

LIBERAL DEMOCRACY IN JAPAN: THE ROLE OF INTELLECTUALS*

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I. *Introduction: Three Ideologies*

The political role intellectuals play in society is open to analysis from a number of directions, ranging from a case study of the role one intellectual played in a particular time and place, on the one hand, to a statistical correlation of intellectuals across time and space, on the other. Although models or theories of intellectual behaviour derived from such statistical correlations can open up new lines of research on the political role intellectuals do play, their direct application to the study of Japanese intellectuals is not particularly fruitful, because these models are mainly based upon data and analyses of European or North American intellectuals. Japan's history and political development are entirely different from the West; so, too, the role of the intellectual. This will become clear as we examine the influence of "Liberal intellectuals" in Japanese politics (A. Gagnon, 1987).

There are two reasons for focussing on liberal intellectuals. The first relates to the central role liberal intellectuals and liberalism have played in postwar Japan. The second relates to the paucity of information on the subject.

In regard to the first point: from the Meiji Restoration of 1868 to the present day, the bearers of three ideological perspectives have dominated the Japanese intellectual scene: right-wing conservatives or traditionalists; liberal intellectuals; and left-wing or socialist intellectuals. From the beginning of the Meiji Era onwards the right-wing conservatives or traditionalists have devoted themselves to preserving Japanese tradition and culture, staunchly opposing the introduction of western values. The pre-war Emperor system, as the pinnacle of Japan's indigenous religious, cultural and political system, crystallized this ideological perspective (S. Matsumoto, 1969; S. Fujita, 1947). In this system the Emperor became the father, and the masses the children (*sekishi*), of the Japanese nation. The people were required to behave as the loyal subjects of the Emperor until the defeat of 1945.

The mystification of the Emperor system was further symbolized by Articles 1 and 4 of the 1889 Constitution:

The Empire of Japan shall be reigned over and governed by a line of Emperors unbroken for ages eternal. (Article 1)

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The Emperor is sacred and inviolable. (Article 4)

The unassailable position of the Emperor meant right-wing conservative ideology could enjoy virtual hegemony in the authoritarian Japan of pre-war and war-time days, despite occasional restrictions by the government. This can be seen in the government's reaction to the Young Turks who, with the backing of right-wing intellectuals, attempted a military Putsch on 15 May 1932. The one time national socialist Kita Ikki, now turned radical right-wing intellectual, met his death by hanging in 1937 because of his political commitment as evidenced in the 26 February 1936 revolt (G. Wilson, 1969).

The government's occasional outbursts against the excesses of the Right are in marked contrast to the relentless oppression of those few intellectuals and labor leaders who championed socialist and communist ideas. Above all else, this reaction was directed against socialist ideology as such, for socialism denied the Emperor's sovereignty. This automatically meant the denial of Japanese identity, which in turn meant high treason. Such being the case, left-wing intellectuals either remained silent in prison, or accepted right-wing ideology through "thought conversion" (*tenko*). It was not until 1945, when the occupation forces ordered the release of political prisoners, that left-wing intellectuals were able to freely discuss their ideas in Japan (N. Bamba and J. Howes, 1978; G. Beckman and G. Okubo, 1969).

Liberalism fell between these two poles: it was denied the authoritarian regime's patronage, yet was not so severely suppressed as socialism, except at the height of fascism, when the two were regarded as equally dangerous (R. Mitchell, 1976). The Japanese masses, too, were unreceptive to the ideas of liberal or left-wing intellectuals. For the struggle for everyday existence in the 1930s and 1940s made the people a source of anti-intellectualism (R. Smethurst, 1974; B.A. Shillony, 1981). With the defeat in war, however, liberalism replaced conservatism at the center of the ideological spectrum. Such a drastic change was made possible by external intervention in Japanese politics: the defeat of the authoritarian regime by the Allied Powers (M. Maruyama, 1963).

Thus, in the postwar period, not only most of the intellectuals but the people, too, came to regard "liberal democracy" as the most desirable political option. Government leaders have had to respect this fact (K. Tsurumi, 1970). Obviously, such popular and intellectual orientation does not spell the death of conservatism for under the new 1947 constitution freedom of speech is guaranteed. However, the center of the political spectrum is now occupied by liberalism.

The second reason for taking up liberal intellectuals is simply the paucity of research. True, some attention has been paid to the role of liberals in the last decade (T. Takemoto, 1979; S. Tsurumi, 1982), but this hardly matches the years of work on the right-wing (eg. R. Storry, 1957; M. Peattie, 1975; W. Fletcher, 1982), or on the left-wing (eg. G. Bernstein, 1978). In other words, in spite of the hegemony of liberalism in the postwar era, students of Japanese politics have not paid sufficient attention to the role liberal intellectuals have played in the development of politics in the postwar era. Of course, from an analytical point of view, in order to identify the role of intellectuals in Japan's political development the conservative, liberal, or socialist perspective can be adopted, but here we will concentrate solely on the liberal.

Thus, the important role played by liberal intellectuals in postwar Japan, the ideological hegemony of liberalism since 1945, and the dearth of scholarly analyses of this phenomenon

justify the choice of liberal intellectuals as the subject of this paper.

II. *Japanese Politics and the Intellectual Climate*

In what way does Japan's political development differ from other industrially advanced countries? Two historical factors are particularly important.

First, Japan's modern political development has been non-incremental, unlike that of the west. In the face of overwhelming external pressure, the Japanese have twice been forced to change the ruling ideology and political system: the Meiji Restoration of 1868 and the collapse of militarism in 1945. These changes were akin to a political Copernican revolution: up to 1868, power was distributed according to feudal tradition; from 1868 to 1945, authoritarian rule was instituted; and from 1945 to the present, democracy has slowly taken root. True, Japan's political culture has been forced to accommodate these radical changes, but it would be wrong to think this occurred incrementally. Rather, each new regime has tried to create new ideologies and institutions, thereby legitimizing the new regime at the same time as it denies the old. What made these Copernican changes possible was thus not incremental changes in the nature of Japanese political culture, but "external pressures." In this sense, the transformations in political structure to occur in the course of Japan's political development are entirely different from those of most western nations.

Second, depending upon the nature of the political regime—feudal, authoritarian, democratic—the intellectual climate has differed, too. Thus, under Tokugawa rule (1603–1867) the study of western ideas or technologies was formally prohibited. The only opportunity for Japanese scholars to study western learning was through the Dutch, who were allowed to keep a commercial mission on Dejima island, Nagasaki. Accordingly, the main intellectual framework in the Tokugawa period was dominated by indigenous traditions and Confucianism (R. Bellah, 1957).

On abandoning the Sakoku policy of isolationism and exclusionism in 1868, the new Meiji government placed priority on two national goals: the establishment of a modern society and the protection of Japanese territory from western imperialism, as symbolized by the slogan "Fukoku Kyohei" (rich country, strong army). It is not surprising that Japanese elites feared colonization by the western powers, for two powerful Asian nations, India and China, were about to lose their national pride and sovereignty. This meant the task of modernizing Japan was both urgent and essential.

The strategy pursued was two-pronged: retention of the traditional value system, on the one hand, and the introduction of western technology, on the other, as in the phrase "Wakon Yosai" (Japanese spirit, western learning). In contrast to the Tokugawa period, therefore, foreign experts were welcomed to Japan, and the government accepted their recommendations and suggestions on building a modern industrial infrastructure. This was nonetheless not so in the case of western ideas, particularly the notion of democracy, which did not fare so well, except in the early years of Meiji (1870s). Instead of Anglo-American liberalism, the new Meiji leaders took the authoritarian Prussian state as their model. This suggests how the lopsided introduction of western technology and ideas was characteristic of Japan's modernization process.

Unlike in later years, the 1870s witnessed the spirit of enlightenment and western liber-

alism take brief hold among both intellectuals and government leaders. Yukichi Fukuzawa captures the spirit of the age with his works *Seiyo Jijo* (An Introduction to the West) and *Bunmei no Gairyaku* (An Introduction to Western Civilization). These books, which criticized the feudal traditions of the Tokugawa regime and people, became extremely popular. Other intellectuals also played a role in introducing liberal thought: Hiroyuki Kato introduced the idea of social contract theory through his discussions of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean Jacques Rousseau, and Masanao Nakamura introduced John Stuart Mill's ideas through his translation of *On Liberty* (H. Tanaka, 1966 and 1977).

But the dark clouds of repression had gathered by the early 1880s. Prominent intellectuals, influenced by the ideas of western liberalism and democracy, joined the parliamentary opposition in demanding democratic reforms such as an elected parliament and universal enfranchisement. The ruling elite was not prepared to bow to these pressures from below, being solely concerned with the needs of governing and diplomacy. Thus, the government cracked down on demands for democratic reform, as called for by the people's Rights Movement (*Minken Undo*), and pursued the strengthening of the Meiji state along the lines of Prussian state-oriented political thought, which found support among government leaders and conservative intellectuals alike (R. Bowen, 1980).

Elements of authoritarian rule were firmly entrenched in the Meiji Constitution of 1889. It was Hirobumi Ito who drafted this constitution by carefully following the Prussian constitution of the time. The Constitution provided the government with several ways to give the state and the Emperor precedence over human rights and democracy. For instance, the Institution of education and compulsory military service made the Japanese uncritical followers of militarism. The armed forces were easily able to control both political and military decisions for neither the parliament nor the cabinet was responsible for the military. The Emperor was supposed to control the military, but he failed to check its activities, as evidenced by the rise of militarism in the 1930s.

The demands for democracy, though hushed, did not die out but revived, especially from the early 1910s to the mid 1920s, when a new movement for democracy, known as Taisho Democracy (after the Taisho Era, 1912–1925), emerged. This was a widespread movement involving not only workers and peasants but also intellectuals, who demanded the democratization of Japanese politics. The government was in fact prepared to accommodate such requests. Several eminent professors, such as Tatsukichi Minobe, Sakuzo Yoshino, Ikuo Oyama, Hajime Kawakami and a prominent journalist, Nyozezan Hasegawa, were very active and influential in this period. Taisho Democracy was short lived, however: by 1932 the civilian cabinet was replaced by military leaders, and the movement for democracy and social reform was suppressed (B. Silberman and H.D. Hatoorunian, 1974).

Even during Taisho Democracy, freedom of speech, freedom of thought, academic freedom, and autonomy of universities were denied to intellectuals or university professors. In fact, any professor who dared to criticize "the Emperor system," "the state," or "capitalism," even in a scholarly way, was usually purged from his university, as in the celebrated case of Professor Tatsukichi Minobe of Tokyo University, who used the organic theory of the state to explain the Emperor's position. Since pre-war Japanese politics was authoritarian and conservative, there was no room to accommodate academic criticism of the government. Social scientists in particular found it difficult to engage in "scientific" analyses of social problems.

It was the new constitution that finally granted academic freedom to Japanese intellectuals. Thenceforth, for the very first time in Japanese history, intellectuals have been able to study their respective subjects without any government regulation or censorship. In short, the intellectual climate in Japan today is entirely different from that of the pre-1945 era.

Nevertheless, it is at the same time necessary to mention a central characteristic of Japanese higher education in order to emphasize the dynamic nature of Japan's modernization. To wit: although in the pre-war era authoritarian principles were the order of the day, elite recruitment was in fact open and flexible. In other words, so long as a student could prove his ability, he had a chance to join the elite. The two most prestigious universities in Japan, Tokyo University and Kyoto University, were thus not the sole preserve of the elite, for able but poor students were able to enter their gates, which was the easiest way to become socially mobile upwards. This was particularly true up to 1945, as less than three percent of high school graduates entered university (R. Spaulding, 1967).

III. *Liberal Intellectuals and Postwar Politics*

The role liberal intellectuals have played in the postwar period has remained basically the same, but domestic and international factors have influenced the focus of their attention. With a little bit of pushing and squeezing, their activities can be considered in terms of three periods: 1945–1950, 1950–1960, 1960–present.

1. *1945–1960: Years of Drastic Reform*

On August 15, 1945 Japan finally surrendered and the General Headquarters of the Allied Powers (GHQ) took on final responsibility for this nation. Formally, Japan was under the control of the Allied Powers, but practically it was the United States, particularly the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, General Douglas MacArthur, and his staff, that virtually monopolized decisions at GHQ, with the United Kingdom, China and the USSR in fact excluded from the decision-making process. In contrast to Germany, therefore, MacArthur's GHQ was almost identical to the U.S. government.

MacArthur knew that the complete destruction of militarism, feudalism and nationalism, as pursued by the previous regime, was essential in order to make Japan a peaceful democracy: hence his call for demilitarization and democratization. The concrete reforms he asked the Government of Japan to implement included, among other things, an October 4, 1945 order permitting the people to discuss politics and government freely, a demand to repeal several laws that severely restricted freedom of speech and political activity, and the release of political prisoners, including communists. A week after his first order, additional reforms were suggested: women's franchise, encouragement of liberal education, economic reforms, and so forth (H. Passin, 1968; E. Takemae, 1983).

The Allied Powers could best consolidate the principles of democracy in a new constitution. The status of the Emperor was a stumbling block to political reform, for the sovereignty of the Emperor, as stipulated in the Meiji Constitution, had to be replaced by the sovereignty of the Japanese people. The Shidehara Cabinet (1945–46) was nonetheless reluctant to acquiesce in a change of the Emperor's status: popular sovereignty was, in this

sense, nothing more than an alternative proposed by GHQ. The proposal the government put forward for a new constitution was very similar to the ones made by the two conservative parties as they, too, allowed the Emperor to retain his political privileges. Even the socialist party's proposal was unclear on popular sovereignty. This was not the case with a number of intellectuals, who clearly saw the need for popular sovereignty. Liberal intellectuals were thus able to enjoy the support of the occupation forces, both politically and intellectually, for GHQ, which realized any Japanese government proposal for a new constitution would be too conservative and undemocratic, put forward a constitutional draft quite similar in terms of democratic principles to the draft of the liberal intellectuals, and this draft was basically accepted as the new constitution of 1947.

It goes without saying that the 1947 constitution was a radical departure from the authoritarian Meiji Constitution. Most significantly, the new constitution enshrined three fundamental principles pursued by liberal intellectuals from the Meiji period onwards: popular sovereignty, pacifism, and human rights. The preamble of the Constitution proclaimed Japan's new political identity:

We, the Japanese people, acting through our duly elected representatives in the National Diet, determined that we shall secure for ourselves and our posterity the fruits of peaceful cooperation with all nations and the blessings of liberty throughout this land, and resolved that never again shall we be visited with the horrors of war through the action of government, do proclaim that sovereign power resides with the people and do firmly establish this Constitution.

Like the British monarchy, the Japanese Emperor became the "symbol of the state and of the unity of the people" (Article 1), and was no longer the ruler of the Japanese polity. It is pertinent at this juncture to enquire as to why GHQ did not abolish the Japanese Crown. The most convincing explanation is that, by making the Emperor the symbol of the Japanese state, the Allied Powers were able to carry out democratic reforms without fear of a backlash from Japanese conservatives and traditionalists, who staunchly opposed the elimination of the Crown (D. Henderson, 1968; K. Takayanagi, 1972). In short, making the emperor a symbol was a political expedient.

Article 9 was a radical departure from Japan's militarist tradition: "the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as a means of settling international disputes." The second paragraph of Article 9 goes even further, preventing the possession of armed forces. Despite this radical departure from the past, the Japanese people were receptive to the pacifism enshrined in the new constitution, for they had learned the formidable costs of war, both abroad and at home: Japan's invasion and destruction of China, Korea, and South East Asia, on the one hand, and the tragedies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, on the other (N. Kobayashi, 1982).

The above political reforms were accompanied by social and economic reforms, three in particular being important: destruction of the *zaibatsu* (business combines), land reform, and liberalization of the labor movement (Institute of Social Sciences, Tokyo University, 1974-75). In addition, GHQ purged from public office those responsible for the war. Thus, about four thousand leaders lost their influence.

What was the role of intellectuals at this stage? The new constitution granted academic freedom and freedom of speech to all Japanese, and many liberals took advantage of this new-found freedom to express their views on democracy. Needless to say, they welcomed

the political and social reforms initiated by GHQ, and even the Communist Party identified the occupation forces as "liberators."

Why were such drastic reforms possible? The external pressure from the Allied Powers was the prime reason although the majority of Japanese were tired of the war and ready to accept reform as a matter of course. Intellectuals positively supported the reconstruction of Japan initiated by the Allied Powers.

2. 1950–1960: *Years of Domestic and International Crises*

Starting in the late 1940s, and increasingly during the 1950s, the U.S. government pressured Japan into joining an anti-communist front in the Asia-Pacific region. President Truman's new cold-war policy of 1947, the communist victory in China in 1949, and the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, signalled the start of a crisis between East and West. In this new international climate Japan could best contribute to U.S. goals by stabilizing politics at home and supporting U.S. policy abroad as a member of an anti-communist alliance. Thus, the maintenance of stability and authority, not democracy, came to characterize American policy towards Japan.

The labor movement, once encouraged by GHQ, came to be regarded as an enemy. GHQ purged communists and communist sympathizers from the government, schools, enterprises, and the mass media. This 1950 purge, which affected nearly 600,000 left-wing activists and intellectuals, was in stark contrast to the 1946 purge launched to eliminate nationalist leaders. In fact, as in the case of Nobusuke Kishi, a prominent war criminal, the once deposed nationalistic and military leaders were now reinstated. Indeed, after his amnesty in 1948, Kishi went on to become Prime Minister (1957–1960).

By clearly indicating its willingness to cooperate with "conservative" or "traditional" Japanese leaders, GHQ closed the door on the implicit yet close alliance enjoyed by liberal intellectuals during the early years of the occupation. Hence followed the liberals' virulent criticism of both the American and Japanese governments, particularly in regard to three issues: the peace treaty, the Constitution, and the security treaty with the U.S.

First, the Japanese government intended to sign the peace treaty, despite criticism from the Eastern-bloc countries. For the U.S. government, which placed priority on the creation of an anti-communist front in the Far East, formally ending the war between Japan and the other western and non-communist Asian countries was top priority. The peace treaty would, in this sense, recognize and legitimate Japan's membership in the new anti-communist alliance being solidified by the United States.

Many intellectuals opposed this view: for them, the pacifistic principles of the new constitution implied the government should establish peaceful relations with both the East and the West. In other words, a treaty failing to include the socialist countries was not worth signing, for it denied the pacifistic principles of the Constitution, which could only be maintained by avoiding membership in America's anti-communist alliance. Shigeru Nambara, a noted political scientist and former president of Tokyo University, was typical of the liberal intellectuals who opposed the Yoshida Cabinet's plan to sign the peace treaty. But Yoshida greeted the liberal's concern with nothing but scorn: to Yoshida, Nambara was simply a quasi-scholar in search of fame.

In September 1951, Prime Minister Yoshida, together with a few other political leaders,

decided to ratify the Treaty of Peace (San Francisco Peace Treaty), which would bring to an end the State of War between Japan and forty-eight western and non-communist Asian countries. At the same time that Yoshida signed the treaty, thereby regaining Japan's formal sovereignty, he also signed the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, unbeknown to not only the public, but also to the ruling party.

The second issue revolved around the question of revising the Constitution. Prime Minister Yoshida, who placed emphasis on quickly regaining Japanese sovereignty at the time of the peace treaty, thereafter gave priority to economic growth: his plan for reconstruction called for the U.S.'s military protection of Japan while his government kept defense spending to a minimum. Still, the demands of the U.S.-Japanese alliance, as symbolized by the Peace Treaty and the security treaty, called for the repeal of Article 9 of the Constitution, which was an impediment to remilitarization. As it is, the ruling party was able to establish the Self Defense Forces by interpreting the constitutional provision broadly, rather than revising it.

Thus, the government tried to legitimate its decision by suggesting that Japan's Self Defense Forces were not armed forces in the sense meant by the Constitution; hence the Constitutional principle was not violated by the creation of the SDF. In 1956, under the leadership of Prime Minister Ichiro Hatoyama, the Commission on the Constitution (1957-64) was established in order to discuss the possibility of constitutional amendment, particularly the removal of Article 9 (J. Maki, 1980). Taking advantage of his premiership Kishi, too, tried to push through revision of the Constitution: a draft presented during his administration called for reestablishment of the Emperor's sovereignty and strong military power.

The counter-moves of liberal intellectuals are well illustrated by the creation of the Constitution Study Association in 1957. This group united a number of influential Tokyo University professors in a common stance against the Kishi Cabinet. In this way, the Constitution, particularly its pacifistic principle, became the most controversial issue in Japan in the late 1950s.

The third issue was the renewal of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty in 1960. Under the provisions of the original treaty signed in 1951, the treaty could be renewed after the end of its ten-year period, as intended by the government. In anticipation of popular opposition to renewal, Prime Minister Kishi introduced a bill into the Diet in 1958 aimed at giving the police a free hand in detaining "anti-government" elements, and restricting the political activities of the opposition, though he was forced to withdraw it due to protest from liberal intellectuals, the trade unions and the parliamentary opposition.

The call to oppose the treaty was not warmly welcomed on the mass level, however, for the majority of people, though opposed to rearmament, also recognized the necessity of the security treaty, given the threat from communism in the Far East. It was not until the Kishi Cabinet took advantage of the absence of the opposition from the Diet on May 19, 1960 to ram the security bill through parliament that the Japanese people, not only intellectuals, trade unions, mass media, and political parties, began to protest the government's decision. This popular opposition was a result of the people's understanding that the ruling party's behaviour was unacceptable and that democracy was in danger. So it was that even the conservative masses came to participate in the protest movement, believing that the Kishi government had violated the principle of democracy. In June, 1960 the largest demonstra-

tions in Japanese history took place in almost every corner of Japan (on June 4, 5.6 million, and on June 15, 5.8 million were said to have participated in these demonstrations). The prime minister was forced to step down from office, but the security treaty was renewed.

The 1960s saw the out and out politicization of domestic and foreign policies. American policy in the region completely transformed the role of liberal intellectuals in Japan: once the promoter of liberal democracy and pacifism, the U.S. was now the supporter of conservative politics and rearmament. Dissatisfied with such a drastic change, the liberal intellectuals played a role as critic, both of the Japanese and American governments, as seen in the contrastive stands the two sides took towards the peace treaty, constitutional amendment, and revision of the security treaty.

3. 1960–1985: *Toward Economic Development*

The ruling Liberal Democratic Party, keenly aware of the growing chasm between the masses and liberal intellectuals, on the one hand, and the conservative elite, on the other, began to adopt a more accommodative posture in the wake of Kishi's downfall. The new prime minister, Hayato Ikeda, symbolized this new style of governing by "tolerance and patience," "accommodation," and an "income-doubling policy," in marked contrast to the governing philosophy of previous regimes. Naturally, this did not mean the end to political conflicts; rather, the LDP placed emphasis on economic prosperity. This led to a transformation of Japanese politics. Democratic institutions, such as parliament and political parties, were of course well established at this time, so the masses began to take democracy for granted: as the framework of liberal democracy was believed to be incorporated into Japanese politics, the goal was to pursue other political and economic values characteristic of a democratic society.

This shift was so confirmed by the establishment of the two-party system. In 1955 the conservative party, on the one hand, and the socialist party, on the other, united the fragmented conservative and socialist forces into two main parties. Of course, in comparison with the frequent changes of governing party in the United States and the United Kingdom, the Japanese party system is far from satisfactory, as indicated by the term "one-and-a-half party system," but the situation created by the establishment of the "1955 system" is far better than pre-war days.

The political stability and economic prosperity achieved under the Liberal Democratic Party did not always produce positive results, as suggested by the occasional scandal to rock the "tripartite coalition" of LDP politicians, business elites, and bureaucrats. In fact, as seen in the scandals during the Sato administration (1964–1972) and the Tanaka administration (1972–1974), virtually no administration was free from political corruption. The role of the liberal intellectuals in this situation was to constantly criticize the government; however, as in the western democracies, student revolts, environmental-protection movements, consumer rights and popular participation have attracted the intellectuals' concern, diversifying their role. Interestingly enough, even liberal intellectuals came in for sharp criticism from radical students, who took to heart the teachings of participatory democracy: to them, university professors of liberal persuasion were nothing but supporters of the status quo, for the radical student leaders preferred socialism to liberal democracy. In this sense, ideological fragmentation was predictable.

Becoming a growing economic power was not without its costs: in particular, the ruling political and business elite were slow to try to stay the negative hand of pollution. The liberal intellectuals thus turned their attention from national politics to local politics, taking up issues related to environmental degradation and the protection of consumer rights. Some intellectuals even entered politics, as did Ryokichi Minobe, a former professor of Tokyo University of Education, Ryoichi Kuroda, a former professor of Osaka City University and Kazuji Nagasu, a former professor of Yokohama National University, who were elected respectively to be governors of Tokyo, Osaka and Kanagawa. This was a new trend, as Japanese intellectuals had traditionally respected the concept of the "Ivory Tower" and "critical detachment" (K. Steiner, et al., 1980).

IV. *Conclusion*

As should be clear from the comments made so far, the influence of liberal intellectuals on the political development of Japan has, with few exceptions, been as critics of political power rather than as direct participants in the decision-making process, although the degree of influence has varied with the period.

In the period between the Meiji Restoration and the end of World War II, intellectuals were faced with a difficult political and intellectual climate, for they could not exercise their influence as critics of the authoritarian regime. The ordinary Japanese people, for their part, swayed by the principles of authoritarian rule, were unable to hear the call of the liberal intellectuals: a fanatical belief in the Emperor as a living god took the place of rational thought. But there were faults on the side of liberal intellectuals, too: some, for instance, simply equated liberalism with franchise or laissez-faire economic liberalism. And from the Japanese liberal's point of view many western nations, despite their democratic structures, were simply set on expanding their colonial empires. Thus, some Japanese liberals could only support liberalism with qualification, for they were aware of the imperialistic nature of western liberalism.

In contrast, the role of intellectuals in the postwar era has become more visible and influential. The Japanese also learned something from their own experience. Those who spent their youth during the war years got to know the misery and hunger of war. Those who protested the renewal of the security treaty knew the importance of democratic values and institutions. The radical students of the 1970s grew sensitive to social issues.

From a comparative perspective, what conclusions can we draw from our inquiry? First, the liberal intellectuals did not positively legitimize the regime, except on two occasions: the early Meiji era and the early postwar years from 1945-1950. They remained as critics of the government, although the government was unreceptive to their criticisms. In the 1930s and 1940s right-wing ideology, not liberalism, enjoyed the support of the regime.

Second, the Japanese intellectual, irrespective of his ideological affiliation, has been markedly influenced by external factors, such as western colonialism, as in the case of the Meiji Restoration, and U.S. foreign policy, as in the case of the postwar era. While domestic political elements were not totally absent, it is powerful external factors which have shaken the course of Japanese politics and society. The lack of a western type "civic culture" endangered the Japanese experience with liberal values and ideas, although many Japanese

in the postwar era do give full support to the values of democracy and pacifism as enshrined in the 1947 constitution. Over the past century the liberal's strategy has been to eliminate traditional values and ideologies and legitimize western democratic principles. In this sense, there is a clear division between what might be called "indigenous traditional values," which are held by the conservatives, and "western universalistic values," as championed by liberal and left-wing intellectuals.

Third, it would be premature to immediately apply models and theories concerning the role of intellectuals in Japan. What students of Japanese politics need to do is to identify how the various ideological perspectives of right-wing conservatives, liberals, and left-wing socialists have exerted an influence on Japanese politics. The above two conclusions may justify our third: namely, only post-1960 Japanese politics might be comparable with that of the advanced western nations in terms of political institutions and political processes.

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