

WHAT WAS THE TWENTIETH CENTURY?

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY JAPANESE EXPERIENCE

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Introduction

The Executive Committee of our International Symposium has posed this topic: How would an historian of Japan summarize Japan's experience during the twentieth century? Because monumental themes such as this seldom engage the mind of the historian in the course of his or her daily work, the topic may pose serious difficulties. Most practitioners of historical science could give rather mundane, commonsense, spur-of-the moment answers. But if the times we now live in do indeed constitute a period of transition, we historians ought to reflect and see if we haven't fallen into outdated patterns of thought; if we have, then we need to reexamine our received ideas in order to enliven our historical studies with new dynamism and verve. In the course of this address, I shall touch upon several works of history that deserve rereading, while also reviewing my own career as an historian in order to offer suggestions for the future of historical science.

In postwar Japan the science of history, and the social sciences generally, have been built upon the experience of protracted undeclared and declared war perpetrated on the peoples of Asia by Japan's armed forces and its government. Reflection on that experience by the academic community has been aimed at assessing and overcoming so called "pre-modern characteristics" of Japanese society. While there were large differences in and heated debates over issue orientation and approaches to be adopted, one may say that Japanese historians roughly shared some common ground until the 1960s. However, in contrast to the situation today, at least two limitations hindered postwar social scientists. They lacked adequate awareness of the intensity with which postwar reform measures were forced upon Japan from the outside, resulting in a "cognitive black-box." Second, they lacked methodological awareness of the entanglement of modern and pre-modern entities in the process of Japan's modernization.

However, it became obvious during the 1960s that the Japanese economy was growing at a phenomenal rate, and when Japanese socioeconomic behavior came into the spotlight of broader attention from the time of the 1973 oil crisis, the social science community in this country was thrust into an era of great transformation. When we superimpose upon this set of circumstances the end of the Cold War regime, the collapse of socialism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and the introduction of market-oriented economy in the Peoples Republic of China and Vietnam, a certain picture comes into view. Economic bubbles and their bursting, the decline of the welfare state in Europe, frequent outbreaks of ethnic and religious conflict, and the rise of hideous, gruesome crime are all parts of the picture's composition.

Technological innovation in such fields as information technology and genetics have lent

urgency to all these trends and processes, as we face the increasing possibility of human civilization being dealt a destructive blow, for example, as the result of some technological error or terrorist activity of some fundamentalist religious movement.

Almost no one in the fields of postwar Japanese social science could have predicted the scenario that envelops us today. It is a radical phenomenon that has suddenly caught us completely unaware. It is in light of this contemporary situation that we are now being asked to reexamine what Japanese modernization really means and exactly what is the twentieth century Japanese experience. Historical science is a discipline able to explain phenomena intelligently only after they occur, and such *post facto* intelligent cognition means rethinking phenomena by introducing different viewpoints and problematics. Seemingly a long and winding road, this is, nevertheless, a very important procedure for enabling us to hone in on the present.

I. *A Short vs. Long Century*

First, let us look at the research done by well-known historian Eric Hobsbawm regarding what kind of century has just passed. Hobsbawm has described the twentieth century experience as actually existing only between 1914 and 1991, a period he terms an “age of extremes,” implying that it has been a relatively short century. The wars that were fought during the last half of the nineteenth century, in which a common international economic and political orders were being formed among the developed nations, were unlike those that would be fought in the following century, in that they were limited to conflicts of relatively short duration involving only two countries. This all changed in 1914, when all of the world powers divided themselves up into two camps to fight an extended war that claimed the lives of an enormous number of young Western European men and women. For the English and the French, the First World War was more horrible and traumatic than the Second. On the other hand, World War II was fought “to the death,” so to speak, with absolutely no thought of compromise in the minds of any of the combatants. It was a war between stubbornly held ideologies, which engulfed many civilians and non-combatants. Wartime regimes regulated every aspect of national life.

This is not to say that World War I did not mobilize the masses, but in contrast to WWI being a “mass war,” World War II was “total war.”

What these wars lent to the characteristic features of the twentieth century was the rise of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics from the ruins left by World War I. The Soviet Union would in the next war provide the moving force to defeat Nazi Germany and compel the capitalist world to reform itself. It was during this short century described by Hobsbawm that two world wars were fought and the Soviet Union was formed, representing the three greatest influences determining the character of the twentieth century. And so, the century came to a completion earlier than expected with the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the socialist bloc (Hobsbawm 1994).

If we try to consider the history of twentieth century Japan within Hobsbawm’s framework, the First World War was not epoch-making in the least, but the fifteen years of declared and undeclared war that began in 1931 fits his concept of “total war” quite suitably. In attempting to place this fifteen-years war in Japan’s periodization scheme, conventionally

two possibilities have been posed. One is to consider it within the modernization process evolving from the time of the Meiji Restoration and place its end as an important dividing point in the history of modern Japan; the other is to look upon this period of belligerence and aggression as an historical deviation or exception to a modernization continuum lasting from Meiji to the present. However, in contrast to these conventional explanations, Yamanouchi Yasushi [1995] has proposed that the fifteen-year war period marked the beginning, not the end, of an epoch that has continued through the postwar era to the present day. Yamanouchi's hypothesis emphasizes that the economic, welfare, and educational policies implemented during this period of total military mobilization were continued during the postwar period, often by the same administrators. He makes a very convincing argument that a continuum existed between the kind of efforts to mobilize economic and human resources during the War and efforts to integrate Japan under capitalism in the postwar era.

Nishikawa Nagao [1999] agrees with Yamanouchi that war mobilization forced a reorganization of Japanese society, but since such a violent reorganization is merely the attribute of any nation state, Nishikawa concludes that the characteristic features of the nation state established in Japan through the Sino- and Russo-Japanese Wars at the turn of the century were merely embedded more thoroughly into society during the fifteen-year war and postwar periods.

However, there is another possibility. What if we were to adopt Hobsbawm's definition of World War II as a total war based on ideology and look at Japan and Germany as having been quickly dislodged from the "age of extremes," and their wartime ideological systems, by defeat at the hands of external military forces, enabling them to concentrate on peaceful economic growth and development?

Because Japan was dislodged from its wartime system by an external military force, it was able to deal with the aftermath of defeat, including the responsibility for its military and colonial aggression, within a framework of such externality, enabling the nation to pursue completely different goals on its own.

Yamanouchi has also characterized contemporary society as the result of "a transition from a society based on class to one based on systems," arguing that "Gleichschaltung" under war mobilization was not only implemented in Japan and Germany, but in all the other major combatant countries, including the United States under the New Deal. However, Yamanouchi's attempt to find homogeneity among such seemingly diversified regimes as totalitarianism in Germany and Japan, the welfare state exemplified by New Deal America, and socialism in the Soviet Union would necessitate a comparative reexamination of these three systems and new efforts to place them in the world order, in the light of the fact that not soon after 1945, Japan and Germany were reconstructed as dependents of the international order based on American liberalism, and that the socialist bloc would fifty years or so later also be incorporated into that same order.

For the capitalist mode of production, which was already integrating the world into a single economic order during the middle of the nineteenth century, the opening of Japan in 1854 was an important milestone marking one stage in the completion of such integration. During the last half of that century, the major world powers formed what can be called an international political order by means of both alliance and conflict, and with conformity of those nations during the last years of the century to the gold standard, a liberal international economic order was established, albeit imperfect. During the two great wars that followed in

the next century, Japan, Germany and the Soviet Union temporarily dropped out of that economic order; but the aim of both conflicts was still the reorganization of the world in the direction of liberalism. After World War II, a political order based on the United Nations and an economic system based on the IMF and GATT were set up under the leadership of the United States. An end to the fighting in World War II was followed by a “cold war” fought between the United States, the Soviet Union and their respective allies, accompanied by nationalist movements rising up in regions throughout the world, posing serious difficulties to integrating it under free trade and democratic institutions. Therefore, given the drawn-out, meandering historical process of trial and error from the middle of the nineteenth to the turn of the twentieth century in efforts to liberalize and democratize world polities and economies, a process that met with such difficult barriers along the way as the rise of Soviet socialism, Japanese and German totalitarianism, the Chinese Revolution, and postwar nationalism and ethnic conflict, it may be possible to characterize the twentieth century as a “long century.”

The authors of the University of Tokyo Institute of Social Science’s six-volume lecture series entitled *The Twentieth Century System* (1998) are of the unanimous opinion that the main characteristic of this century has been economic growth.

Economic growth, which is a concept based on the statistical evaluation of national production and income, became the household word it is today only after the Second World War.

Since the main factor causing economic growth is the adoption of mass production technologies, the classic case is the United States, specifically its automobile industry during the early decades of the twentieth century. At a time when road conditions were not very good, the Model-T Ford was put into production, and despite the engine and body being greatly out of sync, continued for over ten years to be run off the assembly line without a single change in engineering or design, giving birth to an American economy based on mass production and consumption.

However, while Ford’s production strategy emphasizing uniformity met the needs of the early era of mass consumption, it was gradually surpassed by General Motors and its strategy of multi-model design, flexible mass production. From a similar viewpoint, the Japanese economy of the 1970s won world renown for achieving sustained economic growth in the midst of oil crises and the transition to a floating exchange rate system, and the Toyota Motor Company came under close international scrutiny of business management experts for its revolving production system, which had overcome the limitations encountered by its American counterparts. Similarly, the socialist bloc was also studied as an economic entity capable of realizing economic growth, based on the experience of the Soviet Union’s so-called “rapid growth era” during the 1950s and 60s. The aforementioned *Todai ISS Twentieth Century System* series has adopted a perspective concentrating on economic growth in the United States and Japan, and thus tends to consider any other issue during the past one hundred years as peripheral (These views were typically expressed by Hashimoto Juro’s essay in Volume 2 of the series).

Shiokawa Nobuaki’s *Socialism that Actually Existed* (1999) is an ambitious treatise attempting a broad integrated analysis of the present day socialist state system centering on the Soviet Union. In his concluding section, Shiokawa attempts to place contemporary socialism within the context of the history of civilization, a perspective favoring the “long” periodization of the twentieth century. For Shiokawa, the characteristic features of the “long century” are

the processes of “modernization” and “organized planning;” and socialism today may be considered to be the most extreme model of twentieth century civilization, in the sense that it thoroughly embodies the evolvement of an era of modernization via organized planning using the exclusionary, violent nature of the nation state. This is a very convincing argument in its dispassionate reevaluation of socialism today from the historical viewpoint of now.

Looking back on the “long century” from our point in time now, it would probably not be far off the mark to characterize world history since the nineteenth century as a process of the expansion and hegemony of capitalist markets—a process that meandered and detoured at times in the midst of the rise of the socialist bloc, German and Japanese totalitarianism, and post-World War II nationalist states. Although there is much to be said from the discussion of the nation state that classifies the prewar Japanese imperial state as one general type within the modern world, or from the new “mobilization” hypothesis that understands German and Japanese totalitarianism as the moving force behind postwar social systems conducive to rationalization and industrialization, history is, after all, the accumulation of a broad range of personal human experience that cannot be reduced to “The History of” something. The broad range of human exaltation and exertion arising out of the Russian and Chinese revolutions, self-actualization (not to mention repression and subjection) under the Japanese imperialist regime, Auschwitz, the Nanking Incident, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, these events are all made up of the personal experience of millions of individuals, which we historians could not explain with any degree of satisfaction. This kind of experience defies attempts to incorporate the common ideas held by people living in another era into works of general history. We historians are obligated to be witnesses to such easily lost reality in societies like contemporary Japan. Hobsbawm is not very far away from Shiokawa when he states that the experience of the Soviet Union was not an attempt to replace capitalism on a global scale, but rather an attempt to respond in the midst of never-to-be-repeated historical circumstances to a set of particular conditions brought on by being a huge but very backward country. However, as an historian living in the twentieth century, Hobsbawm, like all of us, holds truths indigenous only to him that should be told to readers living at the end of that century.

There are many dimensions of logic within historical perception. I myself look at the overall image of history as a bunch of Japanese sake cups stacked one upon the other. Which of the dimensions of logic will be chosen as the playing ground for historical interpretation is of course left up to the individual historian, but if that historian does not understand the characteristic features of a certain dimension of logic, there is the possibility that his perspective will become ineffective, that he will close himself off, immerse himself stubbornly in his own work, and fall into endless relativism.

There has come out in recent years various treatises on the perceptual foundations of historical science; and I think that most of the confusion surrounding that topic could be avoided by us becoming more self-cognizant of the particular dimension of logic our research falls into. For example, take the “story telling nature” of history that has been widely discussed of late. With a change of viewpoint and different dimension, history can be seen in a very different light. That is to say, the problem is one of multi-stratified, multi-dimensional viewpoints, not one of simple fiction or the unverifiable.

II. *Economic Growth and Cultural Typology*

It was in 1955 or 56 that the economic growth potential of Japan first drew international attention. Then in 1960, when the Ikeda Government concentrated policy on the promotion of high economic growth, a new intellectual trend was born in response. Together with a plethora of treatises on “modernization” influenced by theoretical work done in the United States, we were inundated with journalistic attempts to explain the cultural factors behind Japan’s economic success, giving rise to debate over Japanese-style business management and the unique quality of Japanese culture itself. The debate over Japanese culture was touched off by Nakane Chie’s *Human Relationships in a Vertical Society* (1967), Isaiah Ben-Dasan’s *Japanese and the Jews* (1970), and Doi Takeo’s *The Structure of Pampering* (1971). According to a review by Minami Hiroshi, between 1974 and 1985, there was a strong tendency in the literature to emphasize the aspect of the Japanese group-oriented psyche, particularly the deep psychological dimension.

In the work of Maruyama Masao, whose postwar research on Japan’s imperial system and super state ideology is nothing short of epoch-making, we also see a period of tremendous transition appearing at the end of the 1950s. In Maruyama’s personal opinion, “My life history as a thinker grapples methodologically with Marxism and phenomenologically with the mental structure of the institution of the emperor... [However,] both of them have been eroded in our contemporary sense of reality, and so do not invite the response they once did.” Maruyama is not saying here that the imperial institution and super state ideology were no longer of any interest, for he believed that there was still something important in their foundations determining the nature of Japanese society. After making that statement, Maruyama’s view of Japan’s intellectual history greatly broadened, as he began to lay a great amount of weight on the intellectual history of the ancient and medieval periods, in an attempt to develop an ideational “prototype.” The “prototype” that Maruyama discovered was formed from the agrarian community of the prehistoric Yayoi period, characterized by communal rules and regulations together with animistic and shamanistic agrarian rituals. The communal principle underlying the “prototype” was “basically impervious to fundamental change, but its super-structure continued throughout history to make contact with the most highly developed cultures in forming extremely adaptive technology and political and economic institutions.” Japan had therefore been characterized from antiquity by such a dual structure marked by continuity and change. The overall image produced by Maruyama’s intellectual history describes a struggle between the “prototype” and various forces attempting to break it. In the process, the latter would ultimately end up in subservience to the former, albeit in a state of further evolution. It is from this process that the remarkable ability in Japanese culture to adapt can be explained. Thus Maruyama’s argument of “prototype”, while seemingly a mere description of ancient Yayoi agrarian communities, contains implications which may directly lead to an explanation of contemporary Japanese business and politics [Maruyama 1998]. However, I wonder if forming a total image of society by employing such cultural typology may not lead one to bring external conditions into the analysis of the intellectual formation of people, which may otherwise be explained as more relevant to various circumstances characteristic of the respective times. The issue of whether or not the basic format of the modern and contemporary Japanese experience has been in fact determined by the communal principles of

the Yayoi period is not a problem open to empirical verification. Rather, by placing tradition in a dialectical context, culture tends to improve its ability to integrate ideology.

Tsuda Masumi is well known for furthering the discussion over Japanese-style business management by defining the Japanese corporation as “an entity of communal life.” According to Tsuda, in Europe, the entity of communal life is the city, which radiates out from its nucleus, the family, while the business corporation exists outside as a different space, in which people seek their livelihood. In Japan, on the other hand, since the corporation is the entity of communal life, the family is subservient to it, although it is physically located outside of the corporation. In a book entitled *New Age Business Executives: Their Lives and Opinions* [Tsuda 1987], which contains records of panel discussions held by graduates of Tsuda’s seminar, we find emphasis being put on the severity of corporate life and the high rate of job change. There are such interesting comments as “Prof. Tsuda taught me about Japanese business being a communal entity, but experiences brought the reality of business life to me. I admit I was pretty skeptical at first,” but according to Tsuda, such an entity of communal life stems from old Japanese traditions; business enterprises just inherited them and refashioned them for the tasks at hand.

Ie Society as Civilization [Murakami et al. 1979] is an excellent work on Japanese culture and society that more systematically develops ideas similar to Tsuda’s. Here, what is called “*ie*” (lit. household, family, home) is considered to be an entity for communally managing daily life, and is characterized by self-governance, supra-kinship relations, lineage descent for the sake of long term continuity, and functionalism resulting in rationality free from magico-religious elements. The classic cases of such organizational principles are the feudal lords (*daimyô*) of the Tokugawa period and modern business enterprises and government agencies. On the surface, Japan’s process of modernization seems to be one of gradual westernization; however, underneath the surface, it was none other than a process of adaptation employing “*ie*” organizational principles. Postwar Japanese society developed by nurturing such principles. Thus “*ie*” in this sense is strictly delineated from “family” organization as management entities and often classified further into “petty *ie*” (for example, Tokugawa period samurai houses, “quasi-*ie*” (like Tokugawa period wealthy merchant houses), and “pseudo-*ie* (like the family as defined under Meiji era civil law). Moreover, since “the individual” is not the basic unit of society in Japan, which is rather such “*ie*”-type organizations as business enterprises, it has been argued that either voting rights be handed over out right to such groups, or at least they be given more freedom to campaign politically and make their political contributions in full purview of society.

Given the present economic situation facing us, there are probably not many adherents to the arguments made by Tsuda and the authors of *Ie Society*. Today, a concerted call can be heard throughout Japan for a new liberalism that will overcome its groupist-oriented ideology. For example, such a call is clearly expressed in the volume entitled *Japan’s Frontiers Are in Japan* edited by the Colloquium: “A Vision for 21st Century Japan,” [“Nijuisseki Nippon no Koso” Kondansha 2000], which can be called an official statement of the views held by the Obuchi Government. According to this volume, the twenty-first century should be the century of the individual, “a strong but flexible individual who takes his own responsibility, assumes his own risks, and gives priority to the challenges he himself chooses.” Thus, the relationship between the individual and the corporation should be transformed from “a supervisory, organizationally subordinate” one to a “contracted” one; wages and salaries should reflect a

worker's efficiency and skills; pensions should come from determined sources decided upon by the individual employee; and a society based on the principle that "all are equal in the end" should be replaced by one that recognizes "just and impartial disparity." This report was compiled based on strong fears that Japan as it exists today is not fit to stand the test of the kind of globalization that will rise up and encompass the whole world in the next century, and will consequently decline. It goes on to say that only a display of strong individualistic capabilities can prevent such a decline.

What surprises me in terms of my own point of view concerning the daily life of the masses as one of the most important dimensions of history, is that Tsuda and the authors of *Ie Society* give the family, the dominant element of daily life, only a subordinate, somewhat incidental, role in such "entities of communal life" as business enterprises and government agencies. To me, the family is a communal entity of daily life whose members differ in age and gender, and which exists for the purpose of subsistence. Its principles of organization are therefore completely different from those of corporations and other such groups. Since the family is a unit for managing subsistence and exhibits genealogical continuity and rationality, for modern Japan in general, it may be classified as a type of "ie" organization. At a certain point in the Tokugawa period, this family-type "ie" gained autonomy in its struggle for subsistence in the midst of serious friction with developing market economy; and modernization from the standpoint of the history of the masses could be defined as a process involving strenuous effort to subsist on the part of a wide range of people organized as family units. In contrast to Tsuda's view of corporations as entities of communal life, whose sphere of control extends into the affairs of the family, it would seem more befitting to distinguish between the profit-making principles of the former and the subsistence principles of the latter. Furthermore, if the position of the Colloquium on 21st Century Japan becomes mainstream policy in the future, a new form of social stratification and class conflict will become inevitable. As strong individuals maintain or widen the "just and fair disparities" they have obtained within society, many people on the other end of the stick may very well begin strengthening their family ties in response, or may even be forced to turn to religious salvation and other forms of escapism. The recent controversial "divine nation" statement made by Prime Minister Mori exposed just how inadequate and capricious the makeshift measures to deal with such a situation really are.

Of course, I am not arguing that the family is the only communal group concerned with subsistence within market-oriented society. If we look back a little in time, there were village communities, extended families and various kinds of association that played a similar role. Then later on, philanthropic groups, religious movements, labor unions and grass root organizations took over their function. Moreover, we can observe within cultural history the many diverse forms of adaptation, resistance and resentment taken towards market-oriented society; however, when trying to understand the process of modernization in relation to the daily lives of the masses, putting the family at the nucleus of the issue of livelihood is in my opinion the most appropriate way to proceed.

III. *The Changing Face of Everyday Life*

In my previous work, I have had occasion to argue that as common modes of morality, consisting of hard work, frugality, honesty, filial piety, etc., became the norms of daily life encompassing a large portion of the Japanese masses, it became necessary for historians to look at the general patterns of self-discipline and self-improvement that existed within mass society being newly formed within the process of modernization. Within the wave of postwar Japanese scholarship stressing "enlightenment of the masses," such popular morality was considered "feudalistic" or "pre-modern" in nature. It is true that during both the Tokugawa and early modern periods in Japan, such morality was more or less in line with the indoctrination policies of the powers that be and played an important role in supporting the legitimacy of the existing establishment from below. However, once popular morality was combined with a philosophy of conscience and brought forth the rules and precepts of everyday life, it turned into a concrete form of independent and autonomous life style for the masses. Here one may find the subjective and active nature of a wide range of people to be represented within the practice of a popular morality, which is completely different from modernistic ideals [Yasumaru 1974].

In this way, popular morality can be reinterpreted as the logic of independence and autonomy held by the masses, but in terms of patriarchal families. The general origins of petty production conducted by family units have been sought in the early part of early modern times, when the single family household was severely restricted by such intermediate organizations as the village community or extended family groups. However, the development of market-oriented relations strengthened the independence of petty producers and forced families to become more cohesive. Despite an increase in opportunities for migratory work and commercial peddling, these occupations did not necessarily separate individuals from family, but rather provided income to increment family production. From the late Tokugawa period into the Meiji era, when village communities and extended families still enjoyed a great deal of power over the behavior of their members, popular morality in many cases spread in the form of village reconstruction movements led by local ruling elites. However, even in such cases, traditional communal customs and practices were reformed, and family households became more independent based on community rules and regulations. The family is an entity that forces its members to adopt often complicated, but flexible, measures for the sake of its survival. Market economy could finally penetrate the deep structure of society cushioned by the family of this sort. Popular morality may be understood as a suitable set of norms, or rather an unavoidable form of consciousness, within that process.

My concept of popular morality was originally formed to explain historical transition specifically from the late Tokugawa to the early Meiji period. However, as mentioned previously, if we reexamine it as the logic of independence for the family-type of "ie" under market economy, it will become possible to place popular morality within a larger historical perspective. That is to say, popular morality began by socially awakening the powerful merchant class living in urban areas throughout Tokugawa Japan; then during the late phases of that period, it was adopted into rural society under the leadership of wealthy peasants. Following the turbulent times of the Meiji Restoration and the movement for democratic rights in the early Meiji era, popular morality increased in importance as the logic for establishing order on the local level, and during the late Meiji era penetrated the daily lives of

the lower strata of society through movements for rural improvement. According to Nakagawa Kiyoshi [2000], it was only in the early part of the twentieth century that lower class urban society began to form households in order to reproduce the family. Marriage among lower class people involved mostly common-law marital relations and finally became legally recognized ones during 1930s. Meanwhile, the employment rate of women in these newly rising urban households sharply dropped from 80% to 26% between the end of the nineteenth century and 1926, indicating a shift in the activities of married women from outside employment to housework and child rearing. Thus, even among the lowest classes in urban society, the modern family supported by a gender-based division of labor had been formed.

According to the recent research literature in the field of women's history, the first time that the mass media began portraying the modern family as being bonded by strong emotional ties stemming from meticulous attention to the household on the part of housewives was around 1890; then during the early twentieth century, the universal ideal of "good wife, clever mother" was even incorporated into the public education curriculum [see, for example, Koyama 1991]. Such an image of the family, which is much different from the pre-modern form based on Confucian ideas, was filled with new possibilities, even in terms of the "Imperial Rescript on Education." The term "family state" came into vogue, when it became useful to portray the advantages of monogamous marriage from the imperial family down to the meanest of households. Although the tender image of the modern family was, in Japan prior to World War II, only effective among the relatively wealthy urban middle classes, it can be said that such an image was held as generally desirable among a far larger portion of society. The family in modern Japan as a whole was characterized by "ie"-like cohesion and patriarchy, and it was the urban bourgeoisie and middle classes that remained the most patriarchal, leading feminists today to point, correctly may I add, to patriarchy as its most determinative attribute.

Probably the simplest index for quantifying the elusive sanctioning power of norms within the "ie"-type family is the divorce rate. The divorce rate is assumed by historians to have been extremely high during the Tokugawa period but, from 1888, the first year for which we have reliable statistics, the figure began gradually decreasing. Then with the promulgation of a civil law code in 1899, it plummeted and kept on decreasing until an all-time low was reached in 1938. This statistical trend indicates that the sanctioning power of the family in prewar Japan grew stronger with progressing modernization, and is also a tribute to women who sacrificed so much to protect their homes and families during a long period of war and the aftermath of its destruction.

Turning again to popular morality, this set of norms was excellently suited to petty production carried out with family-owned means of production, and as such, was finely forged to the needs of this mode of production. Even if this mode of production collapsed and the family ceased to be agents of production in the narrow sense, the family would not lose its character as a small communal entity aiming at subsistence. This is because popular morality had already strongly determined how members of families living in rural society had been raised from childhood and deeply penetrated their adult lives and customs. Creating a set of new norms within some other dimension would not have been an easy task.

Nevertheless, it was in 1960 that hired labor first accounted for over half of the working population in Japan, while the standard of living was steadily rising and the era of mass consumption was just around the corner. The collapse of social norms based on popular

morality had become inevitable. It was during this era that the image of the modern family characterized by emotional bonding under the meticulous care of households by professional housewives was popularized. Ochiai Emiko [1994] dates this phenomenon between 1955 and 1975, and characterizes it as most conspicuous among the postwar baby boomer generation, terming it "the postwar family order." Ochiai envisions this sort of "modern" family will, in the narrower sense, be transformed into an "individualized family" of the twenty-first century, a perspective in line with "era of the individual" envisioned by the Colloquium on the 21st Century. There are many scholars in the field of family sociology that agree with Ochiai in predicting a family that will be wanting to make choices on an individual basis and being institutionally assisted by the state in doing so. However, such an image may turn out to be ideologically beneficial to only strong individualists, and thus cover only one aspect of future society. The various contradictions stemming from the realities of globalization and restructuring may still be smoothed out within the family still functioning as a communal entity focusing on subsistence. Thus, many people will still try to get through that cruel reality by internalizing the repressive structure of contemporary society within the family.

Here, let us change the focus a bit and look at changes in the history of the family from the perspective of demography and population movements. The population of Japan at the end of the sixteenth century is estimated to have been slightly more than 10 million, a figure which grew rapidly for the next one hundred years to near 30 million by the beginning of the eighteenth century. With the establishment of "pax-Tokugawa" in the early seventeenth century, the fertile plains regions of Japan were put under cultivation, the nuclear family became universal, and the birth rate rose sharply. Although the unmarried population remained large in the urban areas, it must have been a time when even in the cities, the mainstream of Japanese life progressed in the direction of family formation. During most of the eighteenth century, there was stagnation, possibly even decline, in population, then during its last years, growth began again, and Japan's population surpassed 50 million at the end of the Meiji period. One interesting feminist viewpoint focuses upon the demographic dominance of males during the Tokugawa and prewar modern periods, followed by a larger number of women in the population only from the end of World War II to the present day.

These general demographic trends must be qualified, however, due to large regional differences. From the mid-Tokugawa to the early modern period, northeast Honshu, the Kanto Plain and the Kinki region (Kyoto and its environs) experienced population declines, while growth was experienced in the Hokuriku (north central Japan sea coast) region, central Honshu and Kyushu. Within the process of modernization following the industrial revolution, population grew rapidly in such metropolitan areas as Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya and Fukuoka, due mainly to migration from rural regions, which had experienced population increase since the late Tokugawa period. There were also large numbers of people who migrated from the Hokuriku region to Hokkaido and many emigrants from western Japan who headed for such destinations as South America and Hawaii. Both the migration to metropolitan areas and movements overseas shared a similar background. In the case of the Hokuriku region, its former high levels of productivity due to westward shipping lanes, which gave the region easy access to the national economy, declined with the development of modern industry, as Japan's economic center shifted to the Pacific coast. Just before the turn of the nineteenth century, the Japan Sea side came to be known somewhat derisively as "the backside of Japan." In the United States, economic development was realized as a result of its acceptance of immigrants

from countries all over the world, as a multi-ethnic society developed, being characterized by racial differences in occupation and social class. In Japan, however, the development process was internal to the nation state, as population that had been growing in rural areas during the late Tokugawa period migrated to metropolitan regions, bearing the burden of industrialization and helping to build the modern city. Since the families who moved to the big cities had no choice but to live in isolation from their neighbors, they might have formed a continuum with their former agrarian society in both lifestyle and norms. During the postwar period of rapid economic growth, such migration grew to enormous proportions, bringing about great changes in Japanese society as a whole. The spread of popular religions in modern Japan may most accurately be understood as providing common people residing in the cities with new ideals and ways to live urban-oriented lives.

All of this changed, however, at the beginning of the 1970s, when births per family dropped below two. Today the figure has reached 1.34 and threatens Japan's future with smaller families and a shrinking lower age group work force. In agrarian regions, which at first glance seem to be able to maintain both stable levels of population and agricultural output, an alarming amount of younger people are choosing not to go into agriculture and are leaving their hometowns, giving rise to the possibility of a dramatic collapse of rural Japanese economy and society in the near future. For example, the age composition of one village in Niigata Province that I happened to see was shaped like an elongated Japanese lantern, with the largest portion of the 20,000 villagers aged 65-69, while children aged 0-4 came to only 46% of that portion and adults aged 20-24 only 33% [Sumon Mura 2000]. In Tokyo, on the other hand, the total fertility rate is extremely low at 1.05. When combined with a marked decline in discipline among younger people today, one cannot feel gloomy about the future. The policy to promote immigration of foreign workers to compensate for a shrinking lower age group work force, if taken, may possibly bring about mass confusion and conflict in a Japan with almost no experience as a multi-ethnic society. One cannot exclude as its consequence possibilities of rising ethnocentrism

Concluding Remarks

Let us return now to Eric Hobsbawm. While his depiction of the twentieth century is, in a sense, motivated by the experience of two world wars and the collapse of the socialist system, one more concern of his may lie in the more fundamental issue of changing social relationships, which began taking place during the latter half of this century. This latter issue he terms the largest, most rapid and radical transformation ever recorded in the pages of history, and overshadows, in terms of the long run, even the history of the struggle between capitalism and socialism, which is a social revolution on a par with the Crusades or the religious wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Those fundamental changes in society, which brought about a rapid decline in rural population and a sharp rise in the size of urban areas, has achieved amazing improvement in educational standards, but has, on the other hand, destroyed traditional communal social relationships, while nullifying the working class both socially and culturally by sacrificing it for the sake of advanced technology.

In addition, on the remarkable advance of women into the world at large and the rapid increase of the number of working wives, Hobsbawm remarks that the cultural revolution

revolved around change in the traditional family and household, in which women had always been the central element. What Hobsbawm is talking about here specifically is the family and the breakdown of its norms, or in a different frame, the spread of lawlessness and the growing desire for instant self-gratification within adolescent and young adult culture. Hobsbawm is of the opinion that the resistance shown by young people to established custom and attempts to control them resolves itself in the desire for instant self-gratification, and thus cannot be distinguished from the preconditions set down by societies of mass consumption.

Despite the fact that traditional social organization and custom are being rapidly dismantled in just about every region of the world, kinship, communal entities and neighborhood networks remain to the benefit of the majority of the human race, especially the poor. Merely seeking selfish utility in the market place is for any system bereft of necessary central elements for its existence. Hobsbawm concludes that modern industrial society strongly depended upon traditional communal entities and family values, a fact that is not widely recognized. Without the cultural heritage received from traditional society, managing a capitalism system would have been near impossible. Hobsbawm ends his book on such a pessimistic note, but his pessimism may not be caused by the collapse of the socialist states and decline of the welfare state, but rather stem from the breakdown of social relationships and norms, together with a glut of uncontrollable selfishness. The events surrounding the collapse of socialism are understandable and analyzable, albeit with the help of hindsight; however, the breakdown of relationships and norms represents in Hobsbawm's eyes total destruction of the very fiber of the social formation, an irretrievable situation. However, in my eyes Hobsbawm is apt to be too simplistic at some points of his discussion regarding social transformation. Here are few.

The first one I have already mentioned. It is the idea that culture embraced by young people—rock music, etc.—is an endorsement of the instant gratification of personal desires, and thus resembles consumerism.

Secondly, such feminist demands as calculating the value of housework in labor market terms, a woman's right to choose in the case of abortion, and the responsibility of public agencies for child rearing and care for the elderly all amount to nothing but a self-righteous attitude towards the family.

Next is the idea that the liberation of mental hospital patients will merely lead to their incarceration in penal institutions.

Finally, religious fundamentalism and movements for ethnic self-determination resemble fascism.

For example, concerning feminist self-righteousness, Hobsbawm seems to have defected to the traditional anti-feminist conservative camp, arguing that husband-wife and parent-child relationships have nothing whatsoever in common with relations between buyers and sellers in the market, that a woman's right to choose whether she will give birth is not the last word on abortion, and that the socialization of child rearing and elderly care is by no means a desirable thing. With respect to the housework issue, I am in agreement with Hobsbawm, for it is my understanding that labor was originally a communal activity for the purpose of subsistence, and that modern day housework has inherited that essential character. However, the feminist view of housework, regardless of whether it is correct or not, has important meaning for problematizing the characteristic features of the modern family, which has been turned into a veritable black box by a lack of awareness on our part. Although I share Hobsbawm's opinion

that religious fundamentalism when combined with ultra-nationalism possesses an irrational, magical appeal posing a threat to world peace, religious fundamentalism has also been an important tool for binding poor people together all over the world, and in many cases includes within its ideology an acrimonious indictment of the contemporary world. Religious movements that lean towards fundamentalism, whether in the developed or developing countries, are attempting to free themselves from alienating circumstances.

While I am not an expert on cultural patterns among young people, or rock music for that matter, they may also be criticizing mass consuming society, which should be an important topic in the study of mass culture.

Tension is definitely rising throughout the world today over the threat posed to the livelihood of the masses by the globalization of market economy. The response to such a threat has taken on very complicated forms, some of which may seem strange and irrational for an intellectual in the tradition of the Enlightenment. Part of Hobsbawm's pessimism may be attributed to emotions stemming from such a position. However, adaptation, resistance and resentment to the forces of oppression appear in various forms of complex social consciousness, forms that must be analyzed in concrete terms. Human relationships of the past have not simply been destroyed, but rather reorganized in a number of different ways; so, we can say that new cultures and movements are new expressions of the essential character of daily life. On the other hand, Hobsbawm, in emphasizing the importance of the role played by the nation state, argues that our fate in the new century will be tied to a revival of public authority, but I have my doubts about such a view of politics and power.

In my view, modern and contemporary history is a single entity constructed from the mutually related forces of the capitalist world market, the nation state, and daily life, three moments existing in different dimensions. Therefore, the history of the past century can be understood by linking these three moments together in time. World history from the mid-nineteenth evolved with the capitalist world market as its major engine of movement, so concretely analyzing that dimension is an important starting point. However, the world market does not unilaterally determine the nation-state and daily life; rather, the world market is in the end determined by the reactions of the other two to its initial impacts on them. Moreover, the capitalist world market is composed of nation-states exclusively empowered to intervene in the functioning of the market and in daily life.

As an intermediary between the world market and daily life, the nation-state constitutes a distinct area of analysis. Various international agencies, churches, and labor unions also act as intermediary bodies, but, generally speaking, they play their respective roles by raising political issues within the context of the nation state. Now, the sphere of daily life—churches, schools, regional society, etc.—is indeed penetrated by the world market and the nation state, but its has been formed by principles different than those forming the other two; and it is the family that stands out as the attribute shared by the overwhelming majority of those active within that sphere.

It is in this way that these three moments have formed contemporary history as a multi-dimensional entity; and although each dimension is intricately woven of itself, the history of the past century should be analyzed as the whole which encompasses all of them. In order to come to an understanding of contemporary society, it is necessary to study the organization of markets, corporations, and the state, while examining such aspects as religion, education, the family and mass culture, and we must not forget the important social

phenomena of disease, crime and outlaw groups. But all of these topics can be convincingly analyzed by placing them within the context of the aforementioned three dimensions of the world market, the nation state and the daily life of the masses.

In conclusion, let me express my sincerest hope that the Hitotsubashi University Graduate School of Social Science, as an organization dedicated to introspective interdisciplinary social research and education will continue to play an important role in the study of contemporary society, holding the highest aspirations and deepest sense of truth possible in the academic world.

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