制) with its slave-like conditions of servitude and cruelty, and at the movement toward assimilation. Similarly, for the Okinawans, the process of transforming Ryûkyû into a prefecture, which eliminated the plundering that came from the dual-layered ruling structure of Satsuma and Ryûkyû, must have resulted in a momentary fantasy of liberation. In that respect, in contrast to the members of the lower stratum, who perceived the Restoration as a world-renewal fantasy and who feared their self-destruction through the *kaika* policies and *bunmei kaika*; for the lowest stratum, *bunmei kaika* was ironically structured to provide a temporary illusion of freedom, even though, in actuality, it promised even greater degradation and discrimination for them as well.

The construction of this ironic gap may have given rise to an unhappy situation. In the Mimasaka rebellion against Westernization (文明), *hisabetsu buraku* groups were forced to make a pledge to return to their former status; a situation bluntly shown in the tragedies of immolation and butchery visited against buraku areas that rejected the pledge. Immediately following the proclamation of the "Liberation Edict," movements to prevent its enforcement appeared in every region of the country. In the majority of these movements, sabotage of the Liberation edict and division policies were used by the local ruling class—and in particular, the class of village-level government officials—in order to maintain the social order. There are also many examples like the Mimasaka Rebellion in which the lower stratum themselves forced a return to *buraku* status. The lower stratum had to have grasped the Liberation Edict as one piece in a larger plan for Westernization; the erasure, by means of that edict, of the existence that they conceived of as mediating the security of the pure world of their established community was construed as certainly bringing about the collapse of that communal world itself. This same Mimasaka uprising for the reform of the Bakumatsu manifested itself as a notable riot by the untouchable (非人) class, and can be seen as a collaborative movement with discriminated groups (被差別民衆). The lower stratum, perceiving themselves as failing to benefit from the loss of authority by domain governments,

acted from the supposition that it was outside the world of social obligations and had become untouchable (非人化). At that moment, the village community that had been located within the framework of a world of social obligations lost its meaning; and this brought about the collaborative movement with discriminated groups. Of course, it is doubtful just how much this was truly an opportunity for destroying the existing community and forming a new communal order in which discriminated groups were on an equal footing. And for the lower stratum, in the rebellions against Westernization (文明), resisting the pressure of the powerful otherness of Westernization and, conversely, favoring a tendency toward the purification of the existing community were not contradictory behaviors. The intrinsic goal of the rebellions to completely eliminate exploitation based upon power was also the goal of communal self-reliance and purification. Thus, it was absolutely vital, even more so than before, to secure the existence of the "social outcasts" (賤民) as a mediating force with which to defend against the spreading influence of the Western world (文明世界). When the lower stratum finally began to self-assert their own independent world, they had to regenerate an enormous wall of discrimination at a new level, and in doing so, they closed off their communities within the confines of a narrow framework. But until they destroy the framework of these communities and conceive the communal world at a new level, the people of the lower stratum and the people of the abyss and the borderlands will not be able to discover the path of self-liberation.[xxiv]

In a certain sense, *bunmei kaika* realized modern Japan. *Bunmei kaika* imposed the "success" of capitalism from above. However, because it also turned everything into individual (household) responsibility, the people (民衆) were able, for the first time, to assert themselves through the mediation of the community. But the weaker the economic footing of the lower stratum, the harder it was for them to make the logic of *bunmei kaika* their own. Thus, while respecting the overwhelming dominance of *bunmei kaika*, the people were all the more profoundly captured, under the guidance of the wealthy farming class, by popular

morality's ideology of abstinence and industriousness. Modern Japan was impelled forward by the double-construct of the logic of *bunmei kaika* and the logic of popular morality. Accordingly, the logic of popular morality also embraced the *bunmei* logic of survival of the fittest, thus producing a structure that was contemptuous of (or self-alienating with respect to) the lower stratum and the abyss and the borderlands. The logic of *bunmei kaika* also acquired a sense of moral superiority by cladding itself in the outer skin of popular morality. Emperor-System ideology was erected precisely on the foundation of a communal illusion of imperial authority that governed the construction of both of these [the logic of *bunmei kaika* and the logic of popular morality], and eventually it would come to display an enormous power of control.

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**ENDNOTES**

[i] In Maruyama Masao's "Kaidai" (bibliographical essay) (prev cited) [in fn 26, *Fukuzawa yukichi senshû* (*Selected works of Fukuzawa Yukichi*), vol. 4, Iwanami Shoten, 1952] this appears as "Individual freedom and national independence, national independence and international equality, are supported by the exact same principle…for modern nationalism in Japan, a beautiful if hapless epoch of classical equilibrium." (p. 415).

[ii] Shiba Kôkan, *Oranda tensetsu* (*Dutch nativism*) (Nakai Sôtarô, *Shiba Kôkan*, Atorie-sha, 1942).

[iii] Takano Chôei, *Bojutsu yume monogatari* (*Tale of the bojutsu dream*), (prev cited [in fn 28, Iwanami Shoten, 1971], *Nihonshisôtaikei* (*Survey of Japanese thought*) 55).

[iv] On the evolution of his perspective concerning foreignness, from the end of the *bakufu* to Enlightenment Thought, see Uete Michiari, prev cited opus [in fn 4, *Nihonkindaishisô no keisei* (*The formation of modern Japanese thought*), Iwanami Shoten, 1974); also, Kano Masanao, *Nihonkindaika no shisô* (*Japanese modernization ideology*) (prev cited) [in fn 5, Kenkyûsha, 1972], points out and cogently analyzes the two nationalisms of "the civilizational image and the Great Powers image."

[v] Maruyama Masao, in his "Kaidai" (bibliographical essay) (prev cited), states that in Fukuzawa's "domestic political theory, generally there was continuity in the fundamental political principles themselves…in the case of his international politics, the change in his argument…extended deeply into the theory itself" (p. 412). Against this, Yasukawa Junosuke states, in *Nihon kindaikyôiku no shisôkôzô* (*The construction of modern educational thought in Japan*) (Shinhyôron Co., 1970), from a position diametrically opposed to Maruyama, that "Fukuzawa's thought does not fundamentally change throughout his life…in the end, what changes is the political, economic, and social

environment of Meiji Japan that surrounds Fukuzawa… he resolutely proceeded down the path of his lifelong "great desire" for 'national independence, and a rich country and strong army" (p. 14). I have emphasized that although Fukuzawa's "great desire" never changed, for that very reason, the basic logic of his domestic and international political theory did change (see Hirota Masaki, "Fukuzawa ni okeru daisan no tenkai" (Fukuzawa's third evolution), *Shisô* (*Thought*), v. 580) and that it is significant that Fukuzawa's transformation advanced in parallel with the evolution of other Enlightenment thinkers.

vi Nishi Amane, "Kokumin kifûron" (Theory of the national ethos), (*Nishi amane zenshû* (*Complete works of Nishi Amane*)), v. 3, Shûkô Shobô, 1966). References below to Nishi are to the *Nishi amane zenshû*.

vii Tsuda Hideo, in "Minshûteki kyôiku undô to kenryoku ni yoru kôkyôiku no seiritsu" (The establishment of public education by means of the education movement and the power of the people), (*Rekishigakukenkyû* (*Historical research*), v. 370), emphasizes the continuity in both the "Directive for administering the prefectures" and "The school system" from the standpoint of the new government's policy to instill a national consciousness.

viii "*Iwakura Tomomi-kô jikki* (*The account of lord Iwakura Tomomi*)," middle volume, *Iwakura kyûseki hozonkai* (Iwakura Historical Preservation Assn.), 1906.

ix Sanjô Sanetomi, Letter of 20 August (*Kido takayoshi jûbunsho* (*Papers of Kido Takayoshi*), v. 4, Nihonshiseki Kyôkai, 1930).

x Tsuda Hideo, in the above cited work, evaluated the people's (民衆) local school movement as "a concrete expression of the citizens' (国民) consent to official education." It is noteworthy that Tsuda points to historical forces in the development of the schooling system, but we must await further research on this topic.

xi Fushida Shôzô, *Tennôsei kokka no shihai genri* (*Principles of rule in the emperor-system state*), (Miraisha, 1966) is a classic text that elucidates the characteristics of imperial authority and the logic of the Meiji government's authority. In addition, for a discussion of the enhancement of the emperor's authority, his travels, etc., see Irokawa Daikichi, *Kindaikokka no shuppatsu* (*The beginning of the modern state*), (*Nihon no rekishi* (*Japanese history*) 21, Chûô kôronsha, 1966) and Kano Masanao, *Shihonshugi keiseiki no chitsujo ishiki* (*Perceptions of social order in capitalism's formative period*), (prev cited) [in fn 1, Chikuma Shobô, 1969].

xii See Yasumaru Yoshio, prev cited [in fn 13, "Kinsei shisôshi ni okeru dôtoku to seiji to keizai" (Morality, politics, and economics in early modern intellectual history), *Nihonshi kenkyû* (*Studies in Japanese history*), No. 49]. My assessment of the people's thought in this work is fundamentally indebted to this work.

xiii Miura Meisuke, *Gokuchûki* (*Prison diary*), (prev cited, *Nihonshisô taikei* (*Survey of Japanese thought*) 58, *Minshû undô no shisô* (*Ideology of the people's movement*)).

xiv Maruyama Masao, "Fukuzawaniokeru 'jitsugaku' no tenkai" (The evolution of Fukuzawa's "practical science"), (prev cited) [in fn 30, *Tôyô bunka kenkyû*, No. 3].

xv Ôe Shinobu, *Meijikokka no seiritsu* (*Formation of the Meiji state*), Minerva Shobô, 1960.

xvi Ôhama Tetsuya, "Meiji jûnendai no nôson to jirikikôsei" (The farming communities in the decade of Meiji 10 and their self-reorganization) (*Nihon rekishi* (*Japanese history*), No. 246).

xvii Irokawa Daikichi, *Shinpen meijiseishinshi* (*A history of the Meiji spirit, new edition*), (prev cited) [in fn 3, Chûô Kôronsha, 1973], p. 351.

xviii Yamada Shôji, see "Seikanron • jiyûminkenron • bunmei kaikaron" (Korea annexation theory • freedom and people's rights theory • civilization and enlightenment movement theory (included in *Ronshû nihonrekishi* 10 *Jiyûminken* (*Collected essays in Japanese history 10 Freedom and people's Rights*), Yûseidô, 1973).

xix Yasumaru Yoshio, prev cited [in fn 13, "Kinseishisôshi ni okeru dôtoku to seiji to keizai" (morality, politics, and economics in the history of modern thought) (*Nihonshi kenkyû* (*Research in Japanese history*) v. 49 ], p. 275.

xx Emura Eiichi, in "Jiyûminken undô to minshû" (The freedom and people's rights movement and the people) (*Nihonminshû no rekishi* (*The history of the Japanese people*), vol. 6), stresses that, "The Maruyama sect and the People's Movement to Establish the National Diet were not contradictory. The Maruyama sect, which had won over the lower strata of the people, contained the hidden possibility of a logic that could unite it with the civil rights movement" (p. 130). However, the fact that there were those among its believers who supported the people's rights does not point immediately to the possibility of founder Maruyama's ideas; the total negation of Western civilization expressed in the claim that "Westernization is the downfall of the people" and the attempted "subsumption" even of Westerners in the teachings of the Maruyama sect are not contradictory things. Emura unexpectedly stipulates that the riots of the Maruyama sect *Mi* group [trans. note: the *Mi* Group was founded by Tanigaoka Heishichirô of Shizuoka] had different aims than the people's right's movement (p. 184), but the *Mi* Group riots also exhibited the essence of the Maruyama sect. Nevertheless, we have to note the enormous difference here between the tendency to evaluate the people's rights movement as having subsumed the worldview of the lower strata or to have merged with it, and the tendency to evaluate the two as being essentially different. This is certainly an issue that requires further investigation.

xxi One point of view for evaluating the Luddites is an emphasis on the character of the working class. But I view the character of the small producers as fundamental; in addition, I believe that a decisive difference with the Boxers is that while it is true the Taiping Rebellion was aware of the great Western powers, it did not assume that the Great Powers were the enemy. Further research on these points is greatly anticipated. Also, in the so-called world renewal uprisings and the anti-new government uprisings of the Bakumatsu and Meiji Restoration periods, the same class character was at the core of the uprisings; but we must emphasize the difference in their objectives and tactics, and especially in their states of consciousness. Above all else, this is because in the case of the latter, at least from the point of the view of the people, the opposition between the Western world (文明世界) and the world of the people (民衆世界) was the central problem. Identifying a continuity with the Chichibu Incident is nothing more than an insight gleaned from that perspective.

xxii Yasumaru Yoshio, prev cited, p. 279.

xxiii See Asao Naohiro, see "Sakokusei no seiritsu" (The establishment of the closed country policy) (*Kôza nihonshi* 4 *Bakuhansei shakai* (*Lecture on Japanese history 4: society in the bakuhan system*)).

xxiv Irokawa Daikichi's "Kindai nihon no kyôdôtai" (The community in modern Japan) (Tsurumi Kazuko, et al. ed., *Shisô no bôken* (*Adventures in thought*), Chikuma Shobô, 1974) presents an intriguing theory; he argues that the community of the natural village and the administrative village must be distinguished and that the natural village community must be reassessed, and he emphasizes the "principle of equality, principle of collectivity, meritocracy, the principle of self-defense, and so on" (p. 242) of the natural village community. As a critique of the understanding of community that Maruyama Masao and others have, I believe these claims possess a certain validity; but on the point in question here, I take issue with the notion of establishing the village as having its own self-contained character. Although the early modern village community must certainly have maintained the fantasy of having its own self-contained community, we must ask if it was always premised upon obligating itself to power, and a fantasy of the indispensability of social outcasts as mediators. Perhaps the principle of equality is also based upon such a limitation; again, we must clearly distinguish between how equality actually functions and how we wish that it did.