

Introduction

Reimagining Class and Labor in 2018

Japan

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This is the third issue of *Correspondence: Hitotsubashi Journal of Arts and Literature*, which was founded in 2016 and has been published annually since then. This issue could never have been completed without the following teachers and colleagues. I would like to thank Dr. Kevin Floyd, who graciously accepted our request to give a keynote speech for our journal events. He delivered a thought-provoking lecture titled “Feminized Labor in a Biotechnological Age” on September 23, 2017, and gave invaluable comments to the students who gave their presentations in a graduate school workshop held on September 20. Other than on these two occasions, we enjoyed many stimulating conversations with him. I would also like to thank Yoshinori Yamashita of Kent State University, without whose introduction of Dr. Floyd to us, we could never have had such a great experience. I would like to express my appreciation to Professor Asako Nakai, who always supported me in the organization of the events and the publication of the journal, and to Professor Shintaro Kono, who also continuously helped me prepare the events and whose scientific research fund allowed *Correspondence* to invite Dr. Floyd. My appreciation goes to Miwa Aoyama for the cover design. I am very grateful to Adrian Osbourne and Daniel Gerke of Swansea University, who meticulously proofread our essays as always. Special thanks to

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Houston Small for his careful proofreading of this introduction and the interview included in this volume, and to Jun Fukushima, who kindly introduced Houston to me. When I was organizing the events and editing this issue, I repeatedly remembered late Professor Reiichi Miura, who had strongly recommended Dr. Floyd's book to his students. I wondered how he would have reacted to Dr. Floyd's talk. I owe particular thanks to him.

The contributors to this volume do not necessarily share a particular approach or theoretical position, but, collected under the theme "Reimagining Class and Labor," their essays critically analyze literary representations by Okinawan and US writers and cast a new light on their subjects providing the reader with various clues for rethinking the following two categories: class and labor. Aya Sakima takes up Sueko Yoshida's short story *Love Suicide at Kamaara* (1984), in which the female protagonist Kiyō, a 58-year-old sex worker living in Koza, Okinawa finally decides to kill herself with her lover Sammy, a young fugitive US soldier. Against the background of the inseparability of the US army occupation in Okinawa (1945-1972) and its policy on women's sexuality and of the subsequent Japanese economic-cultural control of the islands after the latter's "reversion" to the country in 1972, she reinterprets what Kiyō and her action allegorically represents: the former can be read as the declining town Koza and the stigmatized body of a fallen woman, and the latter can be read as "mass suicide" during the Pacific War. After revealing that her suicide with her lover at the end of the novel is *only* hinted at, Sakima claims that the Okinawan people's "will to live together"—this phrase derives from the islands' thinker Keitoku Okamoto (1934-2006)—, which has been distorted by external conditions and negatively realized as "mass suicide" or the "reversion," can be turned into a resistance force against the US-Japan domination. And it is our duty to recuperate and inherit such Okinawan thought, she concludes. Ryosuke Yamazaki

reinterprets how women's labor in the US of the 1920s is portrayed in the novel *Yonnondio: From the Thirties* written by the North American writer Tillie Olsen during the 1930s but published in 1974. Focusing on the female characters who are forced to engage in reproductive labor for men, Yamazaki examines how the writer represents the process in which the women's labor is naturalized as non-work. If the capitalist mode of production in the US at the time needed to make such female unwaged work invisible, Olsen's novel, which tried to visualize women's labor, would have intervened into the smooth operation of capital. Yamazaki further connects this criticality in the novel's content with its form and reveals that the form, which is different from the typical proletarian aesthetics at that time, enables an alternative political possibility.

Almost in the same period when Olsen's novel aimed at alternative politics, the North American writer John Dos Passos also sought a type of politics different than the Communist Party politics. Comparing his text included in *Harlan Miners Speak: Report on Terrorism in the Kentucky Coal Fields* (1932) with his subsequent writings, Hiromi Ochi's essay clarifies how his shifting vision of politics corresponds to the change of his style and aesthetics. She interprets this transition as the response to his visit to the coalmine and miners in Harlan County, Kentucky in 1931. The county is located in Appalachia, the cultural region which had been repeatedly evoked as the "other" of the US economic and cultural prosperity and depicted stereotypically from the mid-nineteenth century to the time when the nation faced the Depression. Ochi argues that Dos Passos had to change his aesthetics and political stance from collectivist, party-based politics to individualist politics when he attempted to represent the workers in a non-stereotypical way. In contrast to the other contributors, Kohei Aoki pays attention to the *non*-representation of labor in two cultural works in the US of the early 1990s: David Lynch's TV series *Twin*

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Peaks (1990-1991/2017) and Jeffrey Eugenides' novel *The Virgin Suicides* (1993). Situating these works in the decade's anti-Marxist intellectual atmosphere, he interprets the disappearance of workers and the sudden appearance of ecological themes in the two works as the expression of the time. The interview with Dr. Kevin Floyd was conducted on September 22, 2017 during his stay in Tokyo between September 19 and 27. Since we, some members of *Correspondence*, found it difficult to say that his book *The Reification of Desire: Toward a Queer Marxism* (2009), which explored the convergences between queer theory and Marxism, was widely read in this country, we wanted the interview to reveal his intentions and motivation in writing the book in the academic context of the time. However, beyond this topic, our conversation extended to his next project and to the question of how Marxism, queer studies, and feminism can be taught in university.

The following part is my provisional analysis of the two incidents that happened in Hitotsubashi University in the past three years. Here, I tried to historicize the incidents in the constellation of neoliberal reforms, massive militarization, and university reform, all of which have been driven and intensified by the accumulation process of global capital. I hope that this will illuminate how class is intricately related to other categories such as sexuality, gender, or race in current material conditions.

At 6:00 p.m. on August 20, 2016, about 50 people gathered in front of the west gate of Hitotsubashi University in Kunitachi, Tokyo, in order to mourn the university's law school student who fell to his death from the faculty building.¹ It was actually on August 24, 2015, that is, one year before the mourning rally that he had died, but the fact was concealed by the university administration until then. It was not until the Internet media reported in early August 2016 that the bereaved family sued Hitotsubashi University and one of his classmates that

most students, teachers, and staffs of the university learned of the incident. The deceased male student was gay, and in April 2015 he told one of his closest friends of the same graduate school that he loved him. For him, telling his friend was at the same time coming out since he had never told anybody in the faculty that he was gay. At that moment, the friend told him he could not be his lover but would remain his friend. Yet, two months later, he suddenly disclosed the student's sexuality to several friends on a SNS service (LINE) by sending a message that said "I cannot keep the fact that you are gay from everybody anymore" (but in fact, he already told one of his male classmates right after the student's confession). Shocked by his classmate's action, the student became depressed and start having panic attacks when he saw him in school life (in the School of Law program, students often have to attend the same classes). He asked a professor of the faculty for help so that he could be absent from school or move to another class that his classmate who outed him did not attend, and he also went to the university's harassment consultation office. However, neither the professor nor the staff were able to deal with him properly. They did not encourage him to escape from the immediate situation if only temporarily. Far from giving advice to help the student avoid psychological and physical risks, the professor told him that "I hope a person like you who has suffered a lot will become a lawyer." The staff of the harassment consultation office deemed the student to be suffering from his sexual identity, not from sexual harassment by his classmate, and recommended him to go to a clinic that specialized in gender identity disorder. After his death, the bereaved family requested the university to reveal the medical record of the harassment consultation office and health center, but the university at first refused the request (though eventually they could not help revealing the records) and did not show any gesture to investigate how this tragedy happened or to prevent similar cases. Consequently, the bereaved

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family filed a lawsuit against the university for its dishonest response and lack of adequate and proper knowledge about homosexuality or harassment and against the classmate for his actions. In the trial, the university side, referring to the statistics that gay men's suicide rate is higher than that of heterosexual males, claimed that the student killed himself *because he was gay* (here, homosexual males are made into an Other), and maintained that students of the law school were well educated and all elites, so the university did not have to take any measure to spread knowledge about homosexuality or sexual harassment in the future.² The university has never admitted the responsibility for this affair. In their view, the violence inflicted on the student was completely nonhistorical and individual.

About a half year after the mourning rally for the law school student, another, totally different problem occurred on the same campus.³ The executive committee of the KODAIRA Festival, which is a university festival organized by freshmen and sophomores, announced online that the novelist and screenwriter Naoki Hyakuta would make a speech at the festival in June 2017. He is a best-selling writer who repeatedly posts racist remarks on Twitter and is also a friend of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. He was scheduled to give a talk about the current situation of the Japanese mass media in Kanematsu Hall on June 10, 2017. The project itself was planned by the members of the KODAIRA Festival Executive Committee, but it was the university's administration (the Student Committee, whose chairman is Tsuyoshi Numagami, one of three Executive Vice Presidents) that finally accepted it. This means that the university allowed the festival's executive committee to use the famous hall that symbolizes Hitotsubashi University for the writer's lecture. In a study group with the members of the Liberal Democratic Party in June 2015, Hyakuta had once stated that the two newspapers of Okinawa, Ryuku Shimpo and Okinawa Times, should be shut down, so there was chance that

such aggressive slanders would have been uttered in his lecture on the mass media in Japan.⁴ From the latter half of April, various actors began to regard this lecture as a problem and took actions: Anti Racism Information Center (ARIC) began an online petition drive which requested that the festival's executive committee make an anti-discrimination rule regarding Hyakuta's lecture (ARIC collected over 10,000 signatures), and a group of Chinese exchange students and the Hitotsubashi Students' Volunteer Group (*Hitotsubashisei Yushi no Kai*) each held rallies calling on the festival's executive committee to cancel the lecture. Though members of ARIC and of the Hitotsubashi Students' Volunteer Group had a meeting with members of the committee on the issue, the latter adamantly tried to push through the plan—why they chose Hyakuta as a guest lecturer was for the economic reason of attracting a larger number of attendees. However, due to the rise of the protest movements, they had to change a security system on the lecture's day, which forced the festival's executive committee to cancel the speech: the decision was made on June 2. As in the case of the bereaved family of the deceased graduate student, the university has given no official opinion on this scandal and shown no intention to take measures to prevent similar cases in the future. Even worse, they had disavowed their responsibility long before the lecture's cancellation, claiming that they had to respect “students' self-government” (here “students” only refers to the members of the festival's executive committee). In addition to the protest movements mentioned above, even after the university administration received the request to cancel Hyakuta's lecture with signatures by about 60 teachers working at Hitotsubashi University, they did not intervene in the festival's executive committee and did nothing to protect international students or potentially vulnerable students, staffs, and teachers. Even though Hyakuta did not in the end make a (hate) speech at the KODAIRA Festival, the formal decision to invite such an inappropriate person who

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routinely posts racist tweets to a national university was itself culpable. The decision itself *was* a racist message and agitation (the catchphrase “What’s Wrong If I Say the Truth!?” on a standing signboard for advertising the writer’s speech on the campus suggested that he would talk about what was not “politically correct”) and actually destroyed the safe environment for study. “Self-government” in the true sense of the term means securing a safe environment for *all* of the students and teachers, so the university’s “respect” for the festival’s executive committee’s “self-government” was in reality a violation of it (and, as I will discuss below, recent university reform made self-government by the many who study and work on the campus virtually impossible). However, the university’s administration succeeded in pretending that they did not have any responsibility regarding this scandal.⁵ After the lecture’s cancellation, many of the students and teachers who participated in the protest movement moved to add a provision on racial discrimination, which is included but not detailed in the university’s harassment guidelines, but the university administration is very unlikely to accept the demand willingly.

The Developmental State Regime and its Crisis

These two violent affairs—and other countless, invisible problems that occur in the campus—did not happen in a purely contingent way but were historically prepared by the process of Japanese neoliberal reforms and accompanying university reforms, both of which have been accelerated since the 1990s. Unlike in the European countries and the US in which the welfare state was the main target of neoliberal reforms begun in the late 1970s, it was the developmental state regime that neoliberal reformers began to attack in Japan from the 1990s. In contrast to Keynesianism, which aims to regulate the boom-and-bust cycle, this regime’s primary goal is an economic growth. For this aim, the state plans a big economic project and periodically intervenes in the

market in a systematic way in order to control and regulate it by means of a massive amount of public investments and subsidies or through a preferential tax system, administrative guidance, and the provision of information to companies (Goto, *Han* 138). In the postwar period, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which became the leading party, took the long-term administration and gradually formed an interlocking relationship with the bureaucracy, resulting in the powerful decision making machinery that steered the developmental state from the 1950s to the early 1990s. During the period, the government conducted mass society integration in two ways. “Mass society integration” refers to the process in which the living standard of workers is improved and their demands are met to a certain extent so that most of citizens do not have a strong opposition toward capitalism (118). On the one hand, the LDP integrated people working for large corporations and their families into this developmental state regime by supporting directly or indirectly companies’ commercial activities: about 10-13 million men had full-time employment, so, including their family members, the people included in this regime amounted to 50 million. On the other hand, the LDP’s policy also attracted other citizens such as farmers, the self-employed, and owners and workers in small businesses by supporting regional and small industries through public works projects and agricultural protection. Since the Japanese economy was growing from the 1950s to the early 1990s, the LDP was able to produce a wider range of support layers with these policies.

Michio Goto defines “corporationist integration” (*Kigyo Syugi Togo*) as the way large companies, supported by the developmental state in a direct and indirect way, structure workers to the labor market through the Japanese style of employment characterized by lifetime employment and seniority wages.⁶ In the process of corporationist integration, this style of employment unique to Japan plays a crucial role. In a sharp contrast with the European countries and the US in

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which workers get hired based on their skills, Japanese companies employ men as fulltime workers not based on their skills but on their personalities and educational record (most women were, and many women are, excluded from the Japanese style of employment). Since their wages increase according to the length of their service and changing their workplace will lower their salary, it is normal for them to work longer in the same company. After they are hired, employers make workers accept and internalize the logic of competition, in which a worker should think that he cannot earn a means of living without winning a battle with rival companies and with other workers within his company. Since changing jobs was not easy, this competition with other companies and with other workers became harsh. What is important in this process of corporationist integration is the fact that workers get social welfare not from the state directly but from the company they work for, though the state assists corporations in various ways. The state's indirect provision of welfare also applies to citizens other than large company workers. Farmers and small businesses were supported mainly through the aid to the regional economy and agriculture. This is the point where the developmental state fundamentally differs from the welfare state. The way the state does not provide people with welfare in a direct way well matches the neoliberal ideology in which cutting public welfare is considered imperative. Furthermore, because of the above working conditions in which workers identified themselves with their corporations, worker's movement could not have much power. Since industrial unions were powerless in Japan, the central task of company unions was to request a wage increase on the assumption that their company would keep on developing. Because of this, the workers' movements in Japan were extremely weak in regulating competitions between workers and restricting companies' activity to protect workers. This weakness in labor unions triggered a working situation called the "dictatorship of

management” in the 1980s (Goto, *Sengo* 76, 191).

Though the Nakasone administration had already started neoliberal reforms from the mid-1980s, it was from the mid-1990s that the fundamental restructuring of the economic and political system was accelerated, and here the developmental state and corporationist integration came under attack. The latter appeared in the 1950s, consolidated in the 1960, and was maintained until the 1990s. The oil crisis in 1973 caused business slumps, but they endured this predicament by rationalization and elongating workers’ labor time so that the competitive capacities of Japanese companies in the 1980s did not decline. This was possible because labor unions had been defeated and dismantled in large part by the early 1970s, so, without confronting any substantial counterforce, large companies could make employees work overtime for many hours (which caused *Karoshi*, that is, death from overwork). These factors worked to postpone radical neoliberal reforms since an accumulation crisis had not surfaced in Japan in the 1980s unlike in European countries and the US (Goto, *Han* 85-88). However, as the bubble economy burst in 1991 and the recession became apparent by 1995, it was necessary to transform the developmental state regime into a different regime of accumulation. This means that lifetime employment and seniority wages secured for most of workers could not be sustained. Neoliberal reformers started to restructure the economic and political system and the society as a whole to support Japanese multinational corporations, which had already been moving their production bases to foreign countries in the 1980s (the Plaza Accord in 1985 prompted this process, triggering a disadvantageous import environment for the country due to the high value of the yen). To accomplish this aim, the government needed a centralized decision making mechanism in the realm of politics. Disguised as the reorganization of the “corrupted” LDP politics, a reorganization of the political world was first advocated by the right

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and the majority of the left, resulting in the introduction of an electoral system combining the single-seat constituency system with proportional representation, which enabled parties to centralize administrative power.⁷ Under the slogan “politician-led” politics, the Koizumi administration (2001-2006) transformed the former relatively decentralized LDP regime, which had protected local regions and small companies, into new centralized one, and enforced deregulation in the economic sphere and the privatization of the public sector. While the economy recovered due to reinforcement of large corporations’ competitive capacities, corporationist integration was falling apart and the deepening economic divide became apparent. Neoconservative ideology came to the fore as a remedy for this.

University Reform since the 1990s

Ryuji Sasaki argues that in the capitalist mode of production, the deprivation of the means of production does not automatically make people wage workers, but they also have to be disciplined to be subordinated to capital, and that school education functions as a disciplinary institution while cultivating people’s abilities in the workplace (170). Universities are not an exception to this. They have always offered the commodity of labor power to all sectors of society. During the period in which the corporationist order was stable, big business needed a large amount of standardized, good-quality labor power. Educational institutions were configured to meet this demand, and schools became a place to discipline students and to make them compete with each other for higher test scores (Goto, *Han* 75). However, large companies which were extending operations into the overseas market needed a different type of labor power than hitherto produced in the educational institutions in order to succeed in abroad. They came to need “spontaneous” and “creative” intellectual workers with a risk management ability and highly skilled technical experts on

the one hand, and employees engaged in precarious work in a domestic office on the other. Though the business communities such as Keidanren or Keizai Doyukai had already appealed to the necessity of university reform since the 1980s, it was amidst the mid-1990's recession that they came to recognize educational reform as imperative for Japanese companies to recover their competitive power. They wanted universities to support the departments of science in developing the cutting-edge scientific technology and to be transformed into training institutions for elites such as lawyers, consultants, and software experts (Watanabe, *Kozo* 294). For these reasons, they called on universities to place priority on graduate school education and presented some models for future universities such as the “university which support students to get professional job skills,” the university which provides synthetic general education, or the university which offers lifelong study in a regional community. In order for this reform to be realized, the deregulation of educational program—which was advocated as the “diversification” (*tayoka*) and “specialization” (*koseika*) of universities' curricula—and the centralization of the authority in a president were needed. The government tried to advance this move with the Deregulation of Universities Act in 1991, and they assumed that a president with strengthened authority would restructure his or her university according to these new models. However, in order to direct the reorganization of each university according to the will of the state and the business community, the government introduced a system of external evaluations, in which if a school were rated lowly, then their financial support from the state would decrease. Moreover, national universities were privatized, becoming “national university corporations” in 2004. With this change, the decision to cut each national university's subsidy from the government by 1% every year was also made. Because of this, a national university corporation had to present to the government every five years a medium-term goal and

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a plan for school management based on which the amount of the subsidy was settled. National universities were virtually forced to incessantly reorganize themselves in order to create distinct self-representation. The foundation of a law school in each (national and private) university was part of this process of “diversification” of universities. Large corporations that were moving their factories to foreign countries needed a lot of legal experts who could solve problems in contracts trouble or conflicts in an overseas workplace. As I will see how Hitotsubashi University’s administration addressed the business community’s requirement of the reorganization, the deceased law school student lived his school life in this historical condition.

Late Neoliberalism, or the Second Abe Cabinet

I will leave university reform temporarily and go back to the neoliberalization of Japanese society as a whole. After the stagnant period of neoliberal reforms (2006-2012), in which the growing economic divide and decline of countryside regions caused by deregulation and privatization were palpable and unignorable, the second Abe cabinet from the end of 2012—Osamu Watanabe calls this period “late neoliberalism”—has rapidly propelled the process of neoliberalization. Prime Minister Abe insists on the strength of the economy and relates it to the diplomatic success and to the defense capacity. While invoking the image of the economic growth from the postwar period to the 1980s in which the middle class expanded, his “strong economy” actually and exclusively refers to the prosperity of global corporations. The Abe Cabinet thinks that the nation as a whole can prosper by protecting above all the interests of these corporations that make Japan a “global competitive superpower” (“Abe” 14). For this reason, the Abe administration has been advancing further neoliberal reforms in order to create an even stronger support system for large global business. At the same time, it has also been promoting

massive militarization. Militarization is indispensable because military force is necessary for superpowers to secure and expand the world market order in which global corporations can operate. Militarization in Japan had already begun in the early 1990s since, after the collapse of the Cold War regime, the US government required Japan to play a certain role in securing the “new world order” with military force, and Japanese multinational corporations also asked its country for the protection of their activities and privileges by their own country’s military presence. Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution stipulates that the country outlaws war and has no army (though it has the Self-Defense Force, de facto armed forces) and people’s opposition to militarization was significantly strong because the government also opposed it until the 1990s. But the societal opinions in general were gradually shifting and neo-conservative politicians began to claim that Japan had to become a “normal country” with an army. However, dismantling the Article 9 regime was considered very dangerous by the dominant class because it was likely to destroy mass social integration. Therefore, even after the 1990s, militarization was not advanced as seriously as in the current situation. Yet, with the ultimate goal of nullifying Article 9 by changing the Constitution, the Abe administration, which has been consistently reinforcing the Japan-US alliance, has been enforcing neoliberalization and militarization simultaneously. It steamrolled the State Secrecy Law in 2013, the Japanese Military Legislation in 2015, and the Anti-Terror Conspiracy Law in 2017, all of which are related to Japan’s further militarization. Under the economic policy that places primacy on global corporations, the government has been breaking up the Japanese type of employment to a greater extent by eliminating the remaining practice of long-term employment and deregulating the temporary labor law and limits on labor time (Goto, “Abe” 274). Still, this does not mean that the Japanese type of employment is totally dismantled and some other

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types of labor markets (for example, employment strictly based on job skills) have been formed. Rather, Sasaki characterizes this situation as “the Japanese type of employment without lifetime employment and seniority wages,” in which workers employed in precarious conditions are exposed to the powerful chain of command in the workplace subjugating them to capital more and more (Sasaki 173, 175).

University Reform under Late Neoliberalism

Under the second Abe administration, university reforms, which were also at a halt for a while, have been enforced at new level so that the self-government of teachers and students is virtually nullified for the further privatization of higher education (on a global scale). According to Osamu Watanabe, education reform, especially university reform, occupies a primary position for the administration’s two goals, neoliberal reform and militarization. The Abe cabinet wants elementary and secondary education to both create a “nation with patriotic feelings that will strive for Japan’s superpower-ization” and to serve as a remedy for social disintegration as economic differences deepen. Moreover, as we have already seen, higher education is tasked with training elite workers who can contribute to global companies largely depends on higher education (“Abe” 139). For this goal, the Education Ministry created the National University Reform Plan in November 2013 which proposed the further centralization of the authority in the president (and vice president), the restructuring of education and research organization, and the reform of the personnel and salary calculation system. And they enforced the revision of the School Education Act and National University Corporation Law in the House of Councils in June 2014. By revising the School Education Act, a vice president’s authority was reinforced, virtually annulling the faculty meeting’s (*kyoju kai*) capacity for self-government (Okada 197). The faculty meeting had been important in order to secure the

university's self-government since the postwar period, but now, deprived of the right of personnel and financial management, it became a place where teachers only express their opinions (198). And the change to the National University Corporation Law in effect invalidated an election for the president in effect (198-199). Tomohiro Okada portrays this radical reorganization of the university as the "new stage of the globalization of university business," and by this he means that this process is conducted alongside the goal of reinforcing the Japan-US economic and military alliance. Therefore, he claims that university reform in this stage needs to be viewed from the perspective of its relationship to TPP. Pointing out the similarity in their contents of the above mentioned "National University Reform Plan" by the Education Ministry and *Charting a New Course for Growth: Recommendations for Japan's Leaders* (2010) presented by the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan, he states that since university education is included in the "service" category in TPP, university business is going to be further globalized in the future.⁸ According to the government, an ostensible goal of university reforms is to raise Japanese universities' places in global university rankings, but this will actually only propel the marketization of higher education.⁹ Indeed, from the viewpoint of researchers, it was hardly expected that this governmental policy would improve the quality and quantity of academic researches. Far from it, this rationalization process is worsening the working conditions of researchers, and tenured faculty are now being replaced by contract and outsourced labor (Okouchi 54; Ishihara 183-191). It was based on the reflection of the period of the Pacific War (1941-1945) during which academic freedom, the freedom of thought, and the freedom of expression had been taken away from citizens that academic freedom was inscribed in the Constitution after the war. A faculty meeting and an election for the president were institutionalized as means of self-government with the

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goal of securing academic freedom. However, both mechanisms are now annulled by university reform driven by global capital.

Hitotsubashi University in Higher Education Reform under Late Neoliberalism

Hitotsubashi University represents a “typical unique case” (Kono 9) in the long process of university reform started from the 1990s. It is unique because a logic of development can be seen in the course of the university’s change from a practical science (*jitsugaku*) orientation to social sciences and humanities: established in 1875 as the Institute for Business Training Tokyo, whose name was changed to Tokyo Commercial School in 1884, it began as a school focused on a useful science and changed into a university specializing in social science, resulting in the foundation of the Graduate School of Language and Society in 1996, which is a humanities department (Ukai and Shimazono 72). However, it is typical in that under recent university reforms, voices emphasizing a practical education are becoming bigger and bigger, and the humanities are in crisis. In fact, the process is already progressing via the restructuring of the foreign language education program: many English classes, which were an important place of the liberal arts education, have been replaced with outsourced, communication-oriented ones (Kono 10-11). While the university’s administration, in the process of restructuring, is insisting on developing the research of “social sciences” further to compete with other similar colleges globally, it is likely that their use of the term “social sciences” does not include philosophy, history, or humanities. For they define them as a “research as a useful science” which “practically contributes to societal improvement,” and with this understanding they aims to train “global workers” (*gurobaru jinzai*).¹⁰ This emphasis on a practical science resonates with ideas of cabinet members and bureaucrats: PM Abe stated in the OECD Ministerial

Council Meeting on May 6, 2014 that “Rather than deepening academic research that is highly theoretical, we will conduct more practical vocational education that better anticipates the needs of society. I intend to incorporate that kind of new framework into higher education”.¹¹ Furthermore, the education minister Hakubun Shimomura issued a notification in May 2015 that proposed that national universities take “active steps to abolish [social science and humanities] organizations or to convert them to serve areas that better meet society’s needs” (cited in Mori).¹² For Hitotsubashi University, whose executives seem to have a similar sentiment as the above two, the School of Law is one of the most important faculties to propel “social sciences” and is actually famous for its excellent achievements: it is often first place in the number of students who passed the National Bar Examination. This fact would not be unrelated to the death of the gay male graduate student. The study environment would have inevitably been highly competitive in a similar way the workplace and schools, which have been shaped according to the Japanese style of employment, are competitive, and in such heteronormative and competitive environments, homosocial bonding becomes stronger. In these places, disclosing homosexuality is often considered “private” and even “troublesome (*meiwaku*)” for others (to work or study), so coming out can be highly difficult and dangerous. Moreover, the faculty’s desire to maintain its prestige as the leading university in the field might have influenced the teacher’s response to the deceased graduate student. He told the student who complained about seeing the classmate who outed him that if he were to take time away from his studies “you might not be able to graduate” and “no one has been absent from a moot court” (Watanabe “Gei da”). These words must have put the student under tremendous pressure.

Deepening Class Divide under Neoliberalism

In a university willingly pushing forward such reforms, it would be expected that some parts of students, many of whom tend to be relatively wealthier than others, are favorably treated by it. Yet, such students beneficial to the institution's prestige, including international students, constitute only small part of the campus community¹³—indeed, those who get a job at a global company are only 2% of all the students hired immediately after graduation (Okada 201). It can be said that the ways the university deals with the few is continuous with the state's policy that praises a small number of people who can contribute to global corporations. I think this ideology needs to be explained in reference to the class stratification caused by the material conditions of neoliberal capitalism. As we have already seen, unlike the situation up until the 1980s in which big business had needed standardized, good-quality labor, it came to require fluid, temporary labor on the one hand and creative, spontaneous intellectual workers on the other. As the labor market was reconfigured according to the business community's requests, a new kind of class divide was inevitably brought about. And as the gap deepened, it became even more difficult to redistribute wealth in the society as a whole. Here, there emerged a new upper stratum in the working class. Once, the "old" stratum of the working class had played a central role in organizing labor unions. However, without any powerful labor unions that could restrict a corporation's dictatorial management, a "new" upper stratum began "to actively assimilate themselves to corporationist, or capitalist order" since they could gain welfare services from their companies whatever their working conditions were (Goto, *Sengo* 84). Therefore, such new upper segment of the working class came to feel opposed, or even hostile to the idea that *all* the people should be granted humane lives via the *public* welfare system. The majority of citizens cannot live without social welfare by the state, so they are in an antagonistic relationship

to this upper stratum of the working class in purely objective terms. But the latter's neoliberal ideas and values have become dominant through the mass media and the politician's activity in society as a whole (Goto, *Han* 67).¹⁴ Now, with the economic difference widening, the Abe administration, appealing to people's nationalist feelings, defends the interests of global business as "national interests" to justify its economic policy. In this situation, attacks against the poor, women, and racial and ethnic minorities are intensified, and the LDP politicians routinely make racial and sexually discriminatory comments.¹⁵ Under this neoliberal capitalism, the majority has to be sacrificed for the few.

It is in this socio-economic and ideological climate that the two incidents that happened in Hitotsubashi University have to be situated. By centralizing the authority in the presidents and vice presidents, the "governance reform" promotes their dictatorial management, and under such a regime, if the university's administration goes out of control, it cannot be easily stopped through legal or institutional means. First of all, as with our university, its administration, driven by neoliberal ideology, tends to allocate more money to train excellent students and to cut budgets to basic infrastructures for all the members of the campus. For example, part of tenured teachers and full-time staffs is now being replaced with temporary labor, and this might mean that, in the context of the harassment consultant office or health center, a person with less expert knowledge (not only on sexuality or harassment but also on the university itself) might have been employed. Furthermore, not only in terms of financial management but also of academic research, the centralization of the authority in the (vice) president can be problematic. In an essay addressing the proliferation of racist attacks on academics in 2014, Shun Ishihara critically analyzed the case of the private university Teizukuyama Gakuin University in Osaka. One day, then professor Haruhito Kiyota, who was one of the authors of the newspaper *Asahi Shimbun's* articles on

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“comfort women” published in the 1980s, received a threatening letter that said that the sender would detonate a gas bomb to hurt students if the university did not fire Kiyota. He turned in his resignation letter to the university on September 13, 2014, and the administration accepted his offer immediately within that day. Maybe it sounded reasonable that Teizukayama Gakuin University tried to protect students, but Ishihara problematized the case by offering a different interpretation of the university’s response: with a terrorist attack, you can make an academic resign without this decision being reviewed by other academics. Therefore, the way in which the university handled the situation threatened the self-government of universities and academic knowledge in general (191). Hitotsubashi University acted similarly in the case of Hyakuta’s speech. He is a far-right writer who openly denies the history of the Nanking Massacre and of “comfort women.” Formally inviting such a person to a national university threatened academic knowledge and research activity.

Making Connections

Through my analysis of these two incidents, I attempted to show that social problems are related to much broader social change and that the class divide needs to be grasped in a dynamic way, not in a static way, so that class, race/ethnicity, and sexuality can be understood as mutually determining under the material conditions of capitalism’s continuous drive to exploit the surplus from workers. The postwar Japanese economy experienced a dramatic period of growth based on the Japanese style of employment with few immigrants, and this specific form of economic development has largely influenced how current sexism, homophobia, and racism are configured. In a society in which the male breadwinner-female homemaker family model was hegemonic up until the 1990s, the women’s labor, such as procreation, child-rearing, and care of older family members, was considered “free,”

and on this ground, their oppression was intensified.¹⁶ Though the wage gap between both sexes has remained up to the present, the male worker's wages have been declining, but conservative people, based on the idea of family wage, still insist on the necessity of extended family. This means that they do not want to return what capitalists exploited from other workers, that is, the surplus value, to childcare or nursing. Furthermore, Japanese homophobia has been shaped in this nexus, and it cannot be thinkable without considering the particular material development of the postwar Japanese economy. In this country, it is true that outright attacks on homosexual people are rare, but "normal heterosexual Japanese," whether consciously or unconsciously, usually deny the existence of LGBTQI people in everyday life (it is often the case, even if the person is out). As Peter Drucker points out, it is suggestive that though Japan saw the publication of Asia's first commercial pornographic magazine for homosexual males in the early 1950s and experienced similar capitalist development to the US and European countries, it was not until 1994 that the first gay and lesbian pride march was held and not until the early 1990s that gay male homosexuality suddenly became a popular theme in the mass representations such as TV dramas and magazines (175).¹⁷ And he infers that this delay is related to the unique forms of Japanese Fordism characterized by "lifetime employment for a substantial proportion of the workforce and a tight network of corporate and family ties that even in big cities left less space for purely independent social ties" (175). A man working in a company was expected to get married so that he could become the "*shakaijin*," or "responsible adult member of society" (a man could accomplish their "social responsibilities" only when he worked for a corporation, got married, and had children). Therefore, he was little free of obligations and responsibilities that his family and company imposed on.¹⁸ And, as we have seen in the above section on the developmental state regime,

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under the Japanese style of employment a male worker was forced to identify himself with a company, and without such identification he could not earn wages necessary to support a family with the little amount of social welfare provided by the state. This formed the interlocking relationship between companies and family which would have delayed the beginning of sexual politics in Japan. Indeed, in the early 1970s women, influenced by the second-wave feminism, identified as lesbians and first began political activism, but, without any significant state's oppression of gay men such as McCarthyism in the US, homosexual males, "who were not discriminated against *as men*, did not share the same sentiment for political change lesbian women had, so a broader coalition between homosexual females and males was not formed" (McLelland, "Japan's" 9). There were of course important activists such as Ken Togo or Takashi Otsuka who had been active since the 1970s, but it is notable that it was in the early 1990s when the Japanese style of employment began to fall apart that gay men (and in a considerably disproportionate way lesbian women) became visible on a mass scale. Now, with Shibuya Ward's decision to issue a same-sex partnership certificate in 2015 as a start, Japan is said to be experiencing "the LGBT boom" again, but we have to pay attention to the fact that it is occurring under the Abe administration which is making working conditions more fluid.

This movement, largely led by some entrepreneur-type LGBT activists, may come to end without making any substantial changes if it cannot make connections with other movements critical of exclusivist nationalism or economic inequality. For Japanese homophobia is inseparable from nationalist feelings, and the latter have to be confronted in order to make the society less homophobic. According to Harry Harootunian, since the Meiji period the Japanese government, employing the patriarchal family-state as a model, introduced "nation form" through the promulgation of the Imperial

Rescript on Education and other policies. They wanted it to be a mechanism for forming a single national identity among the people in order to secure a uniform domestic market and to establish a national border (303). This national identity was employed to unify various regional inhabitants so that the government could obtain labor power, which enabled the limitless accumulation of capital and soldiers who guard the frontier and maintain domestic order. This national unification of the people as the “good Japanese” has continued to this day. The self-image of “diligent Japanese,” which was actually materially produced under the coercive corporationist order since the 1960s, is part of this national story. And here, Japanese homophobia and nationalism intersect. In an essay on AIDS panic in the late 1980s Japan, Keith Vincent argues that in contrast to US nationalism in which the other is assumed to be “inside” (of the state or community), the other is considered to be “outside” in Japanese nationalism (102). Therefore, sexual and racial minorities in Japan are supposed to be somewhere else other than the space that “normal Japanese” people inhabit. This is why, according to a large-scale survey conducted by a group of researchers, the proportion of those (66-72%) who did not want their family members to be homosexual was over 20% higher than that of those who did not want non-family members to be so (39-41%).¹⁹ As Holly Lewis argues, “[s]exual orientation is a problem for capital insofar as it disrupts the oppositional sexism that helps regulate the labor force at work and at home” (203). This data reveals that many people unconsciously feel that their (re)production process can be threatened if a family member is not heterosexual, a perception that has been historically produced in the course of Japan’s modernization process. The graduate school student who fell to his death was likely to belong to the new upper stratum of the working class discussed above, but, because of this Japanese homophobia, his being gay forced him to have an antagonistic relationship with many of his classmates

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and teachers. There might have been no choice except to die when he had thought about his future life—a life in which he would have to continue to attend the classes with the classmate who outed him and potentially work with this classmate in a close network of lawyers after graduation.

In order to resist the kind of policies the Abe cabinet is advancing, it is necessary to explain how class, race, and gender/sexuality determine each other under current neoliberal capitalism and to make a broad coalition between movements. The present government is violating Article 9, Article 23 (academic freedom), and Article 25 (the right to live) of the Constitution, to name a few. A movement against changing the Constitution in order to defend the pacifist Article 9 itself works to restrict the circulation of global capital, and it is ultimately important to make the state obey the Constitution for other movements such as tenured and temporary teachers' and staffs' protest against university reform and the movement demanding an increase in the minimum wage. Here, exclusive nationalism which is closely tied to homophobia has to be distinguished from *constitutional nationalism*, which would fiercely confront the former (Ninomiya 347). The latter attempts to defend the rights based on the Constitution that the Abe administration tries to destroy: national rights and human rights grounded on popular sovereignty, the national economy, and national interests in the true sense of the term. It would be impossible to regulate capital on a global scale if global corporations within the state are not restricted. And in the Japanese context, the marriage equality movement can also be part of the broader coalition because, for same-sex marriage to be institutionalized, the government has to change the family register system, which is one of the roots of women's and transgender people's oppression in this society. However, because the system caters to the ruling class, dismantling it will never be easy. For everyone's lives to

be guaranteed, it is necessary for us to develop large-scale solidarity between different movements and between various agencies.

Notes

1. I referred to the following sources to write this paragraph: Shimizu, the writings of Minami, and the online articles of Kazuki Watanabe. In this essay, all citations from the texts written in Japanese without notes are my translation.
2. Needless to say, contrary to the claim by Hitotsubashi University's administration, the higher rate of suicide is clearly caused by homophobia in society. According to a street survey conducted by Yasuharu Hidaka in Osaka in 2001, the risk of gay and bisexual males' attempted suicide was 5.9 times higher than that of heterosexual men (Hidaka and Ogiue). Furthermore, a survey conducted in 1999 reveals that gay and bisexual men who were out were more vulnerable than those who were not, and the risk of the former's attempted suicide was 3.2 times higher (Hatachi).
3. I referred to the following sources to write this paragraph: Aoki, Hitotsubashi Students' Volunteer Group, and Sato.
4. Hyakuta attacked these two Okinawan newspaper companies considering them "left" because their reporters often write articles critical of the Japanese government. As argued in Aya Sakima's essay included in this volume, Okinawa has been economically and culturally exploited by the Japanese government from the Meiji period (1868-1912) to the present. There is no space here to address only slight part of Okinawan history, but it has to be noted that over 70% of the US army base in Japan is located in the islands and the army threatens the Okinawan people's lives. Though GIs make routinely serious

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troubles, the Japanese government is more prone to obey commands of the US army than to protect Okinawan people in such cases.

5. In fact, most of the mass media, ignoring the university administration's approval of Hyakuta's speech, reported this issue as a matter of the "freedom of expression," not of a violation of self-government within a national university. The exception is the report by Dai Sato of *Tokyo Shimbun* (June 4, 2017).
6. Goto argues that "corporationist integration" is a Japanese mode of mass society integration.
7. For the details of the Japanese neoliberal reforms, see Osamu Watanabe's "Nihon no Neoliberalizumu."
8. After the election of Donald Trump, the US government withdrew from the negotiation of TPP, but this does not mean that the global marketization of university education also stopped. US global corporations required a voice in the *Japanese* governmental advisory meetings through the bilateral trade agreement (Japan-US FTA) (Okada 187).
9. When the business group Keidanren, which was pushing for university reform, proposed to change Article 9 and Article 96 (the clause on referendums) of the Constitution in 2005, it had in mind "to protect global companies' interests in cooperation with the US army as their business becomes global and to expand the market of army industry" (Okada 182).
10. The quotations come from "Hitotsubashi Daigaku Kyoka Puran (1): Mittsu no Juten Jiko" (Hitotsubashi University Reinforcement Plan (1): Three Important Points) (<https://www.hit-u.ac.jp/guide/message/150323.pdf>), made public by President Koichi Tadenuma in March 2015. About two-thirds of the documents is devoted to explaining the training of "*gobaru jinzaï*" (global workers) and the "Super Professional School"

such as the MBA school and School of Law.

11. The full English transcript of PM Abe's keynote speech is available via the following link: https://japan.kantei.go.jp/96_abe/statement/201405/oecd.html.
12. Asako Nakai's essay, which is written in English, critically examines how university reform threatens humanities.
13. It is true that in Japan where public expenditure on education is significantly lower than European countries, those who can attend a university are relatively privileged. However, they by no means have easy living conditions. Over a half of all the students borrow money from the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO), and the student loans will weigh on them after graduation (JASSO's collection is becoming stricter and stricter). They can even become a victim of economic conscription.
14. It would be helpful for us to remember the following passage from *The German Ideology* by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels: "[t]he ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e. the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force."
15. In Japan, there was no law banning racial discrimination until the first anti-hate speech law was passed in the diet in 2016. See Ryan for the details of the surprising weakness of the Japanese legal system in controlling racial discrimination.
16. Lise Vogel argues that women's oppression under capitalism derives not from the sexual division of labor but from the general biological position of working-class women under the capitalist mode of production. According to her, pregnant working-class women have to temporarily stop working to take a maternity leave, which means that "she requires the capitalist to return to her the surplus he has extracted from the other workers so that she can survive during the period when she cannot work" (Holly

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- 177; see also Vogel 141-156).
17. I agree with Peter Drucker's view that: "gay identity was shaped in many ways by the mode of capitalist accumulation that some economists call 'Fordism': specifically by mass consumer societies and welfare states" (164). He also remarks that "the gay/straight binary . . . consolidated on a mass scale only after 1945 under Fordism" (163).
 18. The pressure of "social respectability (*sekentei*)" on both men and women has been very strong in Japanese society, which shapes a type of self-consciousness different than in European countries and the US: "[A] sense of self which is not atomistic but is constructed in relation to a wide-ranging network of obligations and responsibilities" (McLelland, "Salaryman" 99). And those who can accomplish such responsibilities are considered the *shakaijin*, as Mark McLelland, referring to the argument of Romit Dasgupta, points out: "the *shakaijin* (literally 'social person') is expected to be both *productive* in the workplace and *reproductive* at home, since Japanese cultural factors place a higher premium on the continuation of the family line than is done in Anglophone societies" (97; emphasis in the original). Though he only refers to "cultural factors" here, I argue that Japanese-style employment practices, which is material as well as cultural, are one of the most powerful determinants of the ideology.
 19. This survey was conducted by Saori Kamano, Hitoshi Ishida, Takashi Kazama, Takashi Yoshinaka, Kazuya Kawaguchi, and is available via the following link: <http://alpha.shudo-u.ac.jp/~kawaguch/chousa2015.pdf>.

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