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Buddhism and Ideology in Japan, 1868-1931

By

George Lazopoulos

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

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University of California, Berkeley

Committee in Charge:

Professor Andrew E. Barshay, Chair

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Professor Alan Tansman

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Buddhism and Ideology in Japan, 1868-1931
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ABSTRACT

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by

George Lazopoulos

Doctor of Philosophy in History

University of California, Berkeley

Professor Andrew E. Barshay, Chair

This dissertation is a critical history of Buddhist thought in Japan from 1868 to 1931. During this time, many intellectuals became fascinated with the Buddhism of Japan's medieval period. Some saw it as a form of religious experience that could overcome the modern problem of alienated existence. Others declared that the cultural history of medieval Japanese Buddhism held the essence of Japanese cultural authenticity. These philosophical and historical interpretations of Buddhism together constituted a modern cultural discourse that I call Japanese Medievalism: a romantic vision of medieval Japan as a world of Buddhist spirituality. This dissertation traces the evolution of Japanese Medievalism, reconstructs its main arguments, and examines its ideological significance as a cultural artifact of modern Japan. Japanese Medievalism had an ambiguous ideological function. On the one hand, it was a religious revolt against the ideology of the ruling class – the ideology of the *kami* (the “native gods” of Japan), which renounced Buddhism as a foreign superstition inimical to national progress. Japanese Medievalism was an attempt to reassert the meaningfulness of Buddhism in defiance of state ideology. But on the other hand, Japanese Medievalism also supported the political order. By evoking a cultural realm of religious experience, Japanese Medievalism diverted attention from the concrete problems of industrial capitalism and anti-democratic politics in Japan. In sum, Japanese Medievalism was a Japanese analog to Existentialism in the West – a spiritual alternative to Marxism's materialist critique of modern society that ultimately had politically conservative consequences.

With love and appreciation for my parents, Mike and Grace. You made it possible.

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Introduction: Buddhism and Ideology in Japan, 1868-1931

Like many artists and intellectuals throughout the industrial world after World War I, the prominent Japanese philosopher and cultural historian Watsuji Tetsurō (1889-1960) was in search of “authentic” culture. He sought to recover the authentic Japanese culture that was, he believed, vanishing from his increasingly modern society. In a vast body of work that spanned nearly five decades, Watsuji maintained that the essence of authentic Japanese culture was Buddhism. The general premises of Watsuji’s work can be gleaned from a 1933 essay in which he declared,

The designation of Buddhist thought as a ‘foreign thought’ that is distinguishable from things distinctively Japanese is largely based on the Nativist (*kokugakusha*) movement of the Tokugawa period. . . . But the present treatment of Buddhist thought as foreign thought does not change the fact that for some ten centuries, the spiritual life (*seishin seikatsu*) of the Japanese was built upon a foundation of Buddhism. Though Buddhism did indeed come to Japan from abroad, the Japanese in certain periods have nevertheless lived their lives within Buddhism. They therefore did not have a ‘foreign relationship’ with Buddhism. Furthermore, Buddhism did not remain in the fixed form in which it came to Japan from abroad, but rather developed and changed together with the life of the Japanese people. To this extent, we can say that it is not ‘foreign’ Buddhism but ‘Japanese Buddhism.’ It has been said that ancient Japan was suited to Mahāyāna, and that of all the countries to which Mahāyāna Buddhism has spread, nowhere has its roots sunk as deeply as they have in Japan.¹

Watsuji was not concerned with Buddhism’s place of origin or even the truth or falsity of its doctrines. The crucial point was that Buddhism, according to Watsuji, had historically provided the structure of human existence on the Japanese islands. The Japanese “lived their lives within Buddhism,” which was the basis for their “spiritual life.” Watsuji discerned the contours of this existential structure in the art, architecture, and literature of Japan. For him, these were not mere representations of Buddhist ideas, but were themselves aesthetic instruments for dissolving the individual self and disclosing the fundamental unity of all things. Japanese culture, for Watsuji, was a system of spiritually charged words and images through which the Japanese existed authentically, and whose revival would re-enchant the radically transformed technological environment of interwar Japan with spiritual significance.

Watsuji’s interpretation of Buddhism – cultural, historical, existential – was emblematic of a much wider trend in the intellectual life of interwar Japan. Along with the primitive agrarian village and early modern urban culture, medieval Buddhism was one of the most powerfully iconic tropes in Japan’s interwar cultural discourse. Medieval Japanese Buddhism refers to the Zen, Nichiren, and Pure Land (*Jōdo*) sects of Mahāyāna Buddhism that developed in Japan’s Kamakura period (1185-1333), now referred to as Kamakura New Buddhism (*Kamakura shin bukkyō*). Modern Japanese intellectuals have

¹ Watsuji Tetsurō, “*Nihon no bungei to bukkyō shisō*,” in *Zoku nihon seishinshi kenkyū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1935), 173-174.

interpreted these sects as a kind of religious existentialism, in which the individual can gain insight into the true nature of reality through spiritual experience. Intellectuals also found in these sects a narrative of Japanese history, in which Buddhism of the Asian continent fused with the warrior mentality of the medieval Japanese samurai to produce Japan's authentic culture. These philosophical and historical interpretations of medieval Japanese Buddhism together constitute a strain of interwar cultural discourse that I call Japanese Medievalism: a romantic vision of medieval Japan as a world enchanted by Buddhism.² This dissertation is a critical study of the origins, development, and consequences of Japanese Medievalism.

Our critical understanding of Japanese Medievalism begins with the work of Japanese Marxist philosopher and critic Tosaka Jun (1900-1945). In his 1935 classic *The Japanese Ideology (Nihon ideorogii ron)*, Tosaka argued that the preoccupation with culture among his intellectual contemporaries functioned as a kind of spiritual palliative for the antagonisms of a capitalist society.³ Liberalism's "religious consciousness," as Tosaka called it, shrouded the material realities of capitalism's contradictions in a numinous world of spiritual wholeness. It thus encouraged a withdrawal from political engagement in favor of freedom in a realm of spiritualized culture, and was the foundation of Japanism, or the fascist ideology of Japan. Watsuji was one of the intellectuals singled out by Tosaka as a leading exponent of this withdrawal into the religious realm of culture. Like the Japanese ideology generally, Buddhist cultural theories like those of Watsuji were a "sham" or a "trick," relying on concepts such as "existence" and "spirit," which had no function other than the neutralization of the dialectical antagonism of the contradictions of capitalism in a bogus realm of spiritual unity. Japanese Medievalism, in this critique, was part of liberalism's "religious consciousness" that supported the capitalist order.

The rediscovery of Tosaka's cultural fascism critique has, in recent decades, helped to fuel a renewed scholarly interest in the interwar discourse on Japanese culture.⁴

² Many historians use the term "medievalism" to describe the modern imagination of a medieval past that is part empirical history, part romantic fantasy. See Michael Alexander, *Medievalism: The Middle Ages in Modern England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007); R. Howard Bloch and Stephen G. Nichols, eds., *Medievalism and the Modernist Temper* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); Elizabeth Fay, *Romantic Medievalism: History and the Romantic Literary Ideal* (New York: Palgrave, 2002). On the imagination of a medieval past in modern Japan, see Thomas Keirstead, *Medieval Japan and the Making of a Modern Past* (forthcoming); Thomas Keirstead, "Inventing Medieval Japan: The History and Politics of National Identity," *The Medieval History Journal* Vol. 1 No. 1 (1998), pp. 47-71.

³ Tosaka Jun, *Nihon ideorogii ron: Gendai nihon ni okeru nihonshugi, fashizumu, jiyūshugi shisō no hihan* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1977).

⁴ Notable titles in the history of interwar Japanese cultural discourse published in the past two decades include Kim Brandt, *Kingdom of Beauty: Mingei and the Politics of Folk Art in Imperial Japan* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007); Richard Calichman, ed. and trans., *Overcoming Modernity: Cultural Identity in Wartime Japan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008); Kevin Doak, *Dreams of Difference: The Japan Romantic School and the Crisis of Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Harry

Though some historians had concluded by 1980 that fascism never functioned as an effective political movement in Japan, other scholars have more recently been discovering fascism in the interwar discourses on Japanese culture.⁵ Following Tosaka's cultural fascism critique, this rich body of scholarship illuminates the political functions of cultural discourses that are apolitical on the surface. More importantly, it highlights Japan's place in the international capitalist order, pointing out that the discourse of Japanese cultural authenticity was itself a badge of membership in the imperialist order of industrial nation states. In short, the recovery of Tosaka's critique of cultural fascism has helped to locate interwar Japanese cultural discourse in the global system of industrial capitalism, and provides an indispensable critical perspective for the study of Japanese Medievalism.

Like any analytical lens, the cultural fascism critique obscures as well as reveals. It correctly illuminates the political function of an interwar cultural discourse like Japanese Medievalism. But at the same time, cultural fascism reduces the religious element of cultural discourse entirely to its political function, viewing it as merely ideological and therefore devoid of any meaningful content. The use of fascism as an analytical framework has thus kept the study of modern Japanese religion separate from the critical study of interwar culture. Indeed, the very notion that Buddhism might be implicated with fascism in modern Japan has, in recent decades, galvanized the field of Religious Studies into critical self-awareness. Scholars have moved away from the study of religion as timeless, essentialized values and taken a sharp historical turn.⁶ Focusing

Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Tessa Morris-Suzuki, "The Invention and Re-Invention of 'Japanese Culture,'" *The Journal of Asian Studies* Vol. 54 No. 3 (Aug. 1995): 759-780; Leslie Pincus, *Authenticating Culture in Imperial Japan: Kuki Shūzō and the Rise of National Aesthetics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); Miriam Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense: The Mass Culture of Japanese Modern Times* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Alan Tansman, *The Aesthetics of Japanese Fascism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009); Alan Tansman, ed., *The Culture of Japanese Fascism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009).

⁵ Peter Duus and Daniel I. Okimoto, "Comment: Fascism and the History of Prewar Japan: The Failure of a Concept," *The Journal of Asian Studies* Vol. 39 No. 1 (Nov. 1979): 65-76.

⁶ Notable titles in the history of modern Japanese religion published in recent decades include James Edward Ketelaar, *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan: Buddhism and its Persecution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); Helen Hardacre, *Shintō and the State, 1868-1988* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989); Brian Daizen Victoria, *Zen at War* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006); Judith Snodgrass, *Presenting Japanese Buddhism to the West: Orientalism, Occidentalism, and the Columbian Expedition* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); James W. Heisig and John C. Maraldo, eds., *Rude Awakenings: Zen, the Kyoto School, and the Question of Nationalism* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1995); Jason Ānanda Josephson, *The Invention of Religion in Japan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012); Kiri Paramore, *Ideology and Christianity in Japan* (London: Routledge, 2009); Robert Sharf, "The Zen of Japanese Nationalism," *History of Religions* Vol. 33 No. 1

especially on the Meiji period (1868-1912), this research has shown that what has been understood as “religion” and “Buddhism” in modern times was itself a product of modernization. Modernizing intellectuals reinterpreted Buddhism through imported Western categories of religion and philosophy on the one hand, and through the new category of national history on the other. This constructivist interpretation of Meiji Buddhism has produced a robust and growing body of first-rate historical scholarship. Yet, the tacit premise of this scholarship is that the commingling of religious ideas with Westernization and nationalism has corrupted or distorted the tradition, and that the modern interpretations of Buddhism – including Japanese Medievalism – are not “really” Buddhism. In the end, the purpose of this historical perspective on Meiji religion has been to insulate the study of “legitimate” religion from fascism.

In short, scholarship on Meiji religion and scholarship on interwar cultural discourse have remained separate because of the use of mutually exclusive categories like “religion” and “fascism.” The purpose of this dissertation is to trace the history of Japanese Medievalism by taking it seriously as religious thought, but without sacrificing the critical perspective on its politically conservative ideological function. Breaking down the theoretical wall that separates Meiji religion from interwar cultural discourse, this dissertation avoids the use of the mutually exclusive categories of “religion” and “fascism” and, instead, attempts to illuminate the ambiguous relationship of religion to power by using the more accommodating concept of “antimodernism.”

Antimodernism is a broad, descriptive term that many intellectual and cultural historians have used to describe a tendency toward religious ambivalence within modernist discourse. As a form of modernism, antimodernism is an enthusiasm for technology and material progress, and a desire to imagine new subject positions. But at the same time, antimodernism is a kind of spiritual revolt against the disenchantment that progress creates, and a desire to re-enchant the modern world with religious significance.⁷ As Marshall Berman argued in his classic study of modernism, “to be fully modern is to be anti-modern:

(Aug. 1993): 1-43; Isomae Jun'ichi, *Kindai nihon no shūkyō gensetsu to sono keifu: shūkyō, kokka, Shintō* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2003); Sueki Fumihiko, *Kindai nihon no shisō saikō* 3 Vols. (Tokyo: Transview, 2004-2010); Yasumaru Yoshio, *Kamigami no Meiji ishin: shinbutsu bunro to haibutsu kishaku* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1979).

⁷ The term “anti-modernism” is used in the classic study, Marshall Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1988). Notable titles in the history of antimodernism include Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Lynda Jessup, ed., *Antimodernism and Artistic Experience: Policing The Boundaries of Modernity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001). Not all scholars who study this phenomenon use the term “antimodernism.” Jeffrey Herf, for example, uses the term “reactionary modernism” in Jeffrey Herf, *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture, and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); Raymond Williams uses the term “modernists against modernity” in Raymond Williams, *The Politics of Modernism: Against the New Conformists* (New York: Verso, 1989).

To be modern is to live a life of paradox and contradiction. It is to be overpowered by the immense bureaucratic organizations that have the power to control and often destroy all communities, values, lives; and yet to be undeterred in our determination to face these forces, to fight to change their world to make it our own. It is to be both revolutionary and conservative: alive to new possibilities for experience and adventure, frightened by the nihilistic depths to which so many modern adventures lead, longing to create and to hold on to something real even as everything melts. We might even say that to be fully modern is to be anti-modern: from Marx's and Dostoevsky's time to our own, it has been impossible to grasp and embrace the modern world's potentialities without loathing and fighting against some of its most palpable realities.⁸

The utility of the concept of antimodernism is that it embraces the religious ambivalence of modernist discourse – it takes seriously the religious revolt against industrial capitalism while remaining critical of its ideological complicity in it. Historians have used the concept of antimodernism to emphasize the ambiguous co-existence of religiosity and power in industrial societies. Art historian Lynda Jessup writes,

A broad, international reaction to the onslaught of the modern world that swept industrialized Western Europe, North America, and Japan in the decades around the turn of the century, antimodernism has been defined by historian Jackson Lears as the 'recoil from an 'overcivilized' modern existence to more intense forms of physical or spiritual experience.' Critically explored many years ago by Raymond Williams in *The Country and the City* as a form of consciousness – a structure of feeling – that gave rise to a 'sentimental ... unlocalised 'Old England' among the alienated urban population of industrializing Britain, what has come to be known as antimodernism is still more familiar today perhaps to cultural historians than to historians of art. In the field of cultural history, the term antimodernism is used to refer to the pervasive senses of loss that often coexisted in the decades around the turn of the century along with an enthusiasm for modernization and material progress. Thus antimodernism was often ambivalent and Janus-faced, smacking of accommodation as well as protest. It describes what was in effect a critique of the modern, a perceived lack in the present manifesting itself not only in a senses of alienation, but also in a longing for the types of physical or spiritual experience embodied in utopian futures and imagined pasts. As such, it embraces what was then a desire for the type of 'authentic', immediate experience supposedly embodied in pre-industrial societies – in medieval communities or 'Oriental' cultures, in the Primitive, the Traditional, or the Folk.⁹

Until now, the only real alternative to analyzing Japanese Medievalism as a form of cultural fascism has been to deny that it had any political function whatsoever, and was simply an innocent and transparent philosophical endeavor. By viewing the origin, evolution, and consequences of Japanese Medievalism through the lens of antimodernism

⁸ Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air*, 14.

⁹ Jessup, *Antimodernism and Artistic Experience*, 3.

instead of fascism, this dissertation destabilizes the theoretical walls that have kept Meiji religion and interwar cultural discourse in separate disciplinary boxes. It re-theorizes Japanese Medievalism in a new narrative that links it to the integration of Japan into global capitalism, and views it as a mode of religiosity that is specific to – and complicit in – the middle-class experience in modern industrial capitalist societies.

The central thesis of this dissertation is that Japanese Medievalism evolved through the dialectical antagonism between Buddhism and state ideology. Until the Meiji period (1868-1912), Buddhism and *kami* worship (the worship of Japan's "native gods") were not separated into exclusive theological systems with their own institutional homes. They were enshrined and worshipped together in a syncretic system that scholars call *shinbutsu shūgō*, or the Harmonization of *kami* and Buddha. Almost immediately after taking power in 1868, the Meiji government separated the two in a series of laws called the Separation of Kami and Buddha Edicts, or *shinbutsu bunri rei*. This separation was a necessary step in the early construction of Japanese state ideology. The worship of *kami* became a public representation of state power through the negation of Buddhism, which was officially renounced as a foreign superstition. This negation of Buddhism was an essential and enabling feature of state ideology. The dialectical antagonism of the two is the tension that animates the following narrative.

I trace the dialectical evolution of Buddhism and ideology through several stages. Chapter one examines the early years (1867-1886) of Japanese state ideology, which I refer to throughout the dissertation as the "Meiji Enlightenment." The Meiji Enlightenment was an ideological definition of reality, in which Shintō theology and evolutionary material progress were both deemed "real," while Buddhism was renounced as "myth." Buddhist priest Inoue Enryō, the subject of chapter two, countered this with a modern reinterpretation of Buddhist metaphysics, blending Buddhism with theories of evolution to argue for the "reality" of Buddhism. The Constitution of 1889, however, institutionalized the Meiji Enlightenment vision of reality as political orthodoxy, thus negating the reality of Enryō's metaphysical Buddhism. The Buddhist intellectuals treated in chapter three countered the Constitution and its related ideology of national morality by turning to the cultural history of Japan's medieval Buddhism. From 1889 to 1905, they argued that medieval Japanese Buddhism was an instrument for piercing the ideological illusion of the Meiji Enlightenment to reveal the true reality of existence. Their work was appropriated by non-Buddhist intellectuals, the subjects of chapter four, in order to confront the spiritual crisis of industrial capitalist Japan from 1905 to 1931. They established Japanese Medievalism in the cultural discourse of the interwar period.

In sum, this dissertation attempts to illuminate the inseparable relationship between religiosity and ideology at the heart of Japanese Medievalism. The incorporation of Japan into the global capitalist system resulted in the construction of a state ideology that necessitated the negation of Buddhism. This ideological negation provoked a spiritual crisis among Buddhist intellectuals who, in response, led a renaissance in Buddhist philosophy in the Meiji period that, later, provided a solution to the spiritual crisis of life in an industrial capitalist society. The intellectual history of Japanese Medievalism is the story of a religious crisis provoked by state ideology. The attempt to overcome that spiritual crisis was at once a religious and an ideological exercise that both defied and complied with state power.

Chapter One. The Meiji Enlightenment and the Crisis of Buddhism, 1867-1886

Japan's modern revolution – the Meiji Restoration of 1868 – created a unique dilemma for Buddhism.¹⁰ In the Meiji Restoration, a coalition of radical courtiers and samurai from the domains of Satsuma and Chōshū (Sat-Chō), known to history as the “Meiji oligarchs,” overthrew the government of the shogun and proclaimed the restoration of rule by the Japanese Emperor (*tennō*).¹¹ The Meiji oligarchs invoked the divine authority of the *kami* (Japan's “native gods”) to legitimize their new regime. Immediately after taking power in 1868, the government laid the foundations for its ruling ideology with a series of edicts called the Separation of *kami* from Buddha Edicts (*shinbutsu bunri rei*).¹² Prior to 1868, the Japanese worshipped and enshrined Buddhist deities together with *kami* in a syncretic theology that scholars call the Harmonization of the *kami* and the Buddha (*shinbutsu shūgō*).¹³ Buddhist priests had a public function in the pre-1868 order. They were granted titles by the imperial court that authorized them to perform public rites on behalf of the state. The 1868 Separation Edicts revoked those titles, and they separated, for the first time, the *kami* from Buddhism in public worship. Over a thousand years after the introduction of Buddhism into Japan, the leaders of the new Meiji government renounced Buddhism as an obstacle to modernization, calling it a superstition of the past, a foreign creed, and an economic parasite. The Separation Edicts triggered a wave of anti-Buddhist activity, epitomized by the slogan *haibutsu kishaku* (Ban Buddhism, Destroy Shakyamuni). Temples and clergy were drastically reduced in number, temple lands and properties were confiscated for official use, and Buddhist icons destroyed. The Meiji Restoration thus threw Japanese Buddhism into the direst crisis of

¹⁰ See Yasumaru, *Kamigami no Meiji ishin*; Haga Shōji, *Meiji ishin to shūkyō* (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1994); Tamamuro Fumio, *Shinbutsu bunri* (Tokyo: Kyōikusha shuppan sabisu, 1977); Tamamuro Fumio, “On the Suppression of Buddhism,” in *New Directions in the Study of Meiji Japan*, ed. Helen Hardacre and Adam L. Kern (New York: Brill, 1997), 499-505; Richard Jaffe, “The Buddhist Cleric as Japanese Subject: Buddhism and the Household Registration System” in *New Directions in the Study of Meiji Japan*, 506-530; Ketelaar, *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan*; Martin Collcutt, “Buddhism: The Threat of Eradication,” in *Japan in Transition*, ed. Marius Jansen and Gilbert Rozman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 143-167.

¹¹ For accounts of the Meiji Restoration in English, see W. G. Beasley, *The Meiji Restoration* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972); Albert Craig, *Chōshū in the Meiji Restoration* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961); H. D. Harootunian, *Towards Restoration: The Growth of Political Consciousness in Tokugawa Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970); Marius Jansen, *Sakamoto Ryōma and the Meiji Restoration* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961); E. H. Norman, *Japan's Emergence as a Modern State: Political and Economic Problems of the Meiji Period, 60th Anniversary Edition*, ed. Lawrence T. Woods (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2000).

¹² The Edicts are reprinted in Tamamuro Fumio, *Shinbutsu bunri*, 120-124; see also Hardacre, *Shintō and the State*, 27-28; Ketelaar, *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan*, 8-10.

¹³ Sueki Fumihiko, *Chūsei no kami to hotoke* (Tokyo: Yamakawa Shuppansha, 2007).

its long history. Japan was about to make a leap into the future, and it intended to leave Buddhism in the past.

The separation of Buddhism from *kami* was a necessary and enabling innovation in the forging of modern Japan's ruling ideology. This chapter examines the process by which the power of the Meiji oligarchs was ideologically legitimized through the separation of *kami* from Buddhism, using the theological language of the *kami* to rearticulate Meiji power as divine authority, and simultaneously negating Buddhism as a mere superstition. This was, in effect, an exercise in defining the structure of reality itself – an ideology that I call the “Meiji Enlightenment.”

The question of whether an Enlightenment occurred in Japan is a familiar one in the historiography of modern Japan. Many scholars have tried to answer this question using an idealized model of the European Enlightenment. According to this model, an Enlightenment is the triumph of reason over superstition.¹⁴ The faculty of reason, the argument runs, liberates the individual from the ignorance of the past. Armed with critical reason, the individual purges superstition from political and social institutions in order to create a rational secular sphere and critical public discourse. Enlightenment, in other words, is an awakening to objective reality through reason. Scholars have identified such an Enlightenment in the early Meiji period's Civilization and Enlightenment (*bunmei kaika*) movement, represented by the *Meirokeisha* (Meiji 6 Society), a study group dedicated to European Enlightenment thought (*keimō*) and its application in Japan.¹⁵ This promising attempt to shake off the delusions of Japan's irrational past proved abortive, however, as the mythology of Japan's imperial institution became the basis of state ideology in the late Meiji period, undermining Japan's rational development and, ultimately, setting Japan on the path to the disastrous Pacific War.

This chapter revisits the question of Enlightenment in Japan with a Critical Theory perspective. Rather than view Enlightenment as an innocent revelation of objective reality through the transparent lens of reason, this chapter considers Enlightenment as the ideological construction of reality. Frankfurt School philosophers Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer pioneered the critique of Enlightenment in their 1944 classic *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Enlightenment, for them, was a mode of ideological domination in which the Enlightener acts as arbiter of what is real and what is

¹⁴ For classic statements of the Enlightenment as the Age of Reason include Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation*, 2 Vols. (New York: Knopf, 1966-1969); Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, trans. Fritz C. A. Koelln and James P. Pettegrove (Boston: Beacon Press, 1965).

¹⁵ For standard accounts of Enlightenment in Japan, see Carmen Blacker, *The Japanese Enlightenment: A Study of the Writings of Fukuzawa Yukichi* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964); Albert Craig, *Civilization and Enlightenment: The Early Thought of Fukuzawa Yukichi* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009); Craig, “Fukuzawa Yukichi: The Philosophical Foundations of Meiji Nationalism,” in *Political Development in Modern Japan*, ed. Robert Ward (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 99-148; Earl Kinmonth, “Fukuzawa Reconsidered: *Gakumon no susume* and its Audience,” *Journal of Asian Studies* XXXVII.4 (1978); Kenneth Pyle, “Meiji Conservatism” in *Cambridge History of Japan Vol. 5* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

fanciful in order to reorganize society accordingly. Enlightenment identifies true reality as that which can withstand empirical verification, mathematical quantification, or literal interpretation. Myth, the cast-off remainder, is deemed mere fancy. It is consigned to a benighted immaturity that seeks an invisible world of meaning by gazing at the visible world of matter through the veil of animism. Enlightened knowledge does not seek to *understand* the world, but rather to *control* it through the identification and manipulation of the universal truths of reason that govern it. This knowledge, Adorno and Horkheimer argue, is the technology of the modern capitalist state. It is the instrument by which the central bureaucracy mobilizes and exploits all material and human resources within its national space. The state's mastery over this space is total, for it can know (i.e., control) all that is material, and that which is not material simply does not exist. Knowledge, in the modern polity, is positive knowledge: the literal representation of actual reality deployed for the covert purpose of exploitation and ideologically concealed by its apparently innocuous self-evidence. "Enlightenment is totalitarian."¹⁶

Drawing on the critique of Enlightenment described above, this chapter argues that the ideology of the Meiji government was an Enlightenment – an attempt to define reality for the purposes of political domination. The Restoration leadership undertook the modernization of Japanese politics and industry for the purposes of integrating Japan into the international imperialist order of industrial capitalist nation-states. It appealed to the universal laws of reason in order to identify and control what was real. In this sense, it was an Enlightenment like any other. But the instrumentalism of positivist skepticism alone does not make an Enlightenment. It explains how the world of matter works, but does not seek to understand what it means. More than a purely mechanical view of the universe, an Enlightenment is also a story that explains the purpose of existence through a narrative of progress. The narrative of progress is not a mere accessory to the ideology of Enlightenment. It is a vital, enabling component. The narrative of progress confers meaning upon the cold instrumentalism of reason, while reason in turn provides the instrument with which the Enlightener reorganizes society. This is why Enlightenments, wherever they occur, are local historical events. Their narratives of progress are inextricably linked with the particular ideology that legitimizes the local ruling power.

In the case of Japan, the Meiji oligarchs legitimized their rule theocratically by linking themselves to the theology of Japan's native *kami*. The Meiji Enlightenment thus not only sought to reorganize Japan according to the scientific realities of reason. It also sought to reorganize Japan according to the theological reality of Shintō (as *kami* worship was later called). The Meiji Enlightenment was an ideological partnership of scientific progress and Japan's mythic history. It simultaneously legitimized the authority of the oligarchs as well as their modernization project. Though the scientific and theological realities they defined were contradictory and served different purposes, together they constituted a mode of thought in which the theology of the imperial institution conferred meaning upon material progress. As can be seen in its founding document, the Charter Oath of 1868, the Meiji government projected its authority through the figure of the heroic Enlightener the Emperor Meiji (literally, "Illuminated Rule"), the mythic descendant of Japan's ancestral deities who would lead Japan out of the benighted past

¹⁶ Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. John Cumming (New York: Continuum, 2002).

and into a glorious new age of progress. From the beginning, then, both imperial myth and evolutionary progress together constituted the positive knowledge of the Meiji Enlightenment. The Meiji leadership not only forbade the denial of the imperial myth's reality, it placed the myth at the very center of Meiji Enlightenment discourse. The imperial institution was to be the cardinal value of the Meiji Enlightenment and the subject of progress – a position occupied by the concept of universal humanity in European Enlightenment discourse. Just as the narrative of universal human progress and scientific positivism are symbiotically linked in European Enlightenment discourse, so the narrative of imperial progress is linked with scientific positivism in the Meiji Enlightenment. It is not a corruption of Enlightenment thought – it is the essential enabling narrative for scientific modernization

This chapter traces the evolution of the Meiji Enlightenment from 1867 to 1886. It begins with Meiji power in its original, pre-ideological form of naked violent coercion, and tracks the stages through which that power was concealed in successive layers of ideological representation – how violence, in other words, sublimated into authority. The Meiji Enlightenment developed through three stages between 1867 and 1886: first, Meiji power was legitimized as theocratic authority in an ideological language of liturgy, and then in an ideological language of doctrine. Finally, the theocratic authority of Meiji was re-articulated as scientific knowledge, resulting in the complete structure of the Meiji Enlightenment. At each of these three stages, the use of the theology of the *kami* as an ideological representation of authority necessitated the negation of Buddhism, to which the *kami* had been traditionally linked. Buddhism reconfigured itself in response to each negation, thus creating the dialectical tension that helped the ideology of the Meiji Enlightenment evolve.

1. The Genesis of Meiji Power

Tokugawa Yoshinobu (1837-1913) was Japan's last shogun. On November 9, 1867, he voluntarily ceded his political authority back to its theoretical source, the Emperor. This brought nearly three centuries of Tokugawa rule to a close. It also marked a kind of anti-climax of restorationism – the ideological movement to restore imperial rule. The roots of restorationism ran back at least as far as the 1820s, when discontent spread among lower-ranking samurai who bore social humiliations and economic burdens which they attributed to incompetent leadership. Restorationism acquired greater urgency after American gunboats forcibly opened Japanese ports to foreign trade in 1853. New contestants appeared on the national political scene, each seeking a place in a new authority structure based upon direct imperial rule. The 1860s witnessed the high tide of restorationism. Its players engaged in terrorism, political machinations, and open warfare in a volatile environment of ever-shifting alliances among themselves. It all ended, somewhat preemptively, with Yoshinobu's renunciation of power. The restoration of imperial rule was now, if only technically, an accomplished fact.

Restorationism was an ideology of action, not of rule. Its narrative of loyalty to the divine Emperor, Japan's rightful sovereign whose rule had been usurped, channeled the angst of alienated samurai and courtiers into political will. The sole object of this political will was the capture of the power center. It was of no practical use once

restoration had been accomplished. With the resignation of Yoshinobu, restorationism ceased to be a radical ideology of action and entered into the official public discourse of legitimate rule. Yoshinobu declared his resignation in a brief document called the Return of Great Authority (*taisei hōkan*, hereafter “the Return”), submitted to the Emperor (*tennō*) on November 9, 1867. The Return was in fact the instrument of imperial restoration.¹⁷ It transposed the ideology of restorationism from radical opposition into the official public orthodoxy of pre-Meiji politics. At the core of the Return is Yoshinobu’s unequivocal acceptance of shogunal incompetence, a charge that had been an essential axiom of restoration thought. The Return embeds this *mea culpa* in a narrative that recounts the historical passing of political responsibility from the Emperor to the bureaucracy in ancient times, then to the samurai in the twelfth century, and ultimately to the samurai House of Tokugawa. Acknowledging the contemporary political disorder as the result of his own failure to carry out the responsibilities entrusted to the House of Tokugawa by the Emperor, Yoshinobu publically and officially renounced all authority so that a new political arrangement, one based on discussion and cooperation of *daimyō* under the singular authority of the Emperor, could be made. The emphasis on discussion merely indicated that he was renouncing the shogun’s traditional monopoly over foreign policy decisions, not mandating a representative democratic assembly. Yoshinobu also renounced the title of shogun in a separate document on November 19.¹⁸

But the content of the text alone does not tell the whole story. A complete reading of the Return of Great Authority must account for the symbolic performance of its submission. The Return was a bureaucratic operation enacted within the Tokugawa institutional structure. By submitting the Return formally to the Emperor, and receiving from the Emperor a formal acknowledgment of its acceptance the following day, Yoshinobu in fact reaffirmed the legitimacy of the established circuits of power.¹⁹ The Return achieved restoration through bureaucratic procedure, and confirmed the legitimacy of that bureaucracy.

Read as a continuous ideological text, the Return of Great Authority and its symbolic context present an ambiguous re-articulation of the authority structure. On the one hand, the Return of Great Authority was a last-ditch attempt at conservative reform. It appropriated restoration ideology into the official public discourse in order to de-radicalize and control it, while preserving as much real power as possible. In the context of Tokugawa ideology, restoring imperial authority may indeed have seemed a plausible, if extreme, reform. The concept of imperial authority was hardly novel. Throughout the Tokugawa period, intellectuals who attempted to follow the logic of legitimate authority to its generative source were inevitably led back to the Emperor.²⁰ In the political fiction

¹⁷ Kunaichō, ed., *Meiji tennō ki (MTK)*, 12 Vols. (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1968-1977), Vol. 1., 527-528; English translation available in W. W. McLaren, ed., *Japanese Government Documents, Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* 42 1st Ser., pt. 1 (1917), 1.

¹⁸ *MTK* Vol. 1, 534-535.

¹⁹ *MTK* Vol. 1, 528-529.

²⁰ See Kate Wildman Nakai, *Shogunal Politics: Arai Hakuseki and the Premises of Tokugawa Rule* (Cambridge: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University Press, 1988).

that was Tokugawa ideology, shogunal power and imperial authority existed as a diarchy, in which shogunal (real) power depended upon the ritual observance of imperial (ideological) authority. But as early as the eighteenth century, the work of Arai Hakuseki made clear that the ultimate rationalization of Tokugawa ideology would require the absolutization of the shogun as king.²¹ The Return of Great Authority was perhaps Yoshinobu's most extreme attempt at conservative reform, in that he attempted to preserve the power arrangements underwritten by Tokugawa ideology by co-opting the narrative of radical loyalist ideology – the failure of leaders entrusted with imperial authority – and then to make ritual observance of it. That is, his voluntary renunciation of power is legitimized as loyal action, and Yoshinobu himself as chief loyalist.

The consensus among historians who have scrutinized the intentions and motivations of Yoshinobu support this view. Formal renunciation of authority was in fact the last realistic move available to Yoshinobu in restoration *realpolitik*. He consented to this at the urging of a faction of restorationists from Tosa, including Gotō Shōjirō and Sakamoto Ryōma, whose post-restoration vision is echoed in the Return of Great Authority. The Tosa loyalists promoted a solution that was less punitive toward the shogun than that of the other major restorationist faction of (now allied) Satsuma and Chōshū. They warned Yoshinobu that the shogunate would not withstand another military attack from the Sat-Chō faction. Formal renunciation would allow him to retain a modicum, possibly a preponderance, of power in a post-Tokugawa order. The Return of Great Authority was intended to change, it seems, very little in real terms. By officially restoring imperial authority himself and then placing himself in the position of closest proximity to the Emperor, Yoshinobu preempted the work of more radical restorationists. This move denied Satsuma and Chōshū their major strategy, in which they would achieve restoration by toppling the corrupt shogunate and claiming moral authority as the true loyalists. The shogun had resigned, and the Emperor was now the highest legitimizing authority in official political discourse. There was, as yet, no concrete plan for a post-Tokugawa polity. A conference of *daimyō*, which Yoshinobu expected to dominate, was planned to discuss the design of the new polity.

For the purposes of this study, however, authorial intent is less significant than the ideological consequences, even if unintended, of the Return. In this respect the Return of Great Authority was epoch-making. It reconfigured the structure of legitimizing authority by co-opting the ideological narrative of “loyal action in crisis” into official public discourse. In this structure, Yoshinobu's bureaucratic procedure is paradoxically legitimized as loyal action. But although intended to legitimize the status quo, the co-optation of restorationism's ideology of action into official public discourse had an unintended and irreversible consequence. Tokugawa ideology could no longer function as it had after the Emperor-shogun diarchic structure had been renounced. Though still in a position of real power, Yoshinobu no longer monopolized the ideological claim to the will of the Emperor. Claims to the will of Emperor would now mediate real political action in mainstream politics among a more open field of contestants. This is the essence of modern Japanese political discourse. The Emperor was formally acknowledged as the chief political value and the direct target of political loyalty. The appropriation of restorationism into official public ideology made direct loyal action legitimate.

²¹ Nakai, *Shogunal Politics*, 190-201.

Dominating the emerging order, whatever that would be, was now a matter of linking oneself to the already-restored Emperor, not of overthrowing the shogunate. In short, the Return of Great Authority qualitatively changed the structure of ruling ideology in Japan.

Yoshinobu made an ideological renunciation of power with the Return, but he was not stripped of actual power until January 3, 1868. On that date, Yoshinobu planned a conference of *daimyō* at the imperial palace to discuss the structure of the new polity. The proceedings were interrupted, however, by the leaders of the Sat-Chō restoration clique (Saigō Takamori (1828-1877) and Ōkubo Toshimichi (1830-1878) of Satsuma and Kido Takayoshi (1833-1877) and Takasugi Shinsaku (1839-1867) of Chōshū). They carried out an armed *coup d'état*, seizing the imperial palace and proclaiming before the startled assembly the dawn of a new order.

The ideological contours of the Sat-Chō coup are discernible in its official public proclamation, the Great Order of the Revival of Ancient Kingship (*ōsei fukko no daigōrei*, hereafter “the Great Order”).²² This text is a narrative of romantic nationalism. It conjures for the reader or listener an aesthetic experience in which the immediate present unites with the original genesis point in a sublime moment occurring outside of historical time. The Great Order announces the abolition of all posts of the old bureaucratic order, (including *shogun*, *sesshō* and *kanpaku*) and the establishment of the Three Offices (*sanshoku*), the legendary institution created by Japan’s mythic founder Emperor Jimmu. It appoints by name an executive (*sōsai*), legislators (*gijō*), and councilors (*san’yo*) of the Three Offices. It also calls for the revival of the ancient departments of state, which were established February 10, 1868.²³ In other words, the Great Order replaced the historical bureaucracy with the mythic one. The Great Order states that this sublime communion of the present with the nation’s prelapsarian state of grace, as it were, will purge the corruptions that accrued in the intervening centuries. These corruptions compromised the nation’s original unity with the distinctions of aristocrat, warrior, and bureaucrat, and left it helpless to confront the foreign threat. The narrative form of the Great Order conjures a sublime moment which elicits an aesthetic response of awe. The power that inspires this awe, in the context of the narrative, is the sacred will of the Emperor Meiji. The revival of ancient kingship was, the Great Order states, the Emperor Meiji’s wish. The restoration of the nation’s original purity will allow the open discussion, national unity, and loyal service that the nation required in this crisis that had caused the former Emperor Kōmei continuous unease, and which the recent resignation of the shogun had done nothing to ameliorate.

Like the Return of Great Authority, the meaning of the Great Order of the Revival of Ancient Kingship is dependent as much upon the symbolic circumstances of its promulgation as upon the content of its text. As already noted, the Great Order was proclaimed in a show of force. The armed seizure of the imperial palace and takeover of the political proceedings therein must also be considered a part of the Great Order. In stark contrast to the Return of Great Authority, in which we observed bureaucratic procedure as text, in the Great Order we see action as text. The event itself was the climax of a longer act of loyalism that began the day before.²⁴ Satsuma loyalist samurai

²² *MTK* Vol. 1, 554-562.

²³ *MTK* Vol. 1, 598.

²⁴ *MTK* Vol. 1, 556.

Saigō and Ōkubo, understanding the import of the moment, persuaded Chōshū samurai of the immediate necessity to intervene. They rescued from exile the court noble Iwakura Tomomi (1825-1883), who had been banished for his radical anti-Tokugawa position and, as such, had become a key court ally of Satsuma. The liberation of Iwakura was not only a loyalist act of defiance. It also provided Sat-Chō with a claim, even if fabricated, to the will of the Emperor. It also provided them with the Great Order itself, which Iwakura had composed in exile. The Sat-Chō clique spent the previous night, from dusk to dawn, in intense deliberation with members of the court regarding what action should be taken, finally resolving their will to deliver the *coup de grace*. Following the coup, the leaders held the first meeting of the Three Offices (*kogojō kaigi*), in which they formally proclaimed the Great Order and decided not to negotiate with Yoshinobu.²⁵

The Great Order of the Revival of Ancient Kingship technically did not restore the Emperor, despite its drastic reconfiguration of power. That had been accomplished by the Return of Great Authority. The Sat-Chō loyalists were operating within an ideological structure that was already different from that of Tokugawa ideology. This Emperor was a modern ideological construct, the highest and sole political legitimizer, unlike the eclectic legitimizing powers of Tokugawa ideology.²⁶ It was not monopolized by any position within the bureaucracy, as it had been in Tokugawa ideology. The modern Emperor concept already in operation indicates that Meiji ideology was growing piecemeal and organically out of pragmatic power politics.

Nevertheless, the Great Order repudiates the power structure underwritten by the Return of Great Authority, both ideological and real, in obvious ways. The Return posits the Emperor as the central legitimizing organ of the already-existing bureaucratic structure. It transposes restorationism's ideology of loyal action onto this Emperor-as-bureaucratic-organ. The Great Order by contrast dissolves all existing bureaucratic structures and re-positions the Emperor in an ahistorical religious authority structure of romantic nationalism: a return to the original, uncorrupted national polity established by the divine founder in the Age of the Gods. The structure of the Great Order elicits an aesthetic response of awe by taking the listener through a narrative culminating in a sublime religious moment. The power that inspires that awe, in the context of the narrative, is the divine will of the Emperor Meiji. The actual power that inspires that awe, however, is Sat-Chō's display of violent power. The raw power of Sat-Chō is here ideologized as divine imperial will to be experienced as a sublime religious moment: violent, terrifying, and omnipotent. The coup is the Meiji Restoration at its zenith: pure action as legitimate power. The Great Order, accordingly, marks the genesis of the theocratic ideological representation of that power. Like the display of power that it ideologizes, the theocratic ideology of the Great Order casts its spell through performance.

²⁵ *MTK* Vol. 1, 560-561.

²⁶ Herman Ooms, *Tokugawa Ideology: Early Constructs: 1570-1680* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985).

2. The Department of Divinity and Liturgical Ideology, 1868-1872

The Bureau of Divinity (*jingi jimukyoku*) was the highest of the seven “ancient” offices reestablished on February 10, 1868, as per the Great Order. Its staff of theologians was responsible for the performance of rites (*jingi saishi*), administration of the imperial institution’s ancestral shrines at Ise (*hafuribe*), and the management of shrine registries (*kanbe*). The reinstatement of this office as a concrete realization of the Revival of Ancient Kingship (*ōsei fukko*) had been a goal of nineteenth-century nativists (*kokugakusha*) Ōkuni Takamasa and Yano Harumichi, as well as the hereditary ritualist houses of Shirakawa and Yoshida. It became an ideological rallying point for anti-Tokugawa loyalists, especially Iwakura and Ōkubo, who were instrumental in having the office established.²⁷ The reestablishment of the Bureau of Divinity catapulted to the political nerve center of the new government a handful of courtiers, nativists, and ritualists who represented a radical minority of religious fundamentalists in the nineteenth century. Their task was the transposition of the theocratic ideology that was used to represent the violent power of the state at the coup into a system of auratic symbolism. In this way, they were the state’s first official intellectuals, in that they sublimated raw power into a routinized system of meaning.

The government empowered the Bureau as its intellectual apparatus on April 5, 1868 with the Unification of Rite and Rule (*saisei itchi*) decree.²⁸ The decree reprises the romantic Revival of Ancient Kingship narrative already seen in the Great Order. It also introduces the concept of Unification of Rite and Rule, or the expression of the imperial will through liturgy. Unification of Rite and Rule, the decree states, had been Emperor Jimmu’s original method of rule in the Age of the Gods, and the actual governmental structure in Japanese High Antiquity (*jōdai*). The decree charges the Bureau of Divinity with the task of ideologically representing the imperial will through liturgy. To empower the Bureau for this function, the Unification of Rite and Rule decree declared all shrines and their administrators under the Bureau’s jurisdiction.

In practical terms, this meant purging shrines of Buddhist priests and Buddha worship. As noted above, shrines in pre-Meiji Japan enshrined both Buddhas and *kami* in a syncretic theology that scholars call Harmonization of the *kami* and Buddha. So-called shrine priests (*bettō* and *shasō*) in the old system were granted titles (*sōkan* and *sōi*) which allowed them to perform ritual in shrines. The Unification of Rite and Rule decree stripped shrine priests of these titles and ordered their laicization. This was the first of the Separation of *kami* from Buddha edicts. Others followed over the next two months: removal from shrines of all images and instruments relating to the veneration of Buddhas (April 20, 1868); granting the lay title of intendant (*jōkannushi* and *shajin*) to shrine priests, with the stipulation that veneration of the Buddhas in an official capacity is strictly prohibited (May 25, 1868); and the requirement for shrine priests and their families receive *kami* death rites (June 8, 1868).²⁹ The expulsion of Buddhist priests and

²⁷ Yasumaru, *Kamigami no Meiji ishin*, 46-49; Sakamoto Koremaru, *Meiji ishin to kokugakusha*, (Tokyo: Kaimeidō, 1994), 1-26.

²⁸ *MTK* Vol 1, 645-646.

²⁹ Reprinted in Tamamuro Fumio, *Shinbutsu bunri*, 120-124.

Buddhist worship from *kami* worship was the necessary premise of Meiji ideology. For the *kami* was now the ideological guise of state power.

By granting the Bureau of Divinity a monopoly on the practice and administration of *kami* worship, the Unification of Rite and Rule decree created what we may call the first public sphere in modern Japan. That is, it authorized a sphere of discourse that represented before the people the will of the Emperor – i.e., the ideological guise of the power of the Meiji government. Within this sphere, the Emperor was the first public person. He did not *represent* the nation of Japan, but rather, he *was* the nation. The Bureau's monopoly on the public representation of the imperial will within this official sphere was tantamount to a monopoly on the representation of the real within the polity of Japan. The exclusion of Buddhism from this sphere meant that Buddhism was not a representation of the real. The separation of Buddha from *kami* thus created the essential dialectic of Meiji ideology, for the reality of the *kami* depended upon the un-reality of the Buddha.

The discourse of representation within this public sphere was liturgy, a performed discourse that created meaning through aesthetic form. The power of the Bureau lay in its monopolization of the arcana of this liturgy. Meiji theocracy was conceived at the coup through the Great Order's ideologization of the display of state power. Now, violent power was concealed, and the auratic power it had vested in theocratic ideology is now reproduced aesthetically in liturgy. As the phrase Unification of Rite and Rule indicates, the imperial will is represented through religious ceremony.

The timing of the Unification of Rite and Rule decree is important. The Meiji oligarchy and Yoshinobu were locked in a civil war known as the Boshin (Year of the Dragon) War. Yoshinobu had declared his non-recognition of the Sat-Chō coup on January 17, and his forces clashed with Sat-Chō at the battles of Toba and Fushimi, south of Kyoto, on January 27. By February 8 Osaka castle had fallen to Sat-Chō, and Yoshinobu had fled to Edo. Foreign delegates in Japan officially recognized the Meiji oligarchy as the government of Japan, and resolved not to interfere in the civil war.³⁰ Saigō Takamori was set to launch an all-out attack on Edo on April 7. In anticipation, the Meiji leaders planned a ceremony to secure the loyalty of undecided members of the political class in their final push against Tokugawa loyalists.³¹ The government empowered the Bureau on April 5 to design the ceremony that was to take place on April 6 at the request of Kido Takayoshi on the day before the attack.³² At this ceremony, we may observe the liturgical ideology of the Bureau in action.

The Bureau of Divinity's theology drew on the Hirata-school nativist thought of Yano Harumichi.³³ Yano's *Humble Petition of a Fool (Kenkin sengo)* of 1867 became a kind of handbook for the restoration nativists. In it, Yano drew on the ritual life of High Antiquity (*jōdai*) in the Nara period as a more concrete model for the Unification of Rite and Rule than the vaguely defined age of the gods. This emphasis on High Antiquity is

³⁰ Hōya Tōru, *Boshin Sensō* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2007), 153.

³¹ Hōya, *Boshin Sensō*, 153-155.

³² *MTK* Vol. 1, 647-652.

³³ Sakamoto, *Meiji ishin to kokugakusha*, 51-81; Yasumaru, *Kamigami no Meiji ishin*, 60-61; Susan Burns, *Before the Nation: Kokugaku and the Imagining of Community in Early Modern Japan* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 189-190.

operant in the Unification of Rite and Rule decree. According to Yano, imperial rule bore ritual responsibilities to two types of deity: *tenjin chigi* (the Myriad Gods of Heaven and Earth) and *kōrei* (Imperial Spirits). *Tenjin chigi* was an ancient Chinese concept, denoting the primal, elemental forces of creation that require appeasement. Its veneration was a central component of the Chinese-modeled Nara state on which Yano based his theology, a point on which mainstream nativists sharply differed. *Kōrei* included the line of emperors and gods recorded in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, the subsequent historical emperors, as well as loyalist martyrs and heroes such as Kusunoki Masashige, Oda Nobunaga, and Toyotomi Hideyoshi.

The April 6 ceremony was a ritual veneration of *tenjin chigi* (*tenjin chigi gosaisei*, hereafter “the Ritual”). It was designed by Yano and Mutoke, and was conducted in the presence of the state’s legislators and councilors, and some four hundred lords, courtiers, and officials of the defunct Tokugawa order.³⁴ It took place in the ritual chamber (*shishiiden*) in the imperial palace of Kyoto, at an altar (*shinden*) constructed there for the ceremony. Ritualists opened the ceremony by summoning *tenjin chigi* to a shrine. Through the incantation of arcane language, the formal presentation and manipulation of sacral objects, and the stylized comportment and costume of ritual, the Ritual aurally and visually conjures the aesthetic presence of the Age of the Gods, thus enacting the Revival of Ancient Kingship narrative. Then the Emperor Meiji and the president of the Three Offices, represented by Iwakura Tomomi and Sanjō Sanetomi (1837-1891), entered the room. Sanjō and the Emperor each venerated the shrine.

Then, Sanjō read aloud the Charter Oath in Five Articles (*gokajō no goseimon*, hereafter “Charter Oath”). The Charter Oath, composed by Kido Takayoshi of Chōshū, Yuri Kimimasa (1829-1912) of Echizen, and Fukuoka Takachika (1835-1919) of Tosa, was the first official statement of the Sat-Chō oligarchs’ intended direction for the new polity. The final version that was formally promulgated at the Ritual is as follows:

Deliberative assemblies shall be widely established and all matters decided by public discussion.

All classes, high and low, shall unite in vigorously carrying out the administration of affairs of state.

The common people, no less than civil and military officials, shall each be allowed to pursue his own calling so that there may be no discontent.

Evil customs of the past shall be broken off and everything based upon the just laws of Nature.

Knowledge shall be sought throughout the world so as to strengthen the foundations of imperial rule.³⁵

³⁴ *MTK* Vol. 1, 647-652; see also John Breen, “The Imperial Oath of 1868: Ritual, Politics, and Power in the Restoration,” *Monumenta Nipponica* Vol. 51 No. 4 (Winter, 1996): 407-429; Ketelaar, *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan*, 88-89; Haga, *Meiji ishin to shūkyō*, 51-60.

³⁵ Translation in Wm. Theodore de Bary, et al., eds., *Sources of Japanese Tradition, Vol. 2, 1600-2000 Abridged, Part 2 1868-2000* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006) p. 8.

Each article proclaims the annihilation of the political, social, and cultural pillars of the old order, collectively sounding a declaration of creative destruction and the imminence of a heroic new age. By suspending the legal structures that had defined rulers against one another (1), rulers against the ruled (2), the ruled against one another (3), and all of the above against the outside world (4), the text projects a view of unobstructed vistas and a heightened sense of a present moment ripe for action. The identification of imperial sovereignty with foreign learning (5), which here means modern Western learning (*yōgaku*), provides the implement of creative destruction with which to tear down the evil customs (4) of the past that negatively define the true knowledge of the imperial present.

The narrative of the Charter Oath differs from the romantic nationalism of the Revival of Ancient Kingship. It does not project a communion of the present with the genesis point in a sublime moment outside of time. The Charter Oath is a future-oriented narrative of evolutionary progress: an imminent departure, a lifting of the yoke of past ignorance and servitude and a promise of greater freedom by aligning with the universal laws of nature. At the same time, its voice is totalitarian. It arrogates to itself the authority to identify and cast off certain elements of culture as ignorance or fancy, and to affirm others as the true reality. This maneuver allows total mastery over reality, for that which is real can be known and controlled, and that which is not knowable and controllable simply does not exist. Combining progressive and authoritarian elements, the Charter Oath projects the cultural logic of Enlightenment – a profound contrast with the romantic nationalism of the Revival of Ancient Kingship.

After the recitation of the Charter Oath, Sanjō read aloud the following Vow (*seiyaku*) to the Emperor to uphold the Charter Oath:

We are truly overawed by the boundless nature of the imperial will. May the crisis of the day make way for the establishment of these eternal principles [of governance]. We, your subjects, humbly submit to your will. We pledge our lives to you and shall spare no efforts in our devotion to duty. May we put His Majesty's mind at ease.³⁶

The legislators each venerated the shrine and signed the vow. The president and Emperor left the ceremony hall, and the remaining witnesses each venerated the shrine and signed the vow. The ritualists closed the four-hour ceremony by dismissing *tenjin chigi*.

The liturgical summoning of *tenjin chigi* created the aesthetic presence of the Age of the Gods, thus enacting the sublime religious communion of the Revival of Ancient Kingship narrative. As argued above, this liturgical ideology was the earliest form of public discourse in the new state. It represented the divine will of the Emperor, who was the nation and thereby the only one authorized to mandate what is real and true in the nation. At the Ritual, the Emperor willed the structural transformation of the polity in the Charter Oath. The narrative of the Charter Oath is antithetical to that of the Revival of Ancient Kingship: The Charter Oath evokes a departure from the immediate past through the elimination of ignorant customs, while the Revival proclaims a union with the remote past through the revival of ancient kingship. The Charter Oath negates political hierarchy in favor of the universal laws of nature, while the Ritual affirms the mythologically

³⁶ Translation in Breen, “The Imperial Oath of 1868,” 412.

justified political hierarchy under the Emperor. The Charter Oath proclaims the validity of foreign learning, the Ritual defends the inviolability of native tradition. The Charter Oath is a manifesto of universal law, and the Ritual is a dramatic performance of charismatic domination. The Charter Oath champions the egalitarian authority of natural law, the Ritual champions the elitist authority of supernatural powers (*tenjin chigi*). Nevertheless, as Article 5 mandates, the purpose of modern Western knowledge is to strengthen the foundations of imperial rule.

In the Ritual, then, we may glimpse the total structure of the Meiji Enlightenment – the method of ideological domination in which the state, as Enlightener, mandated what was real and what was fanciful, so that it could reorganize society accordingly. Through the separation of *kami* from Buddha and the establishment of the Bureau of Divinity, the state mandated that the imperial myth was real. Moreover, the state decreed, through the voice of imperial will, that the polity would be transformed according to modern models. The ideological guise of state power was the heroic enlightener the Emperor Meiji, the descendant of Japan's ancestral *kami* who would lead Japan out of the benighted past and into a glorious new age of progress. Both the imperial myth and scientific progress together were the positive knowledge of the Meiji Enlightenment.

During the four years of the Bureau's operation, the liturgical representation of imperial will was translated into institutions of government. On April 12, 1868, another ritual was conducted at the altar in the ritual chamber imperial palace.³⁷ On June 11, 1868, the polity was reconstituted. The Writ of Polity (*seitaisho*), the instrument of this reconstitution, dissolved the mythic Age of the Gods polity established at the coup (the Three Offices) and established in its place the Department of State (*dajōkan*), which theretofore had been only one of the departments under the Three Offices.³⁸ Although the polity would undergo several reconfigurations before assuming its permanent form in the Meiji Constitution of 1889, the Department of State remained in operation as the locus of real power until replaced by a cabinet government (*naikaku*) in 1885. The official decrees (*hōrei*) of the Department of State remained the legal technology that defined the contours of the polity that embodied the imperial will, and remained so until the law (*hōritsu*) of the constitution. The Writ of Polity stipulated seven departments within the Department of State, including the Bureau of Divinity, now renamed the Department of Divinity (*jingikan*). As historian Haga Shōji has observed, this is a significant feature of the ideological structure of the Writ of Polity's Department of State, in that the Department of Divinity – a group of theologians with the closest access to the Emperor – was now *inside* the government.³⁹ At the same time, the Writ of Polity reproduces the Charter Oath as its preamble. This reconstitution of the polity, then, translates into a set of real institutions the structure of the Meiji Enlightenment.

Although Yoshinobu capitulated on May 3, 1868, Tokugawa loyalist resistance continued until June 27, 1869. The final victory over the loyalists was followed by religious rites and another reconstitution of the polity. Two altars, one for *tenjin chigi* and one for *kōrei*, were built within the Department of Divinity itself. Rites were performed at

³⁷ *MTK* Vol. 1, 658.

³⁸ *MTK* Vol. 1, 707-711.

³⁹ Haga, *Meiji ishin to shūkyō*, 43-50.

each of these altars on August 5, 1869.⁴⁰ Most significantly, a new component of the Unity of Rite and Rule, the Tokyo Shōkonsha (literally, the “Place for the Summoning of Souls”) was established the following day.⁴¹ Neither a government bureau nor a conventional shrine, the Shōkonsha was a mausoleum for war dead. The purpose of the Tokyo Shōkonsha (renamed Yasukuni Shrine in 1879) was the apotheosization of the 3,588 imperial soldiers killed in the Boshin War.⁴² The Shōkonsha functions as an important ideological mechanism. For here we see theocratic ideology and the violent coercion that it sublimates blurred, where normally the ideology of Unity of Rite and Rule functions precisely because it disguises violence. The Staff Order (*shokuin-meī*) of August 15, 1869 reinstated the historical polity of High Antiquity, the Two Departments-Six Ministries (*nikan rokushō*).⁴³ The Department of Divinity and the Department of State (the two departments) were separated again, and the Department of Divinity, now equipped with its own altars, was placed above the Department of State. This marked the high point of the Unification of Rite and Rule. The theocratic polity, as a concrete manifestation of the imperial will, had come into being.

The Unification of Rite and Rule was realized as public institutions of rule at the expense of Buddhism. During the era of the Bureau of Divinity, the slogan *haibutsu kishaku* (Ban the Buddha, Destroy Shakyamuni) encapsulated the general sentiment that Buddhism was corrupt, stagnant, un-modern, and un-Japanese. The Buddhist response was reactionary. It attempted to arrest and reverse the separation of *kami* and Buddha by appealing to Buddhism’s ideological role in the Tokugawa period as a bulwark against Christianity. Most representative of this response, generally referred to as the Movement to Defend of the *Dharma*, i.e., the Law of the Buddha (*gohō undō*), was the formation of the Sects United in Single Virtue (*shoshū dōtoku kaimei*) on January 20, 1869. The intellectual agenda of this new supra-sectarian Buddhist alliance had two items: the inseparability of the Law of the Buddha and the Law of the King (*ōbō buppō furi no ron*), and the research and elimination of heresy (*jakyō kenkyū kishaku no ron*), i.e., Christianity.⁴⁴

The exclusion of Buddhism was a wholly novel development in Japanese history. On the other hand, there could have been little question that Christianity was beyond the pale.⁴⁵ In this, the Meiji government followed shogunate precedent. Christianity had been officially banned in Japan since 1613. The opening of the treaty ports in 1858 brought to Japan the first Christian missionaries since the *senjō* period (Warring States, 1467-1568). Their presence in Japan presented a real enough threat ideologically, which registered in political discourse as alarmist hyperbole about Christianity invading Japan. The discovery in 1867 of an underground Christian community exacerbated this anxiety.

⁴⁰ *MTK* Vol. 2, 144-146.

⁴¹ *MTK* Vol. 2, 146-147.

⁴² Hōya, *Boshin Sensō*, 288.

⁴³ *MTK* Vol. 2, 150-151.

⁴⁴ Naramoto Tatsuya and Momose Meiji, *Meiji ishin no higashi honganji* (Tokyo: Kawade Shobo Shinsha, 1987), pp. 189-200.

⁴⁵ On the history of Christianity in Meiji Japan, see Irwin Scheiner, *Christian Converts and Social Protest in Meiji Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970); Paramore, *Ideology and Christianity in Japan*; Yasumaru, *Kamigami no Meiji ishin*.

This Christian community of some three thousand had existed secretly in the village of Urakami, in what is now Nagasaki, for over two centuries.⁴⁶ The new Meiji government restated the Tokugawa ban on Christianity with three edicts the day after the Charter Oath.⁴⁷ Buddhism was certainly not banned. Yet, its exclusion from the public sphere had epoch-making consequences. First, the ideological isolation of the Buddhas as something separate from *kami* precipitated an unprecedented sense of identification among the numerous schools and institutions of Buddhism. Second, and more profoundly, it triggered a crisis of meaning for Buddhism. Its separation from state power entails the loss of its authority, and therefore the loss of its truth-value as knowledge. The expulsion of Buddhism from the public representation of power was tantamount to separating it from reality as the Meiji Enlightenment was defining it.

3. The Ministry of Doctrine and Doctrinal Ideology Part I, 1871-1873

The Department of Divinity's sublimation of raw power into liturgical performance accomplished the first ideological task of the new state – i.e., the legitimization of Sat-Chō authority against Tokugawa loyalism. With the end of the Boshin War, the task became expanding ideological control over the newly pacified national space. This task was accomplished by a second sublimation of liturgy into a teaching.

The antagonisms between Meiji ideology, Buddhism, and Christianity prepared the ground for this transformation. It began with Chōshū Confucianist Ono Nobuzane (Jusshin, 1824-1910).⁴⁸ The Urakami Christian incident convinced Ono of the threat posed by Christianity. In Confucian fashion, he argued that only correct teachings could sufficiently insulate Japan from Christianity. Ono successfully petitioned for the establishment of an official state teaching and its dissemination. The Bureau of Teachings (*kyōdōkyoku*) was established within the Department of State in March 1869, and in July a cadre of missionaries (*senkyōshi*) was established.⁴⁹ In September 1869, it was moved from the Department of State to the Department of Divinity. This meant that the Department of Divinity was the official center of both ritual performance and doctrinal instruction. The promulgation of a state teaching was officially launched on February 3, 1870.⁵⁰ The Announcement of the Promulgation of the Great Teaching (*daikyō senpu no mikotonori*) announced the initiation of a state doctrine (*daikyō*, Great Teaching). The Announcement reprised the Revival of Ancient Kingship narrative, promising to purge the defilements that have accrued, and to unite the masses of Japan through the Unification of Rite and Rule.

Although the Great Teaching had its official beginning in early 1870, the sublimation of theocracy from liturgy to teachings did not properly begin until 1871. The

⁴⁶ Yasumaru, *Kamigami no Meiji ishin*, 69-71.

⁴⁷ *MTK* Vol. 1, 655-656.

⁴⁸ Yasumaru, *Kamigami no Meiji ishin*, 122-124; Sakamoto, *Meiji ishin to kokugakusha*, 82-101.

⁴⁹ *MTK* Vol. 2, 91.

⁵⁰ *MTK* Vol. 2, 248-249.

catalyst for this second sublimation was the Abolition of Domains and Construction of Prefectures (*haihan chiken*) of August 29, 1871.⁵¹ Although the Tokugawa lords had formally returned all land titles on July 25, 1869 (*hanseki hōkan*),⁵² the Abolition of Domains and Construction of Prefectures officially made the Sat-Chō government the administrative center of a national space that included all of Japan. The ideological unification of this space was the next task at hand. With the Abolition of Domains came another reconstitution of the polity. The Department of State was reappointed with three offices – prime minister (*seiin*), minister of the left (*sain*), and minister of the right (*uin*).⁵³ Three new ministries were added: the Ministry of Justice (*shihōshō*), the Ministry of Education (*monbushō*), and, most significantly, the Ministry of Divinity (*jingishō*), which replaced the Department of Divinity.⁵⁴

The demotion of the Department of Divinity, which briefly had been the highest organ of government, to the level of ministry triggered an internal ideological rift. It brought to the fore a new group of nativists led by Fukuba Bisei (1831-1907).⁵⁵ Fukuba advocated a strain of nativism developed by Ōkuni Takamasa (1792-1871) and experimented with in Tsuwano domain. This nativism emphasized the use of teachings to bring imperial rule into line with contemporary historical conditions. Yano's thought, which emphasized fidelity to the liturgical practices of classical antiquity, had intellectually defined the Department of Divinity so far, but was not suited to the practical necessities created by the Abolition of Domains. It was for this reason that during this time that the Ministry of Divinity became derisively known as the *hiruneshō* (the Ministry of Naps) and the *injunkan* (the Department of Indecision). Saigō Takamori himself began investigating the operations of the Ministry of Divinity and called for its abolition.⁵⁶

Saigō was not alone. Buddhists had become increasingly angry about the activities of the Department of Divinity's missionaries.⁵⁷ Buddhist organizations submitted many requests for the Ministry of Divinity's dissolution, citing anti-Buddhist content in the lectures of the missionaries. The purpose of the teaching, they pointed out, was to fight Christianity, not Buddhism. Resounding the Movement to Defend the Law argument, these letters insisted that Buddhism possessed the intellectual and institutional experience necessary to protect the nation from Christianity. They called for the equal incorporation of Buddhism into state doctrine and its promulgation. The persecution of Buddhism by the missionaries may have indeed catalyzed this. But probably a bigger catalyst for Buddhist outrage was the Abolition of Domains project itself. An order of

⁵¹ MTK Vol. 2, 496-497; McLaren, *Japanese Government Documents*, 32.

⁵² MTK Vol. 2, 140.

⁵³ MTK Vol. 2, 523.

⁵⁴ MTK Vol. 2, 521.

⁵⁵ Yasumaru, *Kamigami no Meiji ishin*, 122-124; Sakamoto, *Meiji ishin to kokugakusha*, 11-17.

⁵⁶ Yasumaru, *Kamigami no Meiji ishin*, 122; Ketelaar, *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan*, 98.

⁵⁷ Ketelaar, *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan*, 98-100; Naramoto and Momose, *Meiji ishin no higashi honganji*; Ogawara Masamichi, *Daikyōin no kenkyū: Meiji shoki shūkyō gyōsei no tenkai to zassetsu* (Tokyo: Keiō Gijuku Daigaku Shuppankai, 2004), 4-6.

January 1871 (*jōchi rei*) confiscated all shrine and temple lands.⁵⁸ That same year, the government abolished the Temple Registration System (*danka seido*), a Tokugawa-era anti-Christianity institution that required all Japanese to register at a temple as a Buddhist. In its place, the government attempted to substitute a shrine-based registration system (*ujiko shirabe*).⁵⁹ While the separation of *kami* and Buddha presented a theological and ideological crisis, the Abolition of Domains presented an economic and institutional one. Eventually, these two crises competed for the attention of the Defend the Dharma movement at the expense of each other. But for now, the creation of a state doctrine and priesthood that included Buddhism seemed a solution to both: it would preserve the institutional and economic security of Buddhism while reversing the crisis of meaning precipitated by the separation of *kami* and Buddha.

In this way, the antagonism of Buddhism, Christianity and state theocracy forced the destruction of the Ministry of Divinity. It was dissolved in April 1872, and the supervision of ritual was taken over by an office (*shikiburyō*) within the Ministry of the Interior (*naimushō*).⁶⁰ This marked the end of the modern Japanese state's first intellectual apparatus. Although it was disbanded because it was deemed ineffective for the task of promulgating state teachings, we should be careful not to conclude that the Ministry of Divinity was a failed experiment. The Ministry of Divinity became obsolete precisely because it had accomplished its historical task of sublimating violent power into a theocratic ideology of liturgy. Its dissolution marked not the end of liturgical theocratic ideology, but its final and permanent routinization. The Ministry of Divinity's twin altars for the veneration of *kōrei* and *tenjin chigi* had been the ideological apex of the theocratic state. These were not discarded following the end of the Ministry of Divinity. They were moved to the imperial palace itself. Combined with the shrine for venerating Amaterasu already within the palace (*kashikodokoro, kensho*), they became the Three Imperial Palace Shrines (*kyūchū sanden*) that form the basis of state ritual.⁶¹

The ritual and administrative functions of the Ministry of Divinity were now split between the between the Ministry of the Interior Ritual Office and the Three Imperial Palace Shrines. These two functions were re-connected by the construction of a national shrine hierarchy. The Shrine Registration experiment necessitated such a hierarchy.⁶² The prospect of such official affiliation was very attractive following the confiscation of shrine land several months earlier. Although the Shrine Registration experiment was abandoned by 1872, the shrine hierarchy and requisite shrine affiliation for all Japanese were permanent legacies. The national shrine order of 1871 abolished hereditary shrine management and a comprehensive shrine ranking system (*shakaku seido*) was established.⁶³ The Ise shrine, the traditional shrine for Japan's creator deities, was specially reformed as the apex of this hierarchy.⁶⁴ The Ise shrines and the Three Imperial Palace Shrines together succeeded the Ministry of Divinity as the ideological center of

⁵⁸ Ketelaar, *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan*, 69.

⁵⁹ Hardacre, *Shintō and the State*, 83-84.

⁶⁰ *MTK* Vol. 2, 656-657.

⁶¹ *MTK* Vol. 2, 662-663.

⁶² Hardacre, *Shintō and the State*, 82-85.

⁶³ *MTK* Vol. 2, 464-465; Yasumaru, *Kamigami no Meiji ishin*, 131-132.

⁶⁴ Yasumaru, *Kamigami no Meiji ishin*, 124-125.

theocratic ritual. The Emperor Meiji became the first of the historical emperors to begin traveling to the Ise shrines to report the business of the nation to Japan's ancestor *kami*.⁶⁵ The theocratic ideology of ritual was now completely routinized into a regular, permanent system. The imperial rites performed at the Three Imperial Palace Shrines, the locus of charismatic authority, were organized according to a ritual calendar.⁶⁶ The rites at the Ise shrines were coordinated with those of the Palace Shrines, and ritual at all shrines in the hierarchy were coordinated with those of Ise. The *Shōkonsha* was the fourth crucial component of this machine. Blurring the lines between violence and ideology, the *Shōkonsha* – not the Ise shrine – is the vital heart of Meiji theocracy. It provides the blood – both literal and metaphorical – for what otherwise would be an elaborate but lifeless bureaucratic structure. War dead continue to be apotheosized at this shrine. The shrine ranking system was dismantled in 1946, but the other three components remain in operation. These are the innermost circuits of Japanese power – the routinized and now-uncontroversial generator of charismatic authority.

The Ministry of Doctrine (*kyōbushō*) succeeded the Ministry of Divinity as the second official intellectual apparatus of the Japanese state, commencing operation immediately upon the latter's closure.⁶⁷ It absorbed the Bureau of Teachings (*kyōdōkyoku*), now renamed Great Teaching Institute (*daikyōin*) and the missionaries, renamed evangelists (*kyōdōshoku*). The evangelists were conceived as a supra-denominational state priesthood whose gospel, the Great Teaching, would bind post-Abolition of Domains Japan into a single unit. The Ministry of Doctrine had a grand vision for building a Japan-wide network of teaching academies (*kyōin*) that would have an evangelist lecturing in every village. The infrastructure they built attempted to approximate this, with the Great Teaching Institute at the top, prefectural academies (*chūkyōin*), and village academies (*shōkyōin*). Like the code of education and the institution of universal conscription, both promulgated that same year, the Ministry of Doctrine was part of a raft of Abolition of Domains institutions intended to abolish all pre-Meiji barriers to nationalization. Its was responsible for building or closing of shrines and temples and the approval of all priestly ranks and privileges; the ordination or appointment of all Buddhist and Shintō priests; the approval and publication of all materials used for the teachings; the approval of all public lectures and private study organizations; and final arbitration of doctrinal differences.⁶⁸

The ideology of Great Teaching depended first of all upon the charismatic authority of liturgical ideology. Like the Ministry of Divinity, the Ministry of Teachings was both a bureaucratic and a religious institution. It was equipped with a shrine for the veneration of Amaterasu and the three creator *kami* of the mythic histories. It was thus connected to the system of routinized charisma described above, and is an extension of that system. This charismatic authority forms the basis of Great Teaching ideology, and the evangelists derived their own authority from it.

⁶⁵ Yasumaru, *Kamigami no Meiji ishin*, 127-128.

⁶⁶ Yasumaru, *Kamigami no Meiji ishin*, 133-134; Hardacre, *Shintō and the State*, 101.

⁶⁷ *MTK* Vol. 2, 656-658.

⁶⁸ Ketelaar, *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan*, 99-100; Hardacre, *Shintō and the State*, 42-46; Yasumaru, *Kamigami no Meiji ishin*.

The Great Teaching channels this charismatic authority into its lectures. The Three Standards (*sanjō no kyōsoku*), stipulated in May 1872, were the basic premises of the Great Teaching.⁶⁹ These were: 1. Comply with commands to revere the *kami* and love the nation; 2. Illuminate the principle of heaven and the way of man; 3. Serve the Emperor and faithfully maintain the will of the court.⁷⁰ The Three Standards articulate in words the charismatic authority that ritual had articulated in performance. These are the cosmic authority of *kami* and nation (1), the existence of an ideal invisible world based on that authority and a visible world of existence (2), and the authority of the Emperor and the court as mediators between the two (3). Like liturgy, the Three Standards derived their meaning only by a symbiotic association with charismatic authority. That is, violence and liturgy only together produced charismatic authority. The Three Standards, on their own, would be meaningless nonsense without the association with the charismatic authority generated by ritual that cloaks violence. The Three Standards extended and gave sharper form to the affect of charismatic authority by articulating it as commands to comply, illuminate, and serve, i.e., to *obey*. The structure of Great Teaching became further clarified with the Eleven Themes, announced by the Great Teaching Institute in June 1873.⁷¹ These were not commands, like the Three Standards, but rather topics for lectures: 1. *kami* and power, Emperor and gratitude, 2. the spirit of man (check this kanji) is immortal, 3. heavenly deities and creation, 4. worlds of the visible and the invisible, 5. love of nation, 6. divine rites, 7. pacification of spirits, 8. lord and minister, 9. father and child, 10, husband and wife, 11. the Great Purification.

Although the ideology of Great Teaching had a family connection to liturgy, it was structurally different. As we have seen, the original structure of theocratic ideology was that of a performance. The aesthetic action of liturgy gave form to the affect created by violent action. This form was articulated in an arcane language of ritual, which the state monopolized. It transformed meaningless power into meaningful discourse, illegitimate power into legitimate authority. By contrast, the structure of Great Teaching was that of a teaching, not a performance. It is delivered in the form of lecture, not liturgy. The evangelists were free to write their own lectures on concepts that the Great Teaching Institute mandated but did not define. The vagueness, opacity, and inconsistency of these lectures drew complaints from listeners.⁷² But the Great Teachings did not aim to appeal to their targets' sense of *reason* by convincing them with logically consistent arguments. The theocratic ideology of Great Teaching, like that of the Department of Divinity's liturgy, was *affective*, not rational. The efficacy of theocratic ideology did not depend on its ability to convince critical listeners of its logical irrefutability. The confusion of theocratic ideology may have in fact aided its efficacy, for it occupies the rational mind and allows more direct access to unconscious affective experience. In short, like the theocratic ideology of ritual, the theocratic ideology of teachings depended upon feeling, not reason, to create meaning and thereby legitimize authority.

⁶⁹ MTK, Vol. 2, 671.

⁷⁰ Translation in Ketelaar, *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan*, 106.

⁷¹ Reprinted in Ogawara, *Daikyōin no kenkyū*, 68; translation in Ketelaar, *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan*, 106.

⁷² For example see Ketelaar, *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan*, 107-113.

The power of Great Teaching lay not in the logic of logical argumentation, but in the logic of affective association. The task of the evangelists was to create rhetorical links between the charismatic authority structure that inheres in the Three Standards and the topics of the Themes. The Themes construct a cosmology of two worlds, an ideal and a real (4). Each individual circulates between them (2). Supreme authority resides with the *kami* in the ideal world (3). The Emperor, the *kami*'s representative, is the supreme authority in this world as the mediator between the two (1). Individuals manifest the ideal world in the real one by giving their loyalty to the earthly representation of the ideal world (5), by making ritual observance of the ideal world (6, 7, 11), and by observing their social stations (8, 9, 10). Each evangelist was free to flesh out these themes or link them rhetorically as they saw fit. Observing the inconsistencies among the various evangelist, or critiquing the logical consistency or persuasiveness of individual lectures fails to grasp the actual structure of the Great Teaching, which is that of a *montage*. Meaning of the components is created by the totality of the juxtapositions. These may be done in any order and according to any rhetorical logic and still achieve the desired effect of commingling the charismatic authority of the evangelist priesthood with the command of the Three Standards and the content of the themes.

As is clear from this brief description, the form and content of the ostensibly supra-denominational Great Teaching was that of Meiji theocracy. Over the course of its existence, the Great Teaching Institute succeeded in absorbing into Meiji theocracy innumerable *kami* of local custom and new religions into a national pantheon, and at the same time codified the exclusion of Buddhism. As noted earlier, Buddhists constituted a large portion of evangelists. Indeed, the Great Teaching Institute was constructed in large measure as a result of Buddhist appeals for a supra-doctrinal doctrine that placed Buddhism at the core. It had been the hope that such a doctrine would arrest and reverse the separation of *kami* and Buddha, and solve the twin dilemmas that befell Buddhism as a result. These were the institutional/economic crisis that accompanied the end of the Temple Registration System, and the spiritual/ideological crisis that accompanied the separation of Buddhism from public representations of power.

The futility of this hope became clear on January 10, 1873. A ceremony was held to install the Great Teaching Institute in its new headquarters at Zōjōji, a Buddhist temple in Tokyo.⁷³ This had a twofold ideological significance. For it was not only a Buddhist temple, it was the ancestral temple of the House of Tokugawa. The ceremony amounted to a ritual humiliation, a performance of the ideological defeat of both Tokugawa loyalism and Buddhism. The theological form and content of the ceremony was that of Meiji theocracy. All religious objects relating to Buddhism were removed and Zōjōji was re-equipped with a shrine to Amaterasu and the creator *kami*. All evangelists, including Buddhist priests, were required to wear the vestments of venerated *kami*. Buddhist priests were subjected to further discipline when going through the instruction and examination process to become evangelists.

⁷³ Hardacre, *Shintō and the State*, 44.

4. The Ministry of Doctrine and Doctrinal Ideology Part II, 1873-1877

On September 13, 1873, seven months after the Great Teaching Institute introduced the Eleven Themes, the Iwakura Mission returned to Japan. Led by Iwakura Tomomi himself, the Iwakura Mission brought a delegation of political and intellectual luminaries, including Kido Takayoshi and Ōkubo Shigenobu, on a two-year observation tour of the modern societies of Europe and the United States. This experience impressed upon the delegation the urgency of securing a different kind of political legitimacy – constitutional government. Both Kido and Ōkubo circulated petitions for the drafting of a constitution immediately upon their return.⁷⁴

The sudden focus on constitutional government opens a new chapter in the story of Meiji ideology's evolution, which until now has been that of the sublimation of violent power into Meiji theocracy. A constitution could not simply be grafted as an appendage onto theocratic Meiji ideology. For the adoption of constitutional government was tantamount to an ideological re-articulation of Meiji authority in the modern conceptual language of Western Enlightenment: progress, nature, and mankind. We have already tracked the first sublimation of Meiji power into theocracy: the use of liturgy to articulate the aesthetic experience of violence as a sublime moment occurring outside of historical time in which the immediate present unites with the original genesis point. In this section, we will analyze the process by which that theocratic power further sublimated into an ideology of progress. The Meiji oligarchs had to exercise their theocratically-legitimized authority in order to will the transformation of Japan's present into their desired future. They had to express this will through a future-oriented narrative of evolutionary progress: an imminent departure, a lifting of the yoke of past ignorance and servitude, and a promise of greater freedom by aligning with the universal laws of nature. As early as the 1868 Charter Oath, the Meiji government established that national progress through Western learning was the divine imperial will. Now, in order to transform that will into action, the narrative of progress had to become a public representation of Sat-Chō power in the same way as theocracy, and accordingly, Sat-Chō had to monopolize that public representation.

The Iwakura emissaries' new emphasis upon domestic modernization and Westernization, known as the Political Change of Meiji 6 (*Meiji rokunen no seihen*), clashed with the political program of military expansion advocated by those who had been left in charge of the government during their absence, especially Saigō Takamori and Etō Shimpei, who were most responsible for the dissolution of the Ministry of Divinity and the establishment of the Ministry of Doctrine.⁷⁵ This difference reached a breaking point in the debate over whether to invade Korea (*seikanron*). The Korea issue split the leadership, and Saigō, Etō, and other supporters of military expansion resigned from the government. Settling the challenges presented by the war faction necessitated new ideological re-articulations of Sat-Chō authority. The new importance of the ideology of progress provided weapons for these new conflicts, which would soon displace open warfare as a form of acceptable politics among the ruling class.

⁷⁴ See Joseph Pittau, S.J., *Political Thought in Early Meiji Japan* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 37-51.

⁷⁵ Pittau, *Political Thought in Early Meiji Japan*, 28-30.

The urgency of constitutional government stemmed from Japan's international predicament. Following the opening of Japan by American gunboats in 1853, Japan was subjected to the open port treaties of 1858, which were highly unfavorable to Japan. Now implicated in the world system of imperial nation-states, Japan had to replicate the nation-state model in order to be recognized as a sovereign polity within this system and reverse the unequal treaties. In contrast to Meiji theocratic ideology, which was directed at other members of the Japanese ruling class, the Meiji ideology of progress was directed at the West.

The incorporation of the progress narrative into Meiji ideology commenced immediately. One month after the return of the Iwakura Mission, the Great Teaching Institute added another Seventeen Themes (*jūnana kendai*) to the original Eleven. These were: 12. imperial nation, national polity, 13. immutability of the Way, 14. organizations must correspond to the times, 15. renewal of imperial rule, 16. man is distinct from the beasts, 17. study is necessary, 18. doctrine is necessary, 19. international relations, 20. national law, civil law, 21. development of laws, 22. taxes and conscription, 23. rich country, strong army, 24. production and manufacturing, 25. cultural enlightenment, 26. different forms of government, 27. employing the heart, employing the form, 28. rights and responsibilities.⁷⁶ These Seventeen Themes incorporated progress into the montage structure of the Great Teaching described above. They reaffirmed the timelessness of the cosmic authority of Meiji theocracy (13) while stipulating that the form of the polity that manifests that authority must change to be in line with contemporary forms (14). The individual that had been defined in relation to the *kami* by the original eleven is here defined in distinction to nature (16). The remainder of the seventeen are moral exhortations (27) to reinvent the polity (15) in the context of the international system of nation-states (12, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 26, 28) by absorbing the culture of that system (17, 18, 25). In short, the Seventeen Themes incorporated the concepts of progress, nature, and universal man into the ideological montage of Great Teaching and thereby commingled it with its charismatic theocratic authority.

This ideological innovation placed Sat-Chō in a position similar to that in which Yoshinobu found himself after incorporating restorationism into Tokugawa ideology. That is, they compromised their monopoly on the public representation of the imperial will. Unlike the formation of Meiji theocracy, Meiji ideology of progress did not *directly* sublimate violence. As I have argued, ritual performance and violent action are meaningless without one another. It was the symbiotic relationship of the two that created meaning from meaninglessness. The Seventeen Themes, by contrast, incorporated into the official ideology an idiom that derives its authoritative meaning from an entirely external network of power relations, which challengers to Sat-Chō authority could exploit.

The incorporation of progress into official ideology conferred a new political power on masters of Western learning. This fact initiated the period that historians refer to as *bunmei kaika* (Civilization and Enlightenment). During this time, political and intellectual elites intensely scrutinized Western science and culture with an eye toward their application to domestic reform. To be sure, *bunmei kaika* hardly marked the Japanese discovery of modern Western learning. Eighth Tokugawa shogun Yoshimune

⁷⁶ Reprinted in Ogawara, *Daikyōin no kenkyū*, 68; translation in Ketelaar, 106.

(1684-1751) lifted the ban on non-religious Western books in 1720. Books coming into Japan through trade with the Dutch, the only Westerners allowed to trade with Japan, fueled interest in Dutch learning (*rangaku*). By 1800, Dutch learning had familiarized Japanese scholars with Western medicine and astronomy. Throughout the nineteenth century, scholars increasingly warned of the necessity of Western science and technology against foreign encroachment. Following the arrival of Perry in 1853, Dutch Learning became known more generally as Western learning (*yōgaku*), and began attracting alienated samurai. Even the shogunate during this time began to sponsor Western learning, opening its own department of specialists in 1858, the Office for the Investigation of Barbarian Books (*bansho shirabesho*), sending a mission to the United States in 1860, and contracting foreign advisors to help modernize its military technology. Satsuma and Chōshū also led the way in military modernization in these years. But all of this is mere preface to 1873. For only now does Western learning cease to be an instrumental *accessory to power* and become an ideological *representation of power*.

The ideological foundations of the Western Enlightenment lay in Western power. The most basic of these foundations is the concept of universal humanity: that which is above nature and is the subject of progress. Universal humanity as modern subject and its implications for Japanese reform was the intellectual premise for the *Meirokeisha* (the Meiji 6 Society, named for the year of its founding, 1873). Founded by Satsuma samurai and Iwakura emissary Mori Arinori (1847-1889), the *Meirokeisha* was a study group dedicated to the study of Western Enlightenment thought (*keimō*). The original members included experienced scholars of Western learning, many of them old hands from the Tokugawa *bansho shirabesho*: Mori, Fukuzawa Yukichi (1834-1901), Nishi Amane (1829-1897), Nakamura Keiu (1832-1891), Tsuda Mamichi (1829-1903), Katō Hiroyuki (1836-1916), Nishimura Shigeki (1828-1902). Their journal, *Meirokei zasshi*, was a touchstone for popularizing *keimō* thought. In it, the *Meirokeisha* scholars subjected the sweep of Japanese institutions to a scathing critique. Their critical standard was the idealized vision of the West projected by classic Enlightenment thought: a liberal bourgeois civil society composed of autonomous individuals acting in rational self interest. The foundation for their critique was the belief in universal humanity, for it was this concept that made possible the envisioning of Japan's future convergence with the West along the unilinear track of human progress. Universal humanity was the key ideological threat to Sat-Chō's monopolization of the public representation of power. For although they had incorporated progress into official ideology with the Seventeen Themes, the ideological premise of universal humanity precluded their monopolization of it.

There was a second, deeper ideological foundation for Western Enlightenment that posed an even greater threat. As part of their effort to reform Japan, the Meiji government lifted the ban on Christianity in 1873. Christian missionaries had been in Japan since the 1858 port treaties, attracting cautiously interested Japanese to their congregations in Yokohama, Nagasaki, and other port cities. The lifting of the ban saw a proliferation of mission schools, mainly American Protestant, and largely at Japanese request. These schools were desired for their lessons in Western science and letters, as well as their missionary activities. For the missionaries as well as the students, the secular and religious teachings of these schools were inseparable, the spiritual and material

components of human progress. The core of this association was the concept of God as the absolute other: the confrontation of the individual with this absolute other was the theological foundation of the liberal concept of the autonomous individual possessing interiorized values. This was the theological bedrock of universal humanity. Indeed, Christianization and Westernization seemed practically synonymous. The mission schools won large numbers of converts in the first decade of the Meiji period, virtually all from the former samurai class. Like the scholars of *keimō*, samurai converts gained access to an ideological authority located outside of Meiji theocracy that, since the Seventeen Themes, presented a challenge to that authority.

These ideological challenges to Sat-Chō's theocratic domination manifested in calls for a representative liberal government collectively known as the Freedom and People's Rights Movement (*jiyū minken undō*).⁷⁷ The various permutations of the Freedom and People's Rights Movement drew on both Christian and *keimō* thought throughout its ten-year existence, during which it eventually joined with a popular agrarian base. But in the 1870s it was exclusively a movement of the political class. The Freedom and People's Rights Movement had its beginnings on January 12, 1874. On this date, Itagaki Taisuke (1837-1919), a Tosa samurai of the war faction, together with Etō Shimpei, Gotō Shōjirō, and others of the war faction formed the Public Party of Patriotism (*Aikoku Kōtō*), an association of advocates for a popularly elected assembly. The Public Party of Patriotism's three-point program is a distillation of the ideology of progress. They vowed to contribute to world civilization and to instill respect for the natural rights of man throughout the nation; to unite the Emperor and the people and bring prosperity to the realm through independent and unrestricted development of the rights of the individual; and to endure any trials and difficulties in pursuit of these goals. Five days later, the Public Party of Patriotism submitted the first request for representative assembly. As many scholars have pointed out, the purpose of this request was not to create a democratic Japan, but to break the oligarchic monopoly on power. It was the first direct challenge to Sat-Chō power that was ideological, not violent. Though nothing came of this request, it brought the lines of the new ideological battleground into relief.

Buddhism – the ideologically excluded domain – also adapted itself to this new ideological configuration. As seen in the previous section, Buddhism faced two crises in the Meiji period: an economic/institutional crisis precipitated by the dismantling of the Temple Registration System, and an ideological/spiritual crisis presented by the separation of Buddhist theology from the public representation of power. Buddhists had hoped to overcome both crises by forming a supra-denominational state doctrine – the Great Teaching – that would incorporate Buddhism as a key defender of the state against Christianity. These hopes were unfulfilled, as it became clear that Buddhism was to have no presence whatsoever in the liturgical or doctrinal content of the Great Teaching. Like Sat-Chō's political rivals, Buddhists found in the ideology of progress an alternative means for attack.

In fact, Shimaji Mokurai (1838-1911), a Nishi Honganji priest from Chōshū and an Iwakura emissary, had already launched this attack in 1872 while in Paris with the

⁷⁷ George Akita, *Foundations of Constitutional Government in Japan, 1868-1900* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 15-30.

Iwakura Mission. Shimaji had been one of the most important advocates and instigators of the founding of the Ministry of Doctrine, only to become a leader of Honganji's secession from it. In 1872, right after the Ministry of Doctrine announced its Three Standards (*sanjō*), Shimaji sent a Critique of the Three Standards (*Sanjō kyōsoku hihan kenpakusho*) from Paris.⁷⁸ The basis for his critique was the Western-based authority of the ideology of progress, citing both conditions in the West and the great Western philosophers as evidence. He begins by demonstrating the disparity between Western and Japanese societies concerning the relationship of state to religion, noting that Japan is shamefully barbaric by comparison.

The term religion (*shūkyō*) was the crucial concept in this critique. It is largely due to this critique that the term *shūkyō* became the standard Japanese approximation of the term "religion," and that the Western concept of religion, of which Christianity is the prototype, became normative.⁷⁹ This model is easily summarized. Religion is a component of humanity, and as such is subject to progress like any other aspect of humanity. The worship of the "myriad gods of the river, mountains, and fields" that is Japanese *kami*-worship, says Shimaji, is the immature belief of the "barbarians of Africa, South America, the Pacific Islands and Siberia." The monotheistic faiths of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are civilized religions. They are theologically based upon the concept of a divinity that is the "absolute other" of humanity, and as such transcends humanity. For this reason, religion is a universal doctrine that is grasped in the interior world of the individual (*naimen*). It is not grasped through idiosyncratic local praxis and cannot be prescribed or circumscribed by political entities. Rather, religion and politics should be separated (separation of Church and State, *seikyō bunri*) into secular and religious spheres of society, to ensure personal freedom of belief (*shinkyō no jiyū*).

Shimaji argued that in Japan, Buddhism was the only faith that exhibited the qualities of a so-called world religion, as defined by the Western ideological model. This became the intellectual grounds for Shimaji's calls for Buddhism's separation from the Ministry of Doctrine. The task of Buddhist intellectuals following the separation was the reform of institutional Buddhism into a world religion, a human religion – a "universal Buddhism" (*tsūbukkyō*) on the Christian model, complete with Buddhist bibles for the home. In this way, Shimaji tied Defending the Dharma (*gohō*) to the concept of religion, a construct of the human sciences of nineteenth century Europe and dependent upon the notion of universal humanity.

The call for the separation of religion from politics into a legally protected private sphere was perhaps the direst threat to Meiji theocracy following the Seventeen Themes. The solution appeared in 1874, in a memorial submitted to the government by ritualists engaged in the promotion of the Great Teaching, calling for the reinstatement of the Department of Divinity. The crux of their argument, in response to the discourse on the separation of Church and State (*seikyō bunri*), was that their national teachings (*kokkyō*) were not a religion. Religions were theories created by the founders of the great traditions, and were therefore human and fallible. The national teaching of Japan was not a theory. It was Shintō (the Way of the Gods). Shintō was not a doctrine, but rather the

⁷⁸ Ketelaar, *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan*, 125-130.

⁷⁹ See Sueki, *Kindai nihon no shisō saikō* Vol. 1, 28-32; Isomae, *Kindai nihon no shūkyō gensetsu to sono keifu*.

transposition of the ways of Japan's divine ancestors into the human world by their ruling descendants. Here we see a restatement of Meiji theocracy in language that speaks to the separation of Church and State and the ideology of progress. The key point is that the memorial dissociates Shintō from the concept of universal humanity, and therefore religion, by conceptualizing it as a patrimony of tradition received directly from divine, not human, ancestors. As Helen Hardacre has observed, this memorial defines Shintō through a series of equations: "National teaching equals Shintō equals the Way of humanity in the age of the gods equals traditions of the imperial house equals codes of government."⁸⁰ Again, this is merely the logic of Meiji theocracy we have already traced, but now expressed in a code that would later serve as an ideological sanction for preserving the political legitimacy of Meiji theocracy as national teachings on the grounds that it is not a religion (Shintō *hi-shūkyō setsu*, Shintō non-Religion Theory).

The ideological designation of Meiji theocracy as the "Way of humanity in the age of the gods" instead of a "religion" provided the key ideological premise for Sat-Chō's monopolization of the ideology of progress. In the development of universal Buddhism and the complementary development of Shintō non-religion theory, we already see the ideological template for the Meiji Constitution of 1889, which will provide for freedom of religion, but will base its concept of sovereignty explicitly on the divinity of the Emperor. Shintō, as national teachings, will be a secular teaching, insofar as it is not relegated to a private sphere of belief, but is rather the public representation of power itself. It will be the basis of the public sphere, as it had been from the beginning. The reform of Buddhism as a religion, by contrast, formalized and institutionalized the exclusion of Buddhism from power. It overcame the twin institutional/economic and ideological/spiritual crises, but only by placing Buddhism on an ideological foundation outside Japan. Buddhism would now become a great world religion. In this, Buddhism not only cemented its ideological separation from Sat-Chō power, it also subordinated itself to Western imperial power.

The ideological template of a secularity that included Meiji theocracy later became the basis for Meiji Enlightenment's ideology of progress: a narrative in which the imperial institution – not the Christian-derived concept of universal humanity – was the cardinal value, the subject that progresses, and that for whose sake all is done. This ideology had to be established before a constitution that would permit Sat-Chō domination could be put in place. And before this ideological sublimation could occur, Sat-Chō had once and for all to silence all violent threats to its authority among the political class. In February 1874, Etō Shimpei, who had left the government in protest over the Korea issue, led a violent revolt in his native domain of Saga (*Saga no ran*, February to April 1874). One month after the government put down this rebellion, Ōkubo authorized a military expedition to Formosa (*Taiwan shuppei*), on the pretext that shipwrecked Ryūkyūans had been murdered there in 1871, in an attempt to appease the war faction. Not only did this fail to appease the war faction, it also caused Kido to leave the government in protest.

Ōkubo attempted to rebuild the 1868 coalition by reconstituting the polity again. The April 1875 Osaka Conference (*Osaka kaigi*) persuaded Kido as well as Itagaki to rejoin the government, and then reshaped it in a form that anticipated constitutional

⁸⁰ Hardacre, *Shintō and the State*, 66-67.

government. An edict of April 14 began by invoking the scene of the promulgation of the Charter Oath, recalling that the restoration leaders swore before the ancestral gods to uphold the Five Articles. To this end, the edict established the senate (*genrōin*) and supreme court (*daishinin*), and called for the establishment of prefectural representatives. The *genrōin* was appointed, theoretically, by the Emperor. Its members were drawn from the ranks of the Peerage (*kazoku*) and the *genrō*, or “elder statesmen,” i.e., the original heroes of the restoration. The *genrōin*’s legislators were relieved of bureaucratic duties to devote themselves to advising the throne. The *genrōin* essentially institutionalized Sat-Chō domination in the form of an appointed senate. The *genrōin* and supreme court together signal a departure from the High Antiquity (*jōdai*) model of government, which was still a government by decree (*hōrei*) centered on the Department of State, and it anticipated a movement towards a constitutional government of law (*hōritsu*). In the wake of the Saga Rebellion, it was becoming clear that open violence was an increasingly unacceptable form of legitimate politics. It had been legitimate since the Return of Great Authority, and its legitimacy essentially justified the 1868 coup itself. The installation of a constitution would require the silencing such open political violence and the monopolization of legitimate violence deployed by the sovereign state only when its laws were violated.

5. Tokyo University and Scientific Ideology, 1877-1886

The year 1877 marked a critical turning point in the history of Meiji ideology. An impasse created by a confluence of problems and contradictions came to a breaking point that finally resulted in the sublimation of Meiji power into an ideology of progress. The first set of problems, just discussed, revolved around the incorporation of Western progress ideology into official ideology in 1873. The external foundations of authority on which this ideology rested compromised Sat-Chō’s monopoly of legitimate authority, as other contestants to power could appeal to these same external sources.

This threat was complicated in 1877 by the deaths of the central figures of the Meiji Restoration. Saigō Takamori, who had left the government over the Korea issue, perished in the course of the course of the Southwest War (*seinan sensō*), a violent rebellion which he led against the government from his native Satsuma in 1877. Kido died of illness during the conflict. Ōkubo, who led the forces against Saigō, was assassinated by a Saigō loyalist the following year. Their deaths signaled the problem of succession and continuity of rule. The authority of the oligarchs had been charismatic, deriving from their participation in the restoration. Their method of recruitment for leadership in the early years was based on clan ties. Authority passed to their younger protégées, most importantly Itō Hirobumi (1841-1909) and Yamagata Aritomo (1838-1922), both of Chōshū. The younger generation now coming to the fore were not sword-swinging heroes of the restoration. They were bureaucrats, and the continuity of the rule they were inheriting depended now on routinizing the authority of Sat-Chō in a bureaucratic structure.

The Southwest War created yet another complication. It was the final episode of open violence among the political classes. As noted above, open violence had been a legitimate form of politics since the Return of Great Authority. While the purpose of

ideology is to disguise violent coercion, the repression of violence was not total until after the Southwest War. Following the end of open warfare, violent conflict sublimated completely into discourse. Political rivals became ideological opponents, and intellectuals took on a new importance accordingly.

A final complication was created by the 1877 closing of the Ministry of Doctrine. The Ministry of Doctrine, like the Ministry of Divinity before it, became obsolete once it had fulfilled its task. Great Teaching sublimated the charismatic authority that had been routinized in liturgy into commands, concepts, themes – into *words*. That was the task of the Ministry of Doctrine, and it achieved it. But the task of sublimating theocratic ideology into an ideology of progress required integrating the positive knowledge of Western natural and human science into the complex network of power that inhered in Meiji theocracy. In short, power had to be sublimated into *knowledge* – the positive knowledge constituted by the human and natural sciences of the eighteenth and nineteenth century West. The Great Teaching's sublimation of charismatic authority into words enabled this transformation. But the Ministry of Doctrine, overtly religious in character and expertise, was not equal to the next task of sublimating power into scientific knowledge.

In short, there came in 1877 a deadlock created by the convergence of four problems: 1. Sat-Chō's inability to monopolize the ideology of progress; 2. the unfeasibility of reproducing authority by means of purely charismatic or clan-based leadership recruitment; 3. the end of violence and the necessity of wielding discourse as the sole instrument of conflict; 4. the dissolution of the Ministry of Doctrine and the necessity of creating a third state intellectual apparatus.

The establishment of Tokyo University in 1877 resolved all four of these problems. The Ministry of Education established Tokyo University for a single purpose: to create a mandarin of native Japanese experts in Western learning that would serve as the intellectual capital necessary for Japanese modernization while eliminating early Meiji's near-total reliance upon foreign experts.⁸¹ Tokyo University was a consolidation of various centers of Western learning that had been confiscated from the shogunate. Its historical antecedent was the *bansho shirabesho*. But its ideological antecedent was the Great Teaching Institute, in that it was the modern Japanese state's third – and permanent – official intellectual apparatus. Like the theologians of the Department of Divinity and the Great Teaching Institute, the scholars of Tokyo University were authorized by the state to make meaningful statements in a public forum. As the intellectual instrument of Japanese modernization, Tokyo University was vested with the state's authority (which was theocratically-legitimized) to assess the present, to envision the future, and to will the transformation of the former into the latter. In this way, they ideologically expressed the divine will of the Emperor, who had called for the modernization of Japan.

This nexus of power and intellectuals was created first of all through the institution of the undergraduate degree (*gakushigō*), starting in 1878.⁸² The undergraduate degree, granted by the Ministry of Education to Tokyo University graduates, was the infrastructural lever that routed intellectuals into the circuits of state power. It became the

⁸¹ Amano Ikuo, *Kyōiku to kindai: nihon no keiken* (Tokyo: Tamagawa Daigaku Shuppanbu, 1997), 257-262.

⁸² Amano, *Kyōiku to kindai*.

necessary qualification for access to power following the cessation of positive violence in politics. As such, the undergraduate degree was a unit of social capital that conferred the highest prestige upon its holder. Although the Sapporo School of Agriculture and the Tokyo Higher School of Business also granted undergraduate degrees, only Tokyo University funded research as well as technical instruction. Until the founding by the state of Kyoto Imperial University in 1897, Tokyo University was the sole producer of the professional full-time professoriate, Japan's new intellectual elite. The first generation of the Japanese professoriate was entirely trained at Tokyo University. Even as late as 1962, 55% of all full-time professors in Japan were Tokyo University degree-holders.

With the orientation of intellectuals toward the state and its modernization project, the human and natural sciences became a public representation of power. The human and natural sciences were products of the eighteenth and nineteenth century West, and emerged inseparably with the power structures of sovereign nation-states. The objects of these bodies of knowledge were humanity and nature. They were the ideological technology of the nation-state, in that they had the form of positive knowledge: the literal representation of actual reality deployed for the covert purpose of exploitation and ideologically concealed by its apparently innocuous self-evidence. They purported to uncover the truth about humanity and nature, but in fact created humanity and nature by generating knowledge about them. The implication that these objects existed independently in the world, and that the sciences merely made innocent expository statements about them, was its ideological method. In comparison to the associative montage that formed the ideological structure of the Great Teachings, the ideological structure of the sciences was that of a mirror, in that they purported to merely reflect that which exists. Like the Ministry of Divinity and the Ministry of Doctrine, Tokyo University's intellectuals were empowered to speak with authority about what was true and untrue, what was real and what was fanciful. The difference was that they were not monopolists of arcana as the intellectuals of the Ministry of Divinity and the Ministry of Doctrine were. Universal accessibility and validity was the defining premise of the knowledge of the sciences.

The sublimation of Meiji theocracy into an ideology of progress required the separation of progress from its ideological foundations of universal humanity and Protestant Christian theology. The intellectuals of Tokyo University accomplished this by transposing the human and natural sciences – which create their objects through knowledge production – onto the ideological foundations of Meiji power. As knowledge-producers in the human and natural sciences, the intellectuals of Tokyo University would actually generate the reality of the polity, and define what was true and false within it. This was the completion of the sublimation of power into words that had begun with the Great Teaching. The intellectuals of Tokyo University were not merely intellectuals. Their visions would be executed. As the modernizing elite of experts in Western learning, their charge was to assess the present, envision the future, and will the transformation of the former into the latter. This changed their perspective to that of a state's-eye view. This is the key connection: the power that they are authorized to wield was state power, which, as the above argument has shown, was theocratic. This maneuver sublimated Meiji power into its most subtle form – positive knowledge – and transposed progress from universal humanity (ideologically grounded in Western power) to Meiji theocracy.

The work of Katō Hiroyuki (1836-1916) was emblematic of Tokyo University's ideological production. Katō, as noted earlier, was one of the original pioneers of Western learning in nineteenth-century Japan, and an alumnus of the *bansho shirabesho* and the *Meirokusha*. His works up to 1877 were classically *bunmei kaika* in their English liberal and utilitarian orientation. His championing of the natural rights of man made enemies of nativists. His *Outline of Constitutional Government (Rikken seitai ryaku, 1868)* was in fact the first book to introduce the concept of social contract into Japanese. In *Outline of True Government (Shinsei tai'i, 1870)*, Katō advocated a Lockean theory of government, positing natural rights as the foundation of government, whose sole responsibility was the defense of the rights to life, civil liberties, and property. Katō made his strongest defense of natural rights in *New Theses on the National Polity (Kokutai shinron, 1875)*. Here, Katō argued that the Japanese emperor was merely human and therefore equal with the population. While Katō did not support the petitions for constitutional government from the war faction, his objections were not ideological. His works were among the most influential defenses of the natural rights of man and individual liberty.⁸³

However, Katō's thought famously changed when he assumed a position of real power. In 1877, Katō was appointed joint director of the new Tokyo University, along with Toyama Masakazu (1848-1900). In 1879, he was appointed the first chair of the Tokyo Academy (*Tokyo gakushikai*), a Ministry of Education committee for the development of academic scholarship in Japan whose subsequent chairs included Fukuzawa Yukichi and Nishi Amane. As the first architect of the Japanese state's modern intellectual class, Katō assumed the state's-eye vision necessary to imagine the top-down reorganization of Japan. Upon assuming this position of real power, the physical and human sciences themselves became an ideological articulation of Meiji power. The authority to assess the present, envision the future, and will the transformation of the former into the latter was evident in Katō's famous and controversial renunciation of human rights and championing of evolutionary theory (*shinkaron*). Evolutionary theory provided the paradigm of long-range institutional change through which Tokyo University's intellectuals could imagine the modernization of Japan. Through the efforts of Katō and Toyama, evolutionary theory became the form of the knowledge produced at Tokyo University, while Katō himself became the "intellectual voice" of the Meiji state.⁸⁴

Katō and Toyama promoted evolutionary theory as the intellectually organizing principle for Tokyo University's three faculties (law, literature, science) from the beginning, recruiting foreign professors with expertise in evolutionary theory.

⁸³ Pittau, *Political Thought in Early Meiji Japan*, 55-60; Julia Adeney Thomas, *Reconfiguring Modernity: Concepts of Nature in Japanese Political Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 84-110; Gerard Rainier Clinton Godart, "Darwin in Japan: Evolutionary Theory and Japan's Modernity (1820-1970)" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2009), 88-92; Winston Davis, *The Moral and Political Naturalism of Baron Katō Hiroyuki* (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, 1996); Yoshida Kōji, *Katō Hiroyuki no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Ōhara Shinseisha, 1976).

⁸⁴ Eugene Soviak, "An Early Meiji Intellectual in Politics: Baba Tatsui and the Jiyūtō," in *Modern Japanese Leadership: Transition and Change*, eds. Bernard S. Silberman and Harry D. Harootunian (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1966), 148.

Evolutionary theory came to dominate intellectual life at Tokyo University so thoroughly during Katō's tenure (1877-1893) that it actually became known as "university evolutionism" (*daigaku shinkaron*).⁸⁵ This began with American zoologist Edward Sylvester Morse (1838-1925), the first foreign expert in evolutionary theory recruited to Tokyo University. Morse is often credited as the first to introduce evolutionary theory into Japan. He was not. However, his public lectures in 1877 on evolution are the starting point for our purposes, for it is now that it intersects with Meiji Enlightenment ideology. The ideological functions of evolutionary theory were immediately apparent in Morse's lectures, which highlighted the incompatibility of evolutionary theory with the creationism of Christianity.⁸⁶ As an ideological mirror-representation of nature, evolutionary theory was essential to separating the natural and human sciences from their Western ideological foundations.

Although evolutionary theory dominated intellectual life at Tokyo University, it was not the biological evolutionary theory of Darwin that became paradigmatic, but rather social evolutionary theory. In this regard, the key figures were not Morse and Darwin, but foreign professor Ernest Fenollosa (1853-1908) and the evolutionary theory of Herbert Spencer (1820-1903). Recruited into Tokyo University in 1878, Fenollosa exerted a profound influence on the intellectual life of the university.⁸⁷ His lectures were a philosophical synthesis of Spencer's social evolutionary theory and the philosophical idealism of Hegel. The thought of Spencer, who coined the phrase "survival of the fittest," became synonymous with the social Darwinism that defined the university intellectually, prompting philosopher Inoue Tetsujirō (1855-1944) to observe in 1880 that Spencer was "the god of the time."⁸⁸ Spencer's thought was a metaphysical brand of evolution. Societies evolve from the primitive and homogeneous through a process of division of labor to become complex and heterogeneous. Spencer used biological terminology to explain this process. Fenollosa combined Spencerian evolution Hegel's idea of the evolution of a world spirit, arguing that it would culminate in an East-West synthesis.⁸⁹

Katō's championing of social evolutionary theory was discernible in a speech given almost immediately after assumed office, in November 1879. In the speech, "Theories of the Non-Existence of Human Rights and of the Non-Existence of the Natural Distinction of Good and Evil" (*Tenpu jinken naki no setsu narabi ni zen'aku no betsu tennen ni arazaru no setsu*), Katō refuted the natural theory of human rights from the view of evolutionary theory.⁹⁰ One year after his appointment to the full presidency of Tokyo University in 1881, Katō fully developed his evolutionism in the book *New*

⁸⁵ Gino Piovesana, S.J., *Recent Japanese Philosophical Thought, 1862-1996* (Richmond, Surrey: Japan Library/Curzon Press, 1997), 25.

⁸⁶ Thomas, *Reconfiguring Modernity*, 104; Godart, "Darwin in Japan," 46-65.

⁸⁷ Godart, "Darwin in Japan," 76-88.

⁸⁸ Piovesana, *Recent Japanese Philosophical Thought*, 26.

⁸⁹ Godart, "Darwin in Japan," 76-88.

⁹⁰ Katō Hiroyuki, *Tenpu jinken naki no setsu narabi ni zen'aku no betsu tennen ni arazaru no setsu*, in *Katō Hiroyuki bunsho* Vol. 1, ed. Ueda Katsumi et al. (Kyoto: Dōshōsha, 1990), 381-389.

Theory of Human Rights (Jinken shinsetsu).⁹¹ Here, Katō dismissed naturally endowed human rights to liberty, equality, and self-government as utopian fancy with no basis in empirically verifiable fact. To the extent that rights exist at all, they are acquired but are intellectual constructs that do not exist independently of mankind. He attacked Rousseau and the Freedom and Popular Rights Movement as fanciful idealism. The true universal law of nature, says Katō, is that of survival of the fittest. Only this law can be empirically verified as the principle operating within the objective reality that exists independently of humans. Heredity and environment create variation among humans. Both within and between these environments, there is brutal competition for survival and domination. The natural motivator of power drives the process of natural selection, by which the strongest dominate and pass their gains to the next generation through heredity and adaptation. The supreme power is that of the ruler, who, when evolution has overcome the violent all-against-all, can create and bestow rights. In short, power itself was natural law and positive knowledge. Human rights were not rejected as invalid, but as invented and therefore not objectively real.

The natural and human sciences of Tokyo University were themselves the ideological successors of the Great Teaching. They represented state power as empirical positive knowledge in expository statements about objective reality, the mirror of nature. According to these human and physical sciences, the theocratic power of the Meiji state was not an invention of the preceding decade. It evolved over the millennia. What had previously been a religious narrative of was now science. This was reinforced by the development of Shintō Non-Religion Theory (*Shintō hi-shūkyō setsu*, discussed above). Shintō Non-Religion Theory and university evolutionism became the foundations of the Meiji ideology of progress. They create a scientific narrative of progress in which the path is not uni-linear, the subject is not universal humanity, and the terminus is not Victorian England. The subject is power, which everywhere is particular, and in Japan is the imperial institution. The theocratic power of Meiji was legitimized as the cultural patrimony, the sum total of tradition, and not as a product of the previous decade, and certainly not as an ideological cover for power begotten of violence and confiscation.

Tokyo University, in this way, monopolized what counted as truth in the polity by institutionalizing a nexus of power (already routinized as theocratic) and knowledge (universal science severed from its Western authority). The meaning of its intellectual content was determined as much by the institutional context as by the content itself, as its intellectuals were empowered by the state to speak authoritatively. The production of knowledge about the polity, and the acquisition of that knowledge by degree-holders, signaled a crucial shift in the recruitment of Meiji leadership. As noted above, participation in the restoration and clan affiliation were no longer feasible criteria of recruitment as the event and its dramatis personae faded into the past. With the establishment of Tokyo University, expertise became the new criteria. Tokyo University degree-holders were the modernizing elite of the Japanese state. Among them, graduates from the university's faculty of law were the elite within the elite. Expertise in the sciences of the polity (law and jurisprudence), evaluated by academic performance and civil service examination, became the criteria for recruitment into the civil bureaucracy.

⁹¹ Katō Hiroyuki, *Jinken shinsetsu*, in *Nishi Amane, Katō Hiroyuki*, ed. Uete Michari (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1972).

By the 1880s, the civil bureaucracy became the defining feature of Japanese government. Its monopoly over public policy decision-making from the 1880s until the present day has been so total that one scholar has characterized Japanese government as “bureaucratic absolutism.”⁹² Tokyo University’s faculty of law was the sole recruitment pool for the civil bureaucracy until the 1920s.

Like its ideological predecessor, the Great Teaching Institute, Tokyo University was the apex of a national hierarchy of education. The ideological continuity between the Great Teaching Institute and Tokyo University is highlighted by the fact that the Ministry of Education constructed Japan’s universal education system directly upon the administrative infrastructure of the defunct Ministry of Doctrine. The hierarchical network of local and prefectural teaching academies was the foundation for the national pyramid of lower and middle schools, culminating in Tokyo University. A career from the bottom to the top of this pyramid was possible by surviving an examination system designed to separate out leadership material from the population.

The sublimation of Meiji theocracy into scientific knowledge at Tokyo University created an ideological alternative to the Freedom and Popular Rights challengers to Sat-Chō authority. In June 1878, the *genrōin* circulated a draft constitution (*Nihon kokken an*).⁹³ The draft was essentially a legal codification of the institutions and ideological structure already in operation. Supreme authority was vested in the sacred and inviolable emperor. He shared legislative power with the parliament, which consisted of the *genrōin* and a house of elected representatives. The draft provoked a revival of Freedom and Popular Rights opposition that led to the formation of political parties. Itagaki revived his party, now called the Patriots’ Society (*Aikokusha*), in September 1878, and re-organized it in December 1880 into the first political party, the Liberal Party (*Jiyūtō*). The following year, Saga samurai Ōkuma Shigenobu (1838-1922), a member of the government, submitted an official opinion on the *genrōin* draft calling for a constitution based on party politics, in which the party with a majority in the assembly would form the cabinet, as in England. Ōkuma was purged from the government as a result of his position. The purge, known as Political Change of Meiji 14 (*Meiji jūyonen no seihen*), cemented Sat-Chō domination of the state, which thereafter was pejoratively referred to as the “clan government” (*hanbatsu seifu*).⁹⁴ An Imperial Rescript calling for the promulgation of a constitution by 1890 was issued, and Itō Hirobumi was selected to oversee its drafting. In March 1882, Itō was dispatched to Europe for research. That same month, two more political parties were formed: the Constitutional Progressive Party (*Rikken kaishintō*), founded by Ōkuma, and the Constitutional Imperial Party (*Rikken teiseitō*), a government-founded conservative party that was disbanded in 1883.

Katō’s *New Theses on Human Rights* appeared in this heated political environment in September 1882. The years following the 1881 witnessed the final showdown between the Meiji oligarchs and the Freedom and Popular Rights Movement,

⁹² Bernard Silberman, “The Bureaucratic State in Japan: The Problem of Authority and Legitimacy,” in *Conflict in Modern Japanese History: The Neglected Tradition*, ed. Tetsuo Najita and J. Victor Koschmann (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 226-257.

⁹³ Pittau, *Political Thought in Early Meiji Japan*, 74-76.

⁹⁴ Akita, *Foundations of Constitutional Government in Japan*, 31-32.

whose hopes came to rest on the Liberal Party. Objections to Katō's evolutionism from Freedom and Popular Rights intellectuals, notably Ueki Emori, Baba Tatsui, and Yano Fumio, predictably reaffirmed the objective reality of human rights. More importantly, Freedom and Popular Rights thought began to feed opposition in the countryside. Since the implementation of the 1873 Land Tax, resentment in the countryside had been building into political expression. Liberal thought and Christianity spread among rural elites (*gōnō*) under the blanket term Freedom and Popular Rights, though it was not an organized movement. The term Freedom and Popular Rights also became associated with the violent uprisings among the peasantry (*nōmin*) who bore the brunt of the land tax. Hopes that the samurai-led Liberal Party would coordinate the local elites and the peasantry into a national movement with a broad social base failed to materialize. The Liberal Party dissolved itself in October 1884 amid accusations that it was inciting the rural uprisings. Several days later, the government unleashed a violent crackdown on a peasant uprising in Chichibu. The combination of these two events marked the end of Freedom and Popular Rights Movement. The political and intellectual culture that it had disseminated through the countryside collapsed. Local elites became usurious landlords, the peasantry became exploited tenants, and country intellectuals were drawn into the cities and state-built institutions of learning. The national education system leading through Tokyo University to the civil bureaucracy was now the sole route to power.

After the failure of the Freedom and People's Rights Movement, there were no more obstacles to the oligarch's monopolization of the ideology of progress. Three reforms were made in anticipation of the promulgation of the constitution that would formalize this monopoly. First, the Peerage (*kazoku*), originally created in 1869, was reformed on July 7, 1884. The reformed peerage consisted of five ranks analogous to the European titles of prince, marquis, count, viscount, and baron. This reform was intended to ensure a majority of peers in the upper house of the parliament.⁹⁵ Second, the Department of State was dissolved on December 22, 1885, after some eighteen years as the central decision-making organ of the state. It was replaced with a cabinet (*naikaku*). Itō Hirobumi, the chief architect of the constitution, was named the first prime minister.⁹⁶ Finally, on March 3, 1886, the Imperial University Order (*Teikoku daigaku rei*) reorganized Tokyo University into Tokyo Imperial University.⁹⁷ This order, drafted by Minister of Education Mori Arinori, formalized the University's role as the intellectual apparatus of the state. It stated that the official purpose of the Imperial University was the teaching and contemplation of the "secrets" of the arts, sciences, and technologies necessary for the state (*kokka*).⁹⁸ For Mori, higher education existed for the benefit of the state, which the people (*kokumin*) should regard as an idol (*honzon*).⁹⁹ The work of the Imperial University was not education (*kyōiku*), but scholarship (*gakumon*). Education, for Mori, denotes the moral, physical, and intellectual instruction imparted from adults to children, in order to train them as imperial subjects. Scholarship, on the other hand, refers

⁹⁵ Pittau, *Political Thought in Early Meiji Japan*, 160-162.

⁹⁶ Pittau, *Political Thought in Early Meiji Japan*, 163-164.

⁹⁷ Tokyo Daigaku Hyakunenshi Henshū Iinkai, eds. *Tokyo daigaku hyakunenshi, tsūshi hen (TDH)* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1984), 787-789.

⁹⁸ *TDH*, 787-789.

⁹⁹ *TDH*, 797.

to research in the arts and sciences necessary for the strengthening of the state.¹⁰⁰ Tokyo Imperial University was officially the intellectual organ of state.

Buddhism once again adapted itself to this new intellectual climate. As argued throughout this chapter, the ideology of the Meiji Enlightenment evolved through the negation of Buddhism. First, Buddhism was separated from the *kami* in the Department of Divinity era (1868-1871). The separation negated Buddhism as non-knowledge, but had the effect of conferring a new unity upon Buddhism. Buddhism, in response, attempted to re-connect with the *kami* in an inclusive state ideology. It was negated a second time by its subordination to *kami* worship as inferior knowledge in the Great Teaching campaigns of the Ministry of Doctrine (1871-1877). Shimaji Mokurai, in response, withdrew from the Ministry of Doctrine to campaign for the protection of Buddhism as a private religion. The debates about the separation of church and state (*seikyō bunri*) that Shimaji instigated continued throughout the Tokyo University era (1877-1886). During this time, Buddhism, now called a religion, was negated a third time as irrational in the context of the University Evolutionism that prevailed throughout the period. In the response to this third negation, Buddhism became a critique of Meiji Enlightenment ideology. The key figure was Inoue Enryō (1858-1919), a Buddhist priest who attended Tokyo University in its formative years. He started in its preparatory course in 1877, entered the philosophy course in 1881, and graduated in 1885. At exactly the time of the Imperial University Decree, Enryō produced a series of works that reimagined Buddhism as knowledge in the manner of University Evolutionism. Enryō is the subject of chapter two.

¹⁰⁰ *TDH*, 801-802; See also Ivan Parker Hall, *Mori Arinori* (Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, 1999), 409-412.

Chapter Two: Buddhist as Intellectual: Inoue Enryō in the Meiji Enlightenment

True Pure Land priest Inoue Enryō (1858-1919) was utterly consumed by the predicament of Buddhism in the Meiji Enlightenment. In 1885, just after becoming the first Buddhist priest to graduate from Tokyo University, he resolved to revive Buddhism. He renounced the priesthood and immersed himself in the work of saving Buddhism, navigating the labyrinth of logical contradictions that separated Buddhism from the modern knowledge of Tokyo University. Laboring ceaselessly in the belief that the fate of Buddhism rested in his hands, Enryō strained and weakened until he finally collapsed in a state of mental and physical exhaustion. In April 1886, he entered a sanatorium in Atami, a seaside hot-spring resort town located on Japan's Izu peninsula, where he remained bedridden for six months. Between 1885 and 1887, working in a state of spiritual turmoil, Enryō produced a series of astonishing texts that virtually inverted all criticisms against Buddhism, re-imagining it as modern, scientific, and quintessentially Japanese.¹⁰¹

The thought of Inoue Enryō represented the second attempt to reverse the Meiji Enlightenment's separation of *kami* from Buddha (*shinbutsu bunri*). Shimaji Mokurai, as seen in chapter one, led the first attempt to reunite *kami* and Buddha by advocating a national ideology that also included Buddhism. The result was the Great Teaching Institute, which included Buddhist clergy but subordinated Buddhism to the *kami*. Shimaji, in response to the denigration of Buddhism, led Buddhism's withdrawal from the Great Teaching Institute and advocated instead for Western-style freedom of religion and Buddhism's permanent separation from politics. Buddhism was thus negated again – this time as a private religious belief. The Meiji Enlightenment, meanwhile, was reaffirmed as the official reality in a new, scientific language of evolution at Tokyo University, which succeeded the Great Teaching Institute as the Meiji Enlightenment's ideological institution.

Enryō was both a Buddhist and a Tokyo University scholar. The ideology produced at Tokyo University had the form of a scientific theory of evolution. It legitimized the imperial institution and its supporting theocratic ideology with a metaphysical principle of evolutionary progress. Enryō's attempt to reassert the “reality” of Buddhism against this scientific ideology necessarily took the form of that ideology. Enryō combined Buddhist metaphysics with evolution to propose a scientific theory in which the Buddhist concept of thusness (Sanskrit Tathatā, Japanese *shinnyo*), or the fundamental unity beneath the apparent differences and distinctions of reality, was the mechanism of cosmic change. In this way, he countered the Meiji Enlightenment's official reality by incorporating Buddhism back into it.

Enryō's work, like that of Shimaji, was antagonistic toward the Meiji Enlightenment's negation of Buddhism. Both tried to overcome the separation of Buddha from *kami* to restore the “reality” of Buddhism. But Enryō's work differed from

¹⁰¹ Biographical data for Inoue Enryō is compiled from Takagi Hirō, *Inoue Enryō no sekai* (Tokyo: Tōyō daigaku Inoue Enryō kinen gakujutsu senta-, 2005); Hirano Imao, *Den Enryō* (Tokyo: Sōfūsha, 1974), Kathleen Staggs, “Defend the Nation, Love the Truth: Inoue Enryō and the Revival of Meiji Buddhism,” *Monumenta Nipponica* Vol. 38 No. 3 (Autumn 1983): 251-281.

Shimaji's in a crucial aspect. Shimaji first tried to re-ground Buddhism on the ideological foundation of Meiji theocracy before re-grounding it on the foundation of universal humanity. These were the only two options for Shimaji, and each was ideologically implicated in a different power structure – Shintō was implicated in Japanese state power, and the Christianity-derived universal humanity was implicated in the imperial power structure of the West. Enryō's great innovation was the discovery of a third option – existential despair. For him, the meaning of Buddhism derived not from the idea of universal humanity or from state power, but from his own experience of faith in something that was illogical according to the official reality. Enryō thus marked the beginning of the antimodernist interpretation of Buddhism that, eventually, evolved into Japanese Medievalism. His existential crisis was itself evidence of Enryō's acceptance of the Meiji Enlightenment, which denied the reality of Buddhism. His insistence on the reality of Buddhism precisely because it exceeded the boundaries of official reality evinced his rejection of the Meiji Enlightenment. The simultaneous embrace and rejection of the Meiji Enlightenment's official reality was the starting point for antimodernism.

1. Inoue Enryō in the Meiji Enlightenment

Inoue Enryō's life leading up to his 1886 crisis was an odyssey from the periphery of the late-Tokugawa world into the inner circles of the Meiji Enlightenment. He was born Inoue Kishimaru in Homura, a village deep in the snow country enclosed between the Higashiyama mountain range and the Japan Sea coast in Nagaoka domain in the old province of Echigo no Kuni, now part of Nagaoka city in Niigata prefecture. He was the eldest son of a Buddhist family that, for fourteen generations, held the headship of Jikōji, a small branch temple of the Higashi Honganji temple complex of True Pure Land (Jōdo Shinshū) Buddhism.¹⁰² His early education, received during the height of the persecution of Buddhism in the Department of Divinity era, consisted of the training he would need to assume the temple headship. He was ordained a Shinshū priest and given the name Enryō in 1871 at age thirteen.

The young Enryō also mastered Chinese letters. He studied first at the Chinese learning school (*kangaku juku*) of Ishiguro Tadanori (1845-1941, future surgeon general of the Japanese army) from October 1868 to April 1869, and then under a former Nagaoka domain Confucian scholar from October 1869 through 1872. Enryō's studies in Western learning were, from the beginning, linked to political crisis. Makino Tadakuni, a shogunal vassal (*fudai daimyō*) and lord of Nagaoka domain, had joined the Northern Alliance (*ōuetsu reppan dōmei*) against the imperial forces in the Boshin War. The clash at Echigo, known as the Hokuetsu War, crushed Makino's forces and laid waste to Nagaoka. Education in Western learning subsequently became a key to the economic recovery of Echigo.¹⁰³ With the creation of Niigata prefecture in 1873, local schools were consolidated into the Nagaoka School of Western Learning (Nagaoka Yōgakkō). Enryō

¹⁰² Miura Setsuo, "Inoue Enryō to sono kazoku: Seika no Jikōji to Eikōji o fukumete," *Inoue Enryō Senta- Nenpō* No. 15 (2006): 113-140.

¹⁰³ Takagi, *Inoue Enryō no sekai*, 16.

entered the school in 1874 and distinguished himself as the center of the student association, and eventually served as a substitute teacher in math and Chinese studies. But it was his mastery of the English course that brought him to the attention of the leadership of Higashi Honganji. In 1877, the year of Tokyo University's founding, the temple recruited Enryō and three others from throughout the temple complex into its sect modernization campaign and brought him to study at the sect's new English school in Kyoto.

At the sect headquarters in Kyoto, the nineteen-year-old Enryō again distinguished himself as a prodigy, and in 1878 the temple sent him to Tokyo University's preparatory course (*yobimon*, which became the prestigious Ichikō, the First Higher School, in the Imperial University reorganization of 1886). He entered the literature department as a regular degree student in 1881, graduated in 1885, and was about to embark upon graduate studies in Indian philosophy at the time of his 1886 crisis. Enryō's experience at Tokyo University thus coincided almost exactly with the University's formative 1877-1886 period. He was one of the original members of the state's intellectual class, and he accepted the positive knowledge of the University as a literal representation of reality. His crisis, I argue below, stemmed from his acceptance of this view.

During his years in the preparatory course, Enryō studied English, mathematics, geography, Chinese and Japanese language, world history, and, in the latter half of his course, biology, chemistry, physics, and economics.¹⁰⁴ In 1881, Enryō entered Tokyo University's literature department as a regular degree student in philosophy during the height of "university evolutionism." He studied Western philosophy with Toyama Masakazu and Ernest Fenollosa, Indian philosophy with Hara Tanzan and Yoshitani Kakuju, and Chinese philosophy with Shimada Jūrei. He also studied history and Eastern (*tōyō*) philosophy with Inoue Tetsujirō, the first graduate of Tokyo University's philosophy course and, later, the successor to Katō Hiroyuki as the most vocal defender of state ideology.¹⁰⁵ Katō himself was not teaching. He assumed the presidency of Tokyo University in 1881, the year of Enryō's entry and the year before the publication of his definitive thesis on social evolutionary theory, *New Theory of Natural Rights* (*Jinken shinsetsu*). Although Katō was no longer lecturing at the university, he became a mentor and even a kind of father figure to Enryō, who was 22 years his junior.¹⁰⁶ He lent his intellectual and personal support to Enryō's various enterprises, including the founding of the Philosophical Association (*Tetsugakukai*) study group – which remains the professional society for philosophers in Japan – while still a student in 1884. Enryō's close relationship with the architect of Japan's official intellectual organ must have left a

¹⁰⁴ Enryō's Preparatory Course curriculum reprinted in Miura Setsuo, "*Inoue Enryō no shoki shisō (sono ni) Tokyo daigaku jidai no kiseki*," *Inoue Enryō senta-nenpō* No. 16 (2007): 81-122.

¹⁰⁵ Enryō's University curriculum reprinted in Miura, "*Inoue Enryō no shoki shisō (sono ni) Tokyo daigaku jidai no kiseki*."

¹⁰⁶ Matsuoka Hachirō, "*Katō Hiroyuki to Inoue Enryō: Katō Hiroyuki no zenki seiji shisō to no kanren ni oite*," *Inoue Enryō Kenkyū* No. 3 (1985): 19-34; Unoura Hiroshi, "*Kindai Nihon ni okeru shinkaron no juyō to Inoue Enryō*," *Inoue Enryō senta-nenpō* No. 2 (1993): 25-48.

profound influence upon him not only intellectually, but also in terms of his sense of mission and purpose as an intellectual. Enryō was fully immersed in the intellectual world of Tokyo University, and he appropriated its paradigmatic form of knowledge – Fenollosa’s Hegelian/Spencerian social evolutionism – into his own thought: a vision of world progress guided by a cosmic intelligence and heading toward a grand East-West synthesis.¹⁰⁷

Enryō submitted occasional pieces on religion to various journals throughout his university career, and graduated with a thesis on Mencius in 1885. Higashi Honganji sent Enryō to Tokyo University with the intention of grooming him for a teaching position in the temple complex. As a graduate of Tokyo University, he was also expected to assume a leadership position in the government. His former teacher Ishiguro Tadanori, now a member of the Peerage, recommended him to Minister of Education Mori Arinori, who offered Enryō a post in the Ministry of Education. But upon graduating in 1885, Enryō refused both of these, abruptly renounced the priesthood, and announced his intention to modernize Buddhism as a secular scholar by combining it with Western philosophy. He stayed on at Tokyo Imperial University as a graduate student in Indian philosophy, in the new graduate course that was just established by the 1886 Imperial University Order.

Such were the experiences that led Enryō to the eve of his crisis. By this time, Enryō had internalized the ideological world vision of the Meiji Enlightenment. He accepted the positive knowledge produced by Tokyo University, which sublimated the power of Meiji Theocracy into its narrative of evolutionary progress. The meaninglessness of Buddhism in the objective reality of the Meiji Enlightenment could not be countered with reason. It had to be countered with sheer will, with the assertion that something is true because one believes it to be so when it is objectively untrue. It required the leap.

2. Young Man Enryō: The Crisis in Atami.

The existential crisis Enryō experienced in Atami was the founding premise of his philosophy. Discerning its place in his thought requires careful reading, for Enryō did not construct a theory of existential crisis, and his philosophy was not, properly speaking, existentialist. Yet, he mixed a personal narrative of crisis with formal philosophy in his most famous work, *Preface to Theses on the Vitality of Buddhism* (*Bukkyō katsuron joron*, hereafter *Preface (Joron)*). First published in February 1887, *Preface* presents a compact exposition of Enryō’s thought. It gave confidence to the embattled defenders of Buddhism, and its vision of the East as a world area united by Buddhism was influential among intellectuals outside the Buddhist world.¹⁰⁸ But when we subtract the philosophical elements from the text, we are left with an interesting but overlooked

¹⁰⁷ Yamaguchi Seiichi, “Fenerosa to Inoue Enryō,” *Inoue Enryō senta-nenpō* No. 1 (1992): 3-35; The use of social evolutionary theory in Enryō’s work is also treated in Gerard Rainier Clinton Godart, “Tracing the Circle of Truth: Inoue Enryō on the History of Philosophy and Buddhism,” *The Eastern Buddhist* Vol. 36 No. 1&2 (2004): 106-133; and Godart, “Darwin in Japan.”

¹⁰⁸ Takagi, *Inoue Enryō no sekai*, 116-119.

remainder. The form of *Preface* is that of an autobiographical narrative. Enryō weaves the philosophical content into an account of his odyssey from childhood through Tokyo University up to his resolution to revive Buddhism and crisis period. Scholars generally excise and synthesize the philosophical content, mining the remainder for background data, or reading it as an innocently literal and transparent account of Enryō's intentions and motivations. Below, I reconsider this crisis narrative not as an accessory, but as philosophical content through a phenomenological analysis of the narrative's form.

Preface is about sixty-six pages in length, and contains no internal breaks or sections.¹⁰⁹ The structure of the text does, however, consist of two parts. A little more than halfway through, its form shifts from narrative autobiography into expository philosophical argument. The dramatic tension created by the autobiographical crisis narrative, in which the Enryō-protagonist endures increasing anxiety on his quest for truth in the intellectual landscape of the Meiji Enlightenment, reaches a coda in the philosophical portion of the text. This does not release the tension. Rather, the tension itself animates the philosophical content, which functions as a kind of epiphany in the narrative. In other words, the crisis narrative elicits from the reader an aesthetic response that conditions the meaning of the philosophical content that follows it.

In terms of literary genre, the *Preface* narrative is a form we may call neo-Confucian religious autobiography.¹¹⁰ Consider the opening passage:

Is anyone born who does not think about the state? Does anyone study who does not love *shinri*? I was born in the provincial countryside and grew up in wilderness, weak in knowledge and ability, yet nothing was without a taste of *gokoku airi* (Defend the Nation, Love the Principle). I still cannot feel morning showers and evening breezes without the feeling of Defend the Nation, I cannot see spring flowers and the autumn moon without the awareness of the Love of Principle. That feeling and that awareness are fused in my pure *kokoro* (mind-heart). I cultivate this *kokoro*, I defend this *kokoro*. Even with only the protection of poor shelter and ripped clothes in bitter cold, I am happy to have this *kokoro*, it warms all my body; even in hunger, I am happy in this *kokoro*, it nourishes my whole body. O, I am made to exist by this *kokoro*, I am animated by this *kokoro*, I am made to laugh, to speak, to cry. This *kokoro* is my entire body. This *kokoro* is my life. I must protect it. I must administer to it.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Inoue Enryō, *Bukkyō katsuron joron*, in *Inoue Enryō Senshū (IES)*, 25 Vols. ed. Tōyō Daigaku Sōritsu Hyaku shūnen kinen ronbunshū hensan iinkai, Dai ichi bukai (Tokyo: Tōyō Daigaku, 1987-2004), Vol. 1, 327-393; an English translation is available in Kathleen Staggs, "In Defense of Japanese Buddhism: Essays from the Meiji Period by Inoue Enryō and Murakami Senshō" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1979).

¹¹⁰ Rodney L. Taylor has written of a neo-Confucian form of religious autobiography, which narrates the hardships and enlightenment experience of the narrator on their quest for sagehood, in the Ming Dynasty. See Taylor, "The Centered Self: Religious Autobiography in the Neo-Confucian Tradition," *History of Religions* Vol. 17, No. 3/4 (Feb.-May 1978), 266-283.

¹¹¹ Inoue Enryō, *Bukkyō katsuron joron*, 330.

This expository passage introduces the key terms that situate *Preface* in the intellectual genre of neo-Confucianism that was common intellectual currency among Tokugawa men of letters. At its most basic, neo-Confucianism was a metaphysical reinterpretation of the moral philosophy of classical Confucianism. It advocated moral self-cultivation for the sake of public service through the investigation of things (Chinese *ko-wu*, Japanese *kakubutsu*); that is, the study of principles (Chinese *li*, Japanese *ri*) in order to attain insight into the Supreme Ultimate (Chinese *taiji*, Japanese *taikyoku*), the yin-yang principle of undifferentiated potentiality from which all existence emanates. During the Song dynasty (960-1276 CE), Zhi Xi (Japanese Shushi, 1130-1200) theorized a dualistic *ri* (principle) and *kokoro* (heart-mind) in which principles inhere in the external world and are accessible through observation and contemplation. The rationalism of Song neo-Confucianism is often contrasted with the idealism of the Ming dynasty (1421-1644 CE) as represented by Wang Yangming (Japanese Ōyōmei, 1472-1529 CE). Wang's neo-Confucianism was a monism in which principles are not external but are in fact conterminous with the heart-mind. Sincerity, action, experience, and things are all heart-mind.¹¹² In short, Ming idealism emphasized value over truth, passion over reason, and existential commitment and faith over the detached observation of objective truths of reason. Ming idealism had wide currency among Tokugawa men of letters, and played an especially important role as a central component of the radical ideology of late-Tokugawa restorationism.¹¹³

The opening passage of *Preface* identifies the *kokoro* (heart-mind) of the Enryō-protagonist with the principle and thus situates the text in the Tokugawa neo-Confucian tradition. Two other terms, however, are specific to Enryō's thought. First, the interior-exterior world of *Preface* is not *kokoro* (heart-mind) and *ri* (principle), but *kokoro* and *shinri*. *Shinri* is a neologism coined by Nishi Amane as a Japanese approximation for the Western philosophical concept of truth, defined as principles universally valid and empirically verifiable by replication. The term *shinri* is a Chinese compound combining the character for "pure," "genuine" or "sincere" with the character for the neo-Confucian term "principle." *Shinri* thus means Pure Principle, or the principle of all principles, and carries the connotation of Western scientific truth. Second, the term *gokoku airi* (Defend the Nation, Love the Principle) plays on the Buddhist slogan *gohō aikoku* (Defend the Law, Love the Country). The slogan *gokoku airi* thus suggests two things: conflation of the scientific truth of *shinri* (principle) with Buddhist law, and a conflation of that scientific truth/Buddhist law with the state. Already, then, the nuanced neo-Confucian language of the opening passage discloses the broad outlines of Enryō's thought: truth is a religious law that invests the universe with meaning and which the state must embody.

The Enryō-protagonist of *Preface* is on a quest for *shinri*; this is the plot of the crisis narrative. As already established in the opening passage, the Enryō-protagonist's commitment to *shinri* is existential. Although *shinri* is an objective principle that inheres in the cosmos, its meaning derives from the protagonist's resolute commitment to it, from his *kokoro*.

¹¹² Wing-tsit Chan, trans. and ed., *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973).

¹¹³ Tetsuo Najita, *Japan: The Intellectual Foundations of Modern Japanese Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974); Harootunian, *Towards Restoration*.

People have their habitual preoccupations. Some enjoy drinking, others the erotic, or the martial arts, or literary pursuits. My preoccupation is *shinri*. I look at the moon, at a flower, at mountain scenery and the color of water, at morning haze and evening fog, I think of *shinri*. The world in which we exist and the bodies we occupy are made of *shinri*. Everything we see and hear reflects *shinri*. O, I breathe *shinri*. O, I am nourished by *shinri*. I cultivate this *kokoro* and this strength for the sake of *shinri*. It is my life's wish.¹¹⁴

The meaningfulness of *shinri* derives not from its objective truth-value, but from its relationship to the knowing/experiencing subject. It is a meaning that the protagonist embodies in its physical and spiritual existence. The existential relationship of the Enryō-protagonist to *shinri* is the basis for the philosophical assertions of the text.

As an existential subject position, the Enryō-protagonist is defined by its relationship to *shinri*, for which it exists. The following passage, in which the Enryō-protagonist describes his early commitment to *shinri*, discloses the nature of this relationship.

Since my childhood I never liked the same things as ordinary people. What pleases them does not please me, and what displeases them pleases me. So I never played with the other kids in the village. Whereas their pleasures were generally restricted to food, drink, and games, my pleasures were solitary. I used to go out of the town and walk among the rivers and mountains; I watched the forests of grasses and trees grown thick and gloomy, the water of the flowing rivers, which peacefully left its source, never to return. With some secret questions in my heart, I would return home thinking about the principle (*ri*). When I could attain the principle after having been unable to do so, I happily smiled to myself with satisfaction. For this reason I was always apart from the crowd. Growing up, I asked others to teach me. I felt inspired by everything I heard and saw, and sat in contemplation day and night about the principle. Afterwards, I went to Tokyo in the season when myriad flowers were in bloom. The spring colors of Kan'eiji and the bank of Sumida River drove the people mad. I saw it and felt nothing other than a sensation. People rejoice at the beauty of a flower, but I want to know why the flowers are beautiful. I want to know what makes the people mad. People like to spend the summer at Shinagawa and, in the autumn, admire the maple trees at Takikawa. Most people look at the forms of things without asking what the inner principle is. I just ask what that principle is. That is why I do not share the same pleasures as the masses.¹¹⁵

In this passage, we see that the Enryō-protagonist is set apart from the rest of society by his relationship to principle. The crowd appears to the protagonist as an undifferentiated collectivity in which there are no individuals. They are unconcerned with principle, and exist in a mode that we may call "aesthetic:" they experience the world of sensible forms

¹¹⁴ Inoue Enryō, *Bukkyō katsuron joron*, 333.

¹¹⁵ Inoue Enryō, *Bukkyō katsuron joron*, 332-333.

as either pleasurable or un-pleasurable. They are passive and without will, allowing the sensual experience of forms to manipulate them. The protagonist is an individual subject, defined against an undifferentiated crowd from which his quest alienates him. He exists “epistemologically.” That is, his experience of the world is mediated by the principles behind the forms. The perception of principle defines the protagonist as an individual subject. Rational reflection alienates the subject from the natural world of forms it observes as its object. It also alienates the subject from others, because its experience of the world is interiorized and incommunicable. Here, then, are two modes of existence – a passive, herd-like, and sensuous experience of the world of natural forms (aesthetic) and an intentional, solitary, and interior intellectual experience (epistemological). The aesthetic is an unmediated experience of the world, while the epistemological is mediated by principle.

The plot develops as the Enryō-protagonist encounters obstacles in his pursuit of *shinri*. The Enryō-protagonist’s coming of age as a Buddhist in the age of the separation of *kami* from Buddha (*shinbutsu bunri*) presents the main obstacle in his quest for *shinri*. This is the conflict that generates the crisis narrative’s dramatic tension.

Before I discovered that Buddhism contained complete *shinri*, I believed Buddhism was untruth and I was no different from those who slandered Buddhism. I was born in a Buddhist house, raised on Buddhist study, and before the Restoration I received a completely Buddhist education. But I secretly believed there was no truth in Buddhism. I felt shame with shaven head and rosary in hand compared to people of the world. I wished to leave the *mon* [“gate,” i.e., Buddhist priesthood] and enter the world. At the time of the Great Restoration, when *haibutsu kishaku* [Abolish Buddha, Destroy Shakyamuni] was directed at Buddhism, I shed the Buddhist robes and studied in the world.¹¹⁶

The Enryō-protagonist’s commitment to Buddhism was a necessity, not of his choosing. He bore traditional obligations to fourteen generations who administered Jikōji. Identity was hereditary, and Buddhism was his identity and his destiny. Pursuing his quest for *shinri* required nothing less than a revolt against traditional claims on his personal identity. The conflict itself is a symptom of the ideological structure of the Meiji Enlightenment that was coming into existence at exactly that time. The shame he felt about Buddhism derived from the separation of *kami* from Buddha, which discredited the truth-value of Buddhism. Apprehending the true principles of reality, as dictated by the Meiji Enlightenment, required accepting Buddhism as untruth.

By the same token, the Enryō-protagonist unproblematically accepted the validity of the Meiji Enlightenment as *shinri*. The following passage narrates the Enryō-protagonist’s fifteen-year upward spiral from his Buddhist past in the periphery to the apex of the Meiji Enlightenment, culminating in the triumphant discovery of *shinri* in Western philosophy:

I first studied Confucianism for five years, but it was not complete in *shinri*. Then I studied Western learning (*yōgaku*), recommended by friends who had already

¹¹⁶ Inoue Enryō, *Bukkyō katsuron joron*, 335-336.

begun studying it. I found that Western learning examined external forms through experimentation, but ignores the *shinri* of the formless. I already found that Buddhism and Confucianism lacked complete *shinri*. Looking to Christianity, I threw away Confucius and based things on Western learning, since Christianity must be based on Western learning. In 1873, I studied English and wished to read the Bible. This book still did not exist in provincial bookstores, and anyway, my family would have been too poor to buy a copy. One of my friends had a Chinese translation, and I got a hold of the original and read it feverishly day and night. I concluded that this too was incomplete in *shinri*. I was totally confused . . . I gave up on the ancient teachings and theories, and resolved to find the one truth myself. I searched for the secret of Western learning, clarified the essence of *shinri* and secretly vowed to one day establish a new religion. Ten years have passed since then. I searched Western philosophy with all my strength and one day had a huge epiphany (*satori*) that the truth lay there. I was immeasurably happy. I felt like Columbus discovering the New World. It was an enlightenment in my brain. It washed away the troubles of the previous years.¹¹⁷

Here, the *Preface* narrates Enryō's educational experience at Tokyo University as the discovery of *shinri*. As shown in the biographical sketch above, the Western philosophy that the Enryō-protagonist was discovering was university evolutionism, the Spencerian/Hegelian evolutionism of Ernest Fenellosa. What Enryō was discovering, in other words, was the truth and reality of the Meiji Enlightenment produced at Tokyo University. *Preface* narrates the experience of assuming the state's-eye view of long-term institutional change as a revelation. The discovery is a triumphal climax to the lonely quest for *shinri* that had set the young protagonist apart from the crowd. The affective experience of this discovery as projected by the narrative is that of wonder, the sudden realization of unlimited horizons and infinite possibilities after a key experience has enabled one to see the world through new eyes. Wonder, consummated in the discovery of *shinri*, is in this text the way in which the epistemological mode of existence is affectively experienced, in contrast with the unmediated aesthetic mode, which is experienced as pleasure.

Having grasped the principle of all principles, the Enryō-protagonist's journey from the unmediated aesthetic existence of the crowd to the mediated epistemological existence of the modern subject is complete. The tension of the narrative, however, is still unresolved, in that the obstacle of his Buddhist past had to be confronted. The plot takes a twist here. The Enryō-protagonist does not simply renounce Buddhism as false, though he had previously wished to. Instead, he suddenly re-embraces Buddhism as the highest principle:

I went back to the ancient teachings after having already discovered *shinri* in the world of philosophy, and I saw that both Christianity and Confucianism clearly lacked *shinri*. Only Buddhism fit with the principle of philosophy (*tetsuri*). As I reread the Buddhist scriptures and came to know the trust of their theories more and more, I clapped my hands together and exclaimed. Who could have known

¹¹⁷ Inoue Enryō, *Bukkyō katsuron joron*, 335-336.

that the *shinri* produced by several thousand years of Western study was already present three thousand years ago the ancient East? In my youth, living within the *mon*, I did not know the *shinri* of my own religion because I was ignorant and lacked the strength for this discovery. Dropping my dream of establishing a new religion, I resolved to reform Buddhism and make it the religion of the world of Enlightenment. That was 1885, the year I launched my reform of Buddhism.¹¹⁸

At this point, the narrative enters another register. The Enryō-protagonist's quest for *shinri* led him to the Meiji Enlightenment, the ideological sublimation of Meiji theocratic power into positive scientific knowledge. His inability to abandon Buddhism is, in this context, not rational. Instead of doing the logical thing, the Enryō-protagonist gives resolute commitment to something that is illogical: a leap of faith, and willing the truth of something that is objectively not true as defined by the politically conditioned values of truth, reality, and knowledge of the Meiji Enlightenment. I quote at length:

I had a secret plan for this reform [of Buddhism]. The year before last, 1885, I searched widely in books foreign and domestic, East and West, every evening late into the night. When I finally did go to bed, all kinds of images went through my mind, and I wandered all night in dreams without taking a sound sleep. Because of this, day and night my spirit (*seishin*) took no rest. I carried on this way for several months and felt exhaustion in my body and mind. I dared to ignore this and carried on working continuously, but finally last spring I developed chronic illness. I have been sick in bed receiving medical treatment for one year now. During that time, I have had no taste for food, drink, or women, yet my *kokoro* was not exhausted by this illness. I only regret that the plan for reforming Buddhism is still not done. In fact, my labors to reform Buddhism caused my illness. If I knew that this illness would bring results for my Buddhist reform, even if my body were to die now, the spirit I devoted to *shinri* will exist for eternity with the sun and moon. This thought is enough to console my heart, but this responsibility is heavy, the goals distant. If the reform fails along the way I will feel regret. I knew from the beginning the adversities I would endure in reforming religion, going ahead of public opinion. Therefore, I did not seek to avoid these adversities, but I became ill before I could see whether my plan would succeed or fail. Will my heart not be at peace for one day? Because of this, easily cured symptoms are uncured, and large doses of strong medication have no effect. It has reached a half a year since I was stricken, and have remained in bed without going outdoors. My body is almost entirely exhausted. I know it will be difficult to recover completely. But I am single-minded in my *gohō aikoku* [Defend the Law, Love the Nation]. I only see its flourishing more and more. I forgot the hard illness and my condition progressed the following six months.

One day in my sickbed, I lamented with anger and resentment that people in secular society with any education despise Buddhism and shrink from priests. There are some among the clergy who are wholly absorbed in *gohō aikoku*

¹¹⁸ Inoue Enryō, *Bukkyō katsuron joron*, 337.

(Defend the Law, Love the Country). But they are as few as the morning stars. Apart from them, everyone who sympathizes with *gohō* has no spirit and no strength, and they are ultimately poisonous to the state. Even I in my sickness cannot put up with it. I temporarily overcame my hard illness and spoke at length, denouncing the spiritlessness of the clergy. To my regret, I still do not see anyone reply to my lone voice. I need big long breath. I perceive that my illness worsened. I once met a spiritless priest and warned him: a person without one part *gohō aikoku* is a criminal of the state. But being sick, I know it is difficult to fulfill my desire, and I fear becoming a criminal of the state myself. Many times, with a heart full of despair, I have sat at my window and howled at the sky against the cold midnight wind. Only recently, I have recovered and regained my strength. I am secretly happy in my heart that Heaven has not thrown me away. Our lives are a dewdrop upon a leaf, we never know when one day in an instant it will scatter in the air. I was born a pauper and will die a pauper. But if I cannot accomplish what my pure heart (*sekishin*) demands before I die I will never rest in peace. Even so, I take comfort in knowing that someone else is rising to take my place. When I read the Buddhist scriptures I see *shinri* flowing from them. When I think about Buddhist doctrines, the brilliance of *shinri* shines in my heart. This religion is without parallel and without equal in all the world. It is perfect and unchanging throughout time. Must we not defend it for the sake of *shinri*? My pure heart does not exist outside of it. The purpose of my life (*hissei*) does not exist outside it. Whatever changes may occur in human values, I swear that I will never change my *kokoro*. When I try to foretell the future, I think that Christianity will one day dominate Japan. But I declare that if this happens during my lifetime and 34,999,999 people are converted, the entire population of Japan will not be converted because I, the thirty-five millionth, will have refused.¹¹⁹

In this long passage, the Enryō-protagonist's resolute commitment has shifted from something eternal and ideal (*shinri*) to something concrete and finite (the revival of Buddhism). The total consuming commitment that dictates all meaning for his existence and provides the purpose for his decisions and actions is now a cause that may not succeed. The commitment is illogical, and the reasons for undertaking it are not explainable. The key to this passage is the connection between the resoluteness of the commitment and the acute awareness of death caused by illness. The awareness of death – the physical annihilation of the self by illness, the spiritual annihilation of the self in having overcome the epistemological subject – is that which drives the commitment. For the commitment is what makes death meaningful for the still-living Enryō-protagonist.

By taking the leap of faith to resolutely commit to something illogical, the Enryō-protagonist enters a third mode of existence unlike the aesthetic and epistemological modes already seen. This we may call the “religious” mode, in which the Enryō-protagonist willfully abandons the certainty of principles alone and makes the leap to belief. There is no logical explanation for the leap. Once made, the leap destabilizes the certitude experienced in the epistemological mode, and the individual subjectivity that the epistemological mode allowed. As demonstrated by the above passage, the affective

¹¹⁹ Inoue Enryō, *Bukkyō katsuron joron*, 355-356.

experience of existing religiously is that of anxiety: the awareness that the individual subjectivity of the epistemological mode is in fact fictitious and that one's existence is actually the absence of subjectivity. No longer experiencing the wonder of discovery that the epistemological subject had experienced, the Enryō-protagonist in the religious mode does not distinguish between dreams and waking reality, his physical health and spiritual health.

Preface thus confers meaning upon the existential anxiety that Enryō experienced in real life by embedding it in a narrative of his experience in the Meiji Enlightenment. I argue that the formal structure of the crisis narrative presents an existential ontology, an analysis of modes of existence. This existential ontology is not theorized, but rather is demonstrated through dramatic narrative structure that creates for the reader an affective experience of these modes as the Enryō-protagonist experienced them. These are three: an immature aesthetic stage, experienced as pleasure, in which the forms of the world stimulate a passive subject that is not differentiated as an individual; a higher, epistemological stage, experienced as wonder, in which the apprehension of an ultimate principle mediates an individual subject's experience of the world; and a higher religious stage, experienced as anxiety, in which the subjectivity of the previous stage is abandoned in a leap of faith to something finite and concrete that gives meaning to the existence of the particular individual defined not by a mediating principle, but by awareness of death.¹²⁰ These three stages are discernible in the plot: the Enryō-protagonist has a desire for *shinri*. Buddhism, the traditional obligation of his family, is the obstacle to his desire. The conflict between desire and obstacle was, in this plot, a condition of the historical context of the Meiji Enlightenment. Grasping Buddhism as truth required leaping to the religious mode of existence. The Enryō-protagonist's point of view shifted from what I called an epistemological to a religious subject position before launching into expository philosophy, and I argue in the next section that Enryō's thought must be read from this perspective to be understood.

3. A Religion of Intellect and Feeling: *chiryoku jōkan ryōzen*.

It is a commonplace in scholarship on Enryō to characterize his work as the invention of "rational religion" in the context of Japanese Buddhism. That is, Enryō's achievement was the rethinking of Buddhism through the lens of reason and demonstrating its compatibility with science. By doing this, he responded to the Western intrusion by incorporating modern science into Japanese tradition on the one hand, and repelling the encroachment of Christianity on the other. To be sure, this was something Enryō intended to do. I argue, however, that characterizing Enryō's thought as "rational religion" focuses on the cliché eclecticism of Enryō's thought and misses the bigger picture, for two reasons.

First, for Enryō, Buddhism was not equivalent to modern forms of rational knowledge. It contained and was superior to modern forms of rational knowledge. The "rational religion" characterization posits the non-rational component of Enryō's thought

¹²⁰ These three modes are analogous to Kierkegaard's aesthetic, ethical, and religious modes, or to Hegel's lower immediacy, mediation, and concept.

as an inevitable by-product of trying to rationalize something that is not entirely rational. His point, however, was precisely to preserve the non-rational as the true locus of meaning. Buddhism's strength is not its rationality, but its ability to embrace both the rational and the non-rational. Buddhism is, in Enryō's phrase, a religion of both intellect and feeling (*chiryoku jōkan ryōzen*).

Second, the "rational religion" argument demonstrates that the form of Buddhism was changed, but does not account for how its meaning was changed. For Enryō, the modern form of knowledge through which he rethought Buddhism was social evolutionary theory. As I argued in chapter one, social evolutionary theory was a component of the ideological structure of the Meiji Enlightenment produced by its intellectual apparatus Tokyo University. This understanding of the ideological significance of social evolutionary theory in the context of Japanese politics adds a layer of meaning beyond the simple "importation of Western categories" interpretation.

These two features of Enryō's work – the non-rational and the ideological – become intelligible when viewed from the perspective of existential religious subjectivity constructed by the crisis narrative. I argue that Enryō's thought is a spiritual critique of the Meiji Enlightenment. The essence of this critique is the re-grounding of the positive knowledge of the Meiji Enlightenment on the non-rational world of feeling.

As a point of entry to our discussion of the ideological dimensions of Enryō's use of the knowledge produced at Tokyo University, it is useful to begin with his concept of Pure Philosophy (*junsei tetsugaku*). He explains in *A Night of Philosophical Conversation* (*Tetsugaku issekiwa* 1886, hereafter *Night*) that Pure Philosophy is the master discipline that organizes and grounds all other forms of knowledge. The forms of knowledge study various principles, while Pure Philosophy studies the principle according to which the other principles relate to each other. This is *shinri*, the "pure principle," the principle of principles.

Most people know what psychology and logic are, but hardly anyone knows what Pure Philosophy is. To put it briefly, Pure Philosophy is the study of *shinri* within philosophy. It is the principle of the pure principle, the field of knowledge that seeks the foundation of the other fields of knowledge. In seeking to apprehend these foundations, it asks: What is the substance of *kokoro* (heart-mind); what is the substance of matter; what are the origins, the relationship of the two?¹²¹

This point is further developed in *Golden Needle of Shinri, Part II* (*Shinri kinshin zoku hen*, 1886). Here, Enryō outlines what he calls the "divisions of the world" (*sekai bun'iki*), a schematic diagram of the structure of the human world.¹²² The human world is divided into the scholarly (*gakkai*) and the civil (*zokkai*) worlds. The civil world consists of manufacturing, transportation, and administration. The scholarly world is divided into the sciences (*rigaku*) and philosophy (*tetsugaku*). The latter is further divided into the physical (*keijika*) and metaphysical (*keijijō*). Each of these three categories (the sciences, metaphysical philosophy, physical philosophy) is each divided into theory and practice. The practice of science includes mechanics and building, and the theory of science is

¹²¹ Inoue Enryō, *Tetsugaku issekiwa*, in *IES* Vol. 1, 34.

¹²² Inoue Enryō, *Shinri kinshin zoku hen*, in *IES* Vol. 3, 161-177.

Pure Science (*junsei rigaku*). The practice of physical philosophy includes ethics and logic, and its theory is psychology. Finally, and most importantly for this discussion, the practice of metaphysical philosophy is religion, and its theory is Pure Philosophy.

Enryō thus takes the modern academic fields of knowledge as representations of reality, and posits Pure Philosophy as the master discipline. With this, Enryō subverts the positive knowledge of Tokyo University. He grounds Tokyo University's ideological mirror of reality on Pure Philosophy, the study of *shinri*. This is the first ideological maneuver in Enryō's thought. For it codifies all knowledge into a single systematic structure, with *shinri* as the foundation. In this way, Enryō's thought is analogous to the professionalization of academic philosophy in the West. As philosopher Richard Rorty has shown, systematic philosophy as an intellectual enterprise arose in tandem with science and the general intellectual trend toward seeing knowledge as a transparent reflection of reality:

The notion that there is an autonomous discipline called "philosophy," distinct from and sitting in judgment upon both religion and science, is of quite recent origin. . . It was not until after Kant that our modern philosophy-science distinction took hold. Until the power of the churches over science and scholarship was broken, the energies of the men we now think of as "philosophers" were directed toward demarcating their activities from religion. It was only after that battle had been won that the question of separation from the sciences could arise. The eventual demarcation of philosophy from science was made possible by the notion that philosophy's core was "theory of knowledge," a theory distinct from the sciences because it was their *foundation*. . . It did not become built into academic institutions, and into the pat, un-reflective self-descriptions of philosophy professors, until far into the nineteenth century. Without this idea of a "theory of knowledge," it is hard to imagine what "philosophy" could have been in the age of modern science.¹²³

By placing the positive knowledge produced at Tokyo University on his foundation of *shinri*, Enryō preserves the ideological function of Tokyo University and transposes it from its Meiji theocratic foundations onto his own cosmic authority structure. This is the critical move that makes Enryō's thought an ideological critique. For the ability of the human and natural sciences to transparently reflect theocratic ideology as truth and reality was the achievement of the Meiji Enlightenment. Separating this reality from Meiji Theocracy and the state power it sublimates, and placing it upon the authority of existential experience, is the essence of the critique. For the reality of *shinri*, as seen above, is grasped by Enryō existentially.

Shinri, as already shown, is the principle of principles. It is a cosmic intelligence according to which reality operates. In the philosophical dialogs of *Night*, Enryō explains that the logic of this cosmic intelligence is the absence of dualistic oppositions. All principles are one, and turn into each other in a circular process of perpetual change. In the dialogs of *Night*, philosophers debate each other, each defending a single position

¹²³ Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 131-132.

(matter and spirit in dialog one, theism and atheism in dialog two, truth and untruth in dialog three). The arguments are only resolved when Enryō, himself a character in the dialogs, points out that each position is one-sided and insufficient to grasp reality in its totality. They are only meaningful from a third perspective, from which one can see the interdependence of opposing principles. To use Enryō's own example, they are as two sides of a sheet of paper. Each viewpoint by necessity assumes the other. Enryō calls this third perspective from which the continuity between two opposites is observable the Middle Path (*chūdō*), a concept from Mahāyāna Buddhism.¹²⁴

In *Outline of Philosophy* (*Tetsugaku yōryō*, Part I 1886, Part II 1887), Enryō uses *shinri* to explain history as a process of circular change (*risō no junkan kaiten*).¹²⁵ The concept of development used is that of Fenollosa's Hegelian/Spencerian social Darwinism. Development moves dialectically (*sandanhō no kisoku*) in a three-part process of thesis clashing with antithesis to produce a synthesis. This process of conflict is also, Enryō notes, the manner by which living organisms (*yūkitai*) evolve. And this development happens according to the cosmic principle of *shinri*. Part II analyzes this process in the abstract, arguing that thought moves from the simple to the complex through seven stages: 1. material-ideal dualism, 2. materialism, 3. rationalism, 4. nihilism, 5. idealism, 6. material and ideal exist, 7. material and ideal are a single substance. This final step is the insight of Middle Path. Enryō notes that from step seven, which is the highest insight into truth, it is only one more step to return to step one and begin the circle again. Part I looks at historical development as actualized in world philosophy. It is a survey that includes Eastern (China and India) along with Western philosophy, and in this way incorporates other intellectual tools Enryō acquired at Tokyo University – Hara Tanzan's lectures on Indian philosophy and Inoue Tetsujirō's (1855-1944) lectures on Eastern philosophy. Enryō argues that Western philosophy developed dialectically from the pre-Socratics to Spencer because Western thinkers (like the philosophers of *Night*) hold to one-sided views, and the ceaseless conflict among them has generated highly developed, complex, and differentiated philosophical thought. The East, by contrast, has stagnated because of the absence of dialectical conflict. The West is evolution (*shinka*), while the East is fluidity (*yōka*). Enryō closes by stating that the completion of world philosophy can come through a synthesis of the East and West.

So here we have the fields of knowledge, which are mirrors of reality, integrated into a single systematic philosophy that seeks to make expository (not interpretive) claims about the total structure of the world, all grounded on Pure Philosophy. The next point to observe is the role of religion (*shūkyō*) in this system. In Enryō's schematic, religion is the praxis of philosophy, the practical counterpart of the theoretical Pure Philosophy. Religion, in other words, is what concretizes philosophy in human life. The core of Enryō's revival of Buddhism is the assertion that Buddhism is the religion that manifests *shinri* and therefore has the potential to complete the East-West synthesis. This assertion not only utilizes the intellectual tools of Tokyo University, it also incorporates the Buddhist discourse of *gohō* (Defend the Dharma).

Enryō argues that the Mahāyāna Buddhist idea of Middle Path contains the logic of *shinri* in its concept *shinnyo* (Sanskrit Tathatā), often translated “suchness” or

¹²⁴ Inoue Enryō, *Tetsugaku issekiwa*, 35.

¹²⁵ Inoue Enryō, *Tetsugaku yōryō*, in *IES* Vol. 1, 153.

“thusness.” This concept that all phenomena are of a single substance and that distinctions are non-essential, he notes, is no different from the Ideal in Hegel or the Unknowable in Spencer. Buddhism is not unique in this way. Its advantage is in its unique dual function as both philosophy and religion (*shūkyō tetsugaku*). “Buddhism is half science and philosophy, half religion.”¹²⁶ This idea, alluded to in *Outline of Philosophy*, is fully developed in *The Golden Needle of Shinri, Part III (Shinri kinshin zokuzoku hen, 1887)*.

We call that which is born of emotion “religion,” and that which is born of intellect “philosophy.” But religion is not necessarily based on emotion alone. The religion of ancient times was based on human imagination alone, even if we accord this to emotion, the religion of today must pass the qualifications of logic, so we must say that there is a religion born of the intellect. If you want to know that principle, you have to look at the development of human knowledge. Human society develops by the same process as infants. It begins as barbarians with low-level emotions; to today’s high-level knowledge progress. The old religion was emotion-based, today’s must be knowledge-based. What is knowledge-based religion? It is that based on philosophy.¹²⁷

In this passage, we see that the key to Buddhism’s revival is in its capacity to encompass both the intellect and feeling. This passage reminds us yet again that for Enryō, demonstrating Buddhism’s viability as a “knowledge-based” religion means demonstrating its currency. To state it simply: *Buddhism evolves*. The original teachings of Sakyamuni (Siddhartha Gautama) already contained the insights of Western philosophy, and these teachings evolved in the same dialectical manner as Western philosophy seen in *Outline of Philosophy*.¹²⁸ Briefly, the theoretical positions of Western thought evolved through the five stages of teachings that the Buddha preached during his lifetime (*goji no sekkyō*): Kegon, Agon, Hōdō, Hannya, and Hokke-Nehan. The final two schools are, according to Enryō, the realization of Middle Path, teaching the inseparability of being (*u*) and emptiness (*kū*). Western thought excels Buddhism, he argues, only in its development of the experimental sciences, the basis of which is already in the insights of three thousand years ago.

The mysterious principle (*myōri*) of philosophy is applied in religion for the invocation of fate for the purposes of quieting spiritual suffering (*anjin ritsumei*). That, writes Enryō, is Buddhism. Evolving and adapting from India, through China, and into Japan, Buddhism developed into two schools of religion: the Holy Path (*shōdōmon*) and the Pure Land (*jōdomon*). After Buddhism died out in India, it was transmitted to China, where the schools of the Holy Path developed. These schools (Kegon, Tendai, Kusha, Yuishiki) teach the relief of spiritual suffering through the “difficult path of self-power” (*jiriki nangyō*). It is the religion of the intellect, in that it requires a high level of mental ability. In Japan, the schools of feeling (Jōdoshū and Jōdo Shinshū) developed. These teach the “easy path of other-power” (*tariki igyō*). These Pure Land schools are the

¹²⁶ Inoue Enryō, *Tetsugaku yōryō*, 103-104.

¹²⁷ Inoue Enryō, *Shinri kinshin zokuzoku hen*, in *IES* Vol. 3, 251-252.

¹²⁸ Inoue Enryō, *Shinri kinshin zokuzoku hen*, 256-7.

religion of feeling, and do not require any special abilities. In this way, Buddhism is the complete religion. “Feeling calms the intellect, the intellect teaches feeling. Intellect and feeling support each other. Buddhism grasps both of these.”¹²⁹

Only in Japan, he argues, do both the Pure Land and Holy Path schools still exist. This observation is the basis of Enryō’s re-conceptualization of *gohō*, the Buddhist self-preservation campaign. His *gohō* is not the typical *gohō*, which, according to him, oscillates between the fear and denigration of Christianity on the one hand, and between fear and denigration of science on the other. Although the first part of *Kinshin* is a refutation of Christianity’s potential as a modern religion based on its incompatibility with modern knowledge, especially evolution, Enryō also points out that Christianity is a feeling-based religion and is therefore contained in Buddhism. But it is not *shinri*, in that it is incompatible with intellect.

Enryō’s *gohō* was modernist, in that it rejected the traditional authority of Higashi Honganji as defunct. That was the reason for his renunciation of the priesthood. The modern institution of authority was the state. As part of the state’s elite vanguard of experts in Western learning, Enryō was part of the state and understood his own role as a technician of the new Japan. The state was the instrument of modernization, not Higashi Honganji. Enryō’s concept *gokoku airi* (Defend the nation, Love the Principle), already seen in the crisis narrative, reformulates the traditional *gohō aikoku* (Defend the Law [of the Buddha], Love the Country) by substituting *shinri* for the Law of the Buddha.

Now, the love of *shinri* is the work of scholars; defense of the state [*gokoku*] is the responsibility of the countrymen [*kokumin*]. Countrymen who do not protect the state [*kokka*] are criminals of the state. Scholars who do not love *shinri* are criminals of *shinri*. The state cannot progress without scholars; scholars cannot survive without state. Scholars who do not protect the state and countrymen who do not love truth are criminals. It could hardly be anyone’s purpose to become a criminal of *shinri* or a criminal of the state. Therefore, one must use all one’s strength for the sake of the nation and dedicate one’s will to *shinri* if one does not want to be a criminal. If the state were not built, if humans did not appear, if only *shinri* existed, who would know it? Who would preach it? We must wait for the scholar intellectual. The independence of the state is necessary for his existence. Therefore if the scholar knows he should to preach truth, he must first pray for the independence of the state. This way, Defense of the State and Love of Principle are inseparably linked for the scholar.¹³⁰

The role of the scholar, in other words, is to build the state as the embodiment of *shinri*. As noted above, however, the embodiment of *shinri* in the world is also the function of religion. Understood this way, it is clear that the state replaced Honganji as the highest intellectual authority for Enryō.

The construction of a modern state and the revival of Buddhism are thus linked. For as noted, only Buddhism manifests *shinri*, and only in Japan does Buddhism exist in its complete form (both Pure Land and Holy Path). Japan has a responsibility to

¹²⁹ Inoue Enryō, *Shinri kinshin zokuzoku hen*, 253.

¹³⁰ Inoue Enryō, *Bukkyō katsuron joron*, 330-331.

regenerate and reform Buddhism. This is true first of all for the awakening of national consciousness and the creation of a national state that reflects the national mind. Buddhism, says Enryō, has gestated in Japanese society and has penetrated the everyday lives of the Japanese.

First of all, why is the country independent? Clearly because of this country's particular politics, religion, peoples, relations, language, scholarship, technology, customs, and folkways. If you change one of them, you change it all and the country loses its independence. Religion is the most important in this regard. It is directly related to all the rest. Buddhism is our religion for some thousand years, must be preserved for the sake of the nation.¹³¹

Secondly, as the last country in which Buddhism still exists in its complete form, Japan has an obligation to revive Asia.

The reason why we must revive Buddhism is because it is the basis of Oriental civilization. It is greatly influential in Chinese civilization, and of course in Indian civilization. The same is true of Japanese civilization. The great intellectual innovations of the Song dynasty were due to the infusion of Buddhist thought. It was the strength of Buddhism that prevented the destruction of culture in Japan during the Warring states period, and allowed the transmission of culture to the present time. Its influence was not only academic; it influenced our feelings, language, and customs. This religion is directly related to our spirit (*seishin*). Its abolition will certainly affect the independence of our thought, as it has infected the hearts of the ignorant men and women. To change it would certainly lead to the waste of the spirit of the nation. It has been one thousand years since Buddhism came to Japan. It has infected the hearts of its people and maintained its civilization. Protecting the civilization that infects the human heart. Even where its radiance is blocked, its influence is felt in shadows. Therefore, if it is our duty to the state to destroy Oriental civilization and throw away Japan's independence, then let us just give up. If we want to maintain Oriental civilization or our own independence at all, then we must revive Buddhism if we want to preserve the independence of oriental civilization.¹³²

Finally, the revival of Buddhism is necessary to complete the East-West synthesis of world progress.

Today's Buddhism is Japan's Buddhism. It is the unique product of Japan. Can we not cultivate it in Japan and disseminate it to foreign countries? Even though many types of things are produced in our country, there are few things specially produced here that cannot be found in the West. Everyone knows that we look to the West for a multitude of useful things – politics, law, military science, and education, and the many sciences and industries. The one thing that exists in

¹³¹ Inoue Enryō, *Bukkyō katsuron joron*, 340-341.

¹³² Inoue Enryō, *Bukkyō katsuron joron*, 340.

Japan and not in the West, the one thing that we must transmit to the West to win fame, is Buddhism. Modern Western philosophy has already studied the principles of Buddhism, but the West has yet to apply its principles to construct a worldly religion. Scholars there detest Christianity and, day and night, seek a religion based upon a philosophical standpoint. They will one day be happy when Buddhism is transmitted there.¹³³

The common theme connecting these three passages is spiritual regeneration. The East-West synthesis that is evolution's next step depends upon the re-awakening of Eastern civilization, the foundation of which is Buddhism. Buddhism only exists in its complete form in Japan. It is not the practice of priests, but is in fact the Japanese mode of existence. It has seeped deep into the feelings, language, customs – deep into the *spirit* (*seishin*) of the Japanese. The Japanese are, in this way, existentially and authentically Buddhist. Buddhism is not what the Japanese do, it is not even what they believe, it is what they are. Preserving the Japanese spirit from Westernization does not mean insulating it, but regenerating it, making it new after a long period of deterioration and stagnation. The turning of evolution's wheel depends therefore on the spiritual regeneration of Japan, which can be achieved by fusing Buddhism with the institutions of a modern Japanese state. It is neither Westernization nor traditionalism, but a modern third way, the construction of new authority structures to replace the old. It is antimodernist, in that it posits Buddhism – deemed a superstition of the past by the Meiji Enlightenment – as an eternal truth and the authentic culture of Japan and Asia.

The spiritual regeneration at the core of Enryō's thought returns us to the beginning of our enquiry: existential crisis. The conventional "rational religion" approach to Enryō sees Enryō's thought as the result of his filtering of Buddhism through imported Western imported forms of knowledge. By beginning with his existential crisis and reading from the vantage of the religious subject position of the crisis narrative, I arrive at the opposite assessment. Enryō transformed existential anxiety into truth and reality by re-orienting the forms of knowledge generated by Tokyo University around it. His thought was a response to the Meiji Enlightenment, its forms of knowledge, the structures of meaning that sublimate state power. It was an existential response to the structures of meaning of the actual Japanese modernity he was living in, and not an intellectual response to an abstracted "West." In this final observation we see the clear outline of the Meiji Enlightenment and its existential Buddhist critique. The structures of meaning generated by the Meiji Enlightenment are the site of a contest between the violent power that it sublimates, and the existential anxiety that seeks not to overthrow it, but to claim it. At the bottom of this was existential crisis, not as a concept, but as a lived experience, an historical event that took place within body and consciousness. The discourse of Buddhism's spiritual regeneration begins with this experience, itself a product of the rational limits on truth and reality imposed by the Meiji Enlightenment.

¹³³ Inoue Enryō, *Bukkyō katsuron joron*, 338-339.

4. Philosophy Hall.

Existential crisis, spiritual yearning, and the world of feeling were common concerns among young Japanese intellectuals in the mid-1880s. As historian Kenneth Pyle has argued, young intellectuals of this time endured “mental agonies” of reconciling the traditional education of their youth with the Western education of young adulthood, i.e., tradition with Westernization.¹³⁴ Although I reject such a “tradition vs. West” framework, Enryō’s experiences and work were nevertheless emblematic of a trend: a Japanese antimodernism that imagines a new Japan, a third way between Westernization and reactionary conservatism, based upon feeling and spirit as authentic culture. In this section, I shall discuss Enryō’s work and activities in the context of this mid-Meiji trend.

Enryō began his life-long campaign to revive Buddhism by developing its philosophical underpinnings immediately following his convalescence in Atami. In January 1887, he founded a publishing house for philosophy-related books, the Philosophy Publishing House (*Tetsugaku shoin*), in Tokyo University’s neighborhood of Hongō. Its purpose was the dissemination of philosophy in Japan through works and translations of foreign books by Nishi Amane, Nakamura Keiu, Katō Hiroyuki, Nishimura Shigeki, and other Philosophy Society associates.¹³⁵ He launched the *Journal of the Philosophical Association* (*Tetsugakukai zasshi*) in February 1887. Katō Hiroyuki contributed the inaugural essay, in which he explained the publication of the discussions of the Philosophy Society as a little bit of progress (*shō shimpo*). Just as in the West, he argued, the journal will allow the competition of intellectual schools, associations, and doctrines that drive progress. Only in this case, it will include the philosophies of India and China as well as that of the West.¹³⁶ Enryō’s introductory article announced the necessity of philosophy for Japanese progress by reproducing his explanation of Pure Philosophy as the basis of all fields of knowledge. In a telling analogy, Enryō states that the world of learning is like a central government (*chūō seifu*). The various fields of knowledge are like the ministries, while Pure Philosophy is the cabinet (*naikaku*).¹³⁷

The centerpiece of Enryō’s activities at this time was the founding of a school, the Philosophy Hall (*Tetsugakukan*, present-day Tōyō University). Enryō opened the Philosophy Hall on September 6, 1887 in a single rented classroom at Rinshō-in, a Buddhist temple in the Yushima section of Tokyo, minutes from the Hongō campus of Tokyo Imperial University.¹³⁸ News reporters and Philosophy Hall lecturers were in

¹³⁴ Kenneth Pyle, *The New Generation in Meiji Japan: Problems of Cultural Identity, 1885-1895* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969).

¹³⁵ “*Tetsugaku shoin, tetsugakusho no shuppan wa subete atsukau*,” *Yomiuri shinbun* January 8, 1887.

¹³⁶ Katō Hiroyuki, “*Honkai zasshi no hakkan wo setsu shi awasete kaiin shokun ni tadasu*,” *Tetsugakukai zasshi* Vol. 1 No. 1 (1887), 1-4.

¹³⁷ Inoue Enryō “*Tetsugaku no hitsuyō wo ronjite honkai no enkaku ni oyobu*,” *Tetsugakukai zasshi* Vol. 1 No. 1 (1887): 4-9, continued in *Tetsugakukai zasshi* Vol. 1 No. 2 (1887): 41-44.

¹³⁸ “*Inoue Enryō gakushi tetsugakukan wo hiraku*,” *Mainichi shinbun*, June 26, 1887; “*Inoue Enryō no tetsugakukan kaikan*,” *Tokyo nichinichi shinbun*, September 18, 1887;

attendance at the opening ceremony, held on the temple grounds at 2 p.m. on that date. Inoue Enryō delivered the keynote address, restating again the foundational function of philosophy and its necessity for the progress of Japan.¹³⁹ Katō Hiroyuki and Toyama Masakazu delivered some inaugural remarks, as did two Philosophy Hall lecturers: Tanahashi Ichirō (1863-1942), a close associate of Enryō since the founding of the Philosophy Society and the co-founder of both the Philosophy Hall and Philosophy Publishing House; and Tatsumi Kojirō (1859-?).

The Philosophy Hall combined the old authority of Higashi Honganji and the new authority of Tokyo University. Its eighteen-person lecture staff was drawn from two groups: the Philosophy Society of Tokyo University, and Buddhist clergy who, like Enryō, had been sent to Tokyo University by Higashi Honganji as part of its sect modernization project. Most of the lecturers were in their 20s or 30s, and 12 of them were Tokyo University degree-holders. Its original lecture staff included: Enryō, Tanahashi, Tatsumi, Miyake Setsurei (born Miyake Yūjirō, 1860-1945), Kiyozawa Manshi (born Tokunaga, 1863-1903), Kaga Shūichi (1865-), and Murakami Senshō (1851-1929). The Philosophy Hall was the embodiment of Enryō's vision of Buddhism. It put the Buddhist priesthood and state-trained intellectuals in dialog, intending to force the conflict necessary to evolve the two into a new authority. It was also intended to make lectures that would otherwise be available only to Tokyo University students available more broadly. Its curriculum was based upon Enryō's "Divisions of the World" schematic, centering the lectures of Tokyo University on a "core curriculum" of Pure Philosophy, the foundation of all knowledge. The Philosophy Hall thus gave institutional form to Enryō's philosophical system.

The Philosophy Hall was not the organ of a movement, and its lecturers were not devotees of Enryō's thought in a dogmatic sense. The Philosophy Hall was rather an intellectual hub. It was the central node through which a network of intellectuals circulated, connecting Tokyo University's Philosophy Society on the one end and Higashi Honganji on the other. The common intellectual orientation of this network was antimodernist. All were concerned with the renunciation of old structures of authority and the creation of a new one. All were concerned with *feeling* as the locus of meaning, its separation from the obsolete structures that had given it form in the past, and its regeneration in new structures. Although it was not a "Buddhist movement," it was the main outlet for Buddhist thought, especially the antimodernist Buddhist thought of Enryō, who really was the central organizing figure. Along with the Philosophy Publishing House, the Philosophy Hall brought Buddhist thought out of Buddhist-specific publishing houses and academies and into secular intellectual discourse. Through this corridor of intellectual exchange, secular philosophy mingled with Buddhism, and philosophical Buddhism entered political criticism. Let us take each end of this corridor – Higashi Honganji and political criticism – in turn.

Miura Setsuo, *Inoue Enryō no kyōiku rinen: rekishi ha sono tsudo genzai ga tsukuru* (Tokyo: Tōyō Daigaku, 2004), 36.

¹³⁹ Inoue Enryō, "Tetsugakukan kaisetsu no shishu," in *IES* Vol. 25, 750-751.

i. *Seikyōsha*

The instrument that channeled the existentialist crisis of Philosophy Hall intellectuals into concrete political criticism was an intellectual society called *Seikyōsha* (Politics and Religion Society).¹⁴⁰ The origins of *Seikyōsha* can be traced to a book called *Survey of Japan (Nihon tsugan)*, which intended to explain Japanese history in simple terms to a general readership. The book was brought to the Philosophy Publishing House for publication by Sugiura Jūgō (1855-1924), a graduate of *daigaku nankō* (one of Tokyo University's earlier permutations) and former director of Tokyo University's preparatory course. Editing this work on Japanese history had two results on the Philosophy Hall group at the Philosophy Publishing House. First, it triggered a discussion about what they perceived as the government's obsequious attitude toward the Western powers and the denigration of Japanese culture. Second, it put them in touch with similarly concerned young intellectuals at Sugiura's school, the Tokyo School of English (*Tokyo eigo gakkō*), including Sugie Suketo (1862-1905), Kon Sotosaburō (1865-1892), Shiga Shigetaka (1863-1927), Kikuchi Kumatarō (1864-1908), Kunitomo Shigeaki (1861-1909), Miyazaki Michimasa (1852-1916), and Matsushita Jōkichi (1859-?). They were also university degree holders, some from the Sapporo School of Agriculture.¹⁴¹

Scholars have pointed out that a distinctive, perhaps defining, feature of the *Seikyōsha* is that they were all university degree-holders, a new phenomenon in Japanese intellectual life.¹⁴² I argued in chapter one that the creation of Tokyo University and the undergraduate degree (*gakushigō*) were ideological institutions that routed intellectuals into the circuits of power, and that the positive knowledge they produced at Tokyo University was itself the ideology of the state. The intellectuals of the *Seikyōsha* were, I argue, creatures of the Meiji Enlightenment. They accepted as givens that social Darwinism, so paradigmatic of Tokyo University's intellectual culture, was a mirror-representation of reality; that the nation was the subject of evolutionary progress; and that the imperial institution of Japan was the subject of the Japanese nation. I argue that the *Seikyōsha* intellectuals, like Enryō, were the first to critique the Meiji Enlightenment from within, accepting its structures of knowledge and challenging its authority in its own terms. In this sense, *Seikyōsha* is the political successor to the Freedom and People's Rights Movement. It sought representative government, but without relying upon external sources of ideological authority, i.e., Christianity and universal humanity. Kunitomo summarized the position, arguing that for such pro-Western reformers, "there is 'mankind' but not 'nation,' 'world' but not 'state.'"¹⁴³

¹⁴⁰ Satō Yoshimaru, *Meiji nashonarizumu no kenkyū: seikyōsha no seiritsu to sono shūhen* (Tokyo: Fuyō Shobō Shuppan, 1998); Nakanome Tōru, *Seikyōsha no kenkyū* (Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 1993); Nakanome, "Inoue Enryō to seikyōsha," *Inoue Enryō senta- nenpō* No. 8 (1999), 3-23; Miura Setsuō, "Inoue Enryō no nashonarizumu ni kan suru mikata" in *Inoue Enryō senta- nenpō* Vol. 1 (1992), 73-92; Miura, *Inoue Enryō no kyōiku rinen*; Pyle, *The New Generation in Meiji Japan*.

¹⁴¹ Satō, *Meiji nashonarizumu no kenkyū*, 20-27.

¹⁴² Nakanome, *Seikyōsha no kenkyū*, 101-106.

¹⁴³ Quoted in Pyle, *The New Generation in Meiji Japan*, 65.

Scholars have often portrayed the intellectual climate of mid-Meiji as a debate between the “nationalist” *Seikyōsha* and the “Westernizing” *Min’yūsha* (People’s Friends Society), the intellectual circle led by Christian convert Tokutomi Sohō (1863-1957). I argue that *Seikyōsha* was actually a third position between the pro-Westernizing *Min’yūsha* and the conservative thinkers of Meiji Enlightenment orthodoxy. As scholars of the Meiji Enlightenment, *Seikyōsha* sought an ideological authority *within* Japan to serve as the foundation of progress. They shared this goal of the Meiji Enlightenment. However, they differed on the source of this authority. I argued in part one that the violent power of the Meiji oligarchs sublimated into theocratic ideology. This ideology served as the theological substitute for the Christian-derived universal humanity, the subject of progress in Western Enlightenment thought. This theocratic ideology is transcendental. It projects the narrative of the Revival of Ancient Kingship (*ōsei fukko*): the communion of the present with the nation’s original genesis point in a sublime moment outside of time. *Seikyōsha*, as antimodernist critics, argued instead for the interior world of feeling, instead of violent state power, as the generator of authority. This authority was not transcendental, but immanent, enworlded, existential. *Seikyōsha* thus replicated the form of critique already developed by Enryō. They argued that Japan was an existential condition, a way of being, just as Enryō had done. Even the name “*Seikyōsha*” was coined by Enryō himself as a riff on such slogans of the time as *seikyō bunri* (Separation of Religion and Politics), combining it with his own idea of religion as the actualization of *shinri* in human life. Enryō recruited Shimaji Mokurai as a major financier for the group and its intellectual organ, *Nihonjin* (“Japanese,” i.e., Japanese person). The first issue of *Nihonjin* was published on the national holiday that celebrated the mythic founder Emperor Jimmu, April 4, 1888.

Shiga, who served as editor, wrote that the central goal of *Seikyōsha* was the articulation of an immanent existential authority that he called *kokusui*.¹⁴⁴ *Kokusui* is a two-character compound meaning “national essence” which Shiga simply renders in English as “nationality.” *Kokusui* is the particular feeling or spirit or mentality that defines a people. It is structureless, unique to each people, and impossible to replicate. The *kokusui* of a people arises organically from the experience of perceiving the particular forms of a specific place over centuries. These are the forms of the innumerable geographical factors that make a place unique, and then the forms of the language, customs, art, religion, and other cultural products that arise in that place. The *kokusui* evolves biologically, like an organism. It also evolves through enlightenment. Enlightenments are like chemical reactions between the importation of civilization and the *kokusui* of a people. Enlightenments, Shiga argues, are unique wherever they occur. The unique civilization of Greece, for example, resulted from the digestion and assimilation (*shōka dōka*) of Phoenician Enlightenment (*bunmei kaika*) into the *kokusui* of the Hellenic people. The *kokusui* of the Japanese people (*Yamato minzoku*), he argues, is an artistic sensibility (*bijutsuteki kannen*). It is not the traditional forms of art, but the aesthetic sensibility that produced them that is the unique and authenticating feature of the Japanese. The key point is that the defining feature of Japan – the subject of progress

¹⁴⁴ Shiga Shigetaka, “*Nihonjin’ ga kaihō suru tokoro no shigi wo kokuhakusu*,” *Nihonjin* No. 2 (April 1888): 41-54; “*Nihon zento no kuni kore wa ‘kokusui hozon shigi’ ni sentei sezarubekarazu*,” *Nihonjin* No. 3 (May 1888): 1-6.

embodied by the imperial institution – is a way of being. The Japanese Enlightenment for Shiga was the preservation of Japan’s *kokusui* and its harmonization with the imported civilization of the West. This was a third way between the replication of Western Enlightenment (the *Min’yūsha* position) and the defense of tradition (the ideological position of Meiji Enlightenment orthodoxy).

The *Seikyōsha* never really succeeded in defining the content of Japan’s *kokusui*. Their real achievement, I argue, was the articulation of spirit or feeling as the locus of meaning, and of national ideology, in conceptual terms. Among the *Seikyōsha* contributors, only Enryō really offered a concrete vision of the content of Japan’s *kokusui*. As already seen, Enryō’s Buddhism was the manifestation of the spirit of the Japanese people, and their unique possession. Without much modification, Enryō adapted his thought to the concept of *kokusui* for the *Seikyōsha*. His essay “New Thesis on Religion” (*Shūkyō shinron*) was serialized in *Nihonjin* from the first issue. Noting Shiga’s *kokusui* concept as the controlling idea, Enryō reprised his argument about religion as the cultural embodiment of a people’s spirit, and the importance of Buddhism as the embodiment of Japan’s spirit. The *Seikyōsha* was not a movement devoted to Enryō’s thought. The point to note is that the *Seikyōsha* created a space in public intellectual discourse for antimodernism with their concept of *kokusui*. Enryō was an original architect of the movement, and it bears the mark of his vision. This space brought Enryō’s thought out of the Buddhist world and into general political and intellectual discourse.

ii. *Higashi Honganji*

The *Seikyōsha*, as an extension of the Philosophy Society, brought Enryō’s Buddhist thought into secular political discourse. Conversely, Buddhist priests Kiyozawa Manshi (1863-1903) and Murakami Senshō (1851-1929), both Philosophy Hall lecturers, brought Enryō’s philosophical Buddhism into Higashi Honganji.¹⁴⁵ Unlike Enryō, who renounced the priesthood, Kiyozawa and Murakami remained committed to the sect. Yet, they both developed and expanded Enryō’s notion of Buddhism as a philosophy-based religion (*shūkyō tetsugaku*) in their own intellectual reform of Buddhism. In so doing, they advanced Enryō’s goal of reorienting the knowledge of the Meiji Enlightenment around feeling, which they articulated in the language of Buddhism. Each developed a different aspect of Enryō’s thought. Kiyozawa, a Tokyo University-trained philosopher, gave greater theoretical articulation to the existentialist core of Enryō’s thought. Murakami was a Buddhist theoretician with a traditional temple training. He abstracted a universal model of Buddhist theory from the myriad schools of Buddhism.

Kiyozawa, along with Enryō and Miyake, lectured on Pure Philosophy at the Philosophy Hall. Enryō lectured on the theory of Pure Philosophy, introducing the concept as already described above. Miyake’s lectures focused on the history of philosophy. Kiyozawa’s Pure Philosophy lecture focused on technical philosophy. The lecture he gave was called *Jitsuzai ron*, which translates literally as “Theory of Actual

¹⁴⁵ The lives and works of Murakami and Kiyozawa are treated in detail in chapter three.

Existence” but which is closer in meaning to “Ontology” (*sonzai ron* in Japanese).¹⁴⁶ This was the first of a projected three-part lecture that was to include “Cosmology” (*uchū ron*) and “Theory of the Psychic” (*shinrei ron*). Drawing on German philosopher Hermann Lotze (1817-1881), Kiyozawa’s lecture is a philosophy of existence that introduces the concept of organic structure (*yūki renraku*) as an explanation of Pure Philosophy. Using a phrase from Zhu Xi metaphysics, Kiyozawa argues that all things are one (*banbutsu ittai*). They are related in that they comprise a single organic structure in which they are in continuous flux (*hendō*). Philosophy is the study of the principle by which things change, or come into and out of existence. While science seeks to grasp the principles of change of things apprehended by experiment and observation, philosophy, Kiyozawa states, extends the inquiry to things beyond human observation and thought unknowable. The Ontology lecture shows the influence of Enryō on Kiyozawa. For like Enryō, Kiyozawa sees Buddhism as a principle of change that includes, but is greater than, the rational and the knowable.

Kiyozawa, a Tokyo University-trained philosopher, gave technical sophistication to the existentialist core of Enryō’s thought with his ontology. Murakami Senshō, trained in a more traditional manner by Buddhist scholars, brought Buddhist theory into the Philosophy Hall. His contribution was not an original philosophy, as in the case of Kiyozawa, but rather the abstraction of all schools of Buddhist thought into a single theoretical structure. He based this structure on Pure Philosophy, which was the foundation of all Philosophy Hall disciplines. In his Philosophy Hall lecture on Buddhist theory (*Butsugaku*), Murakami reproduced Enryō’s arguments about Pure Philosophy’s position as the foundation of all knowledge, the study of the principle of all principles for all phenomena in the universe.¹⁴⁷ He also reproduced Enryō’s philosophy-religion distinction, noting that philosophy is intellectual and religion is emotional, and that Buddhism has since its origin contained both. Also like Enryō, Murakami posited that Buddhist philosophy evolved, citing six stages of evolution in the Buddhist conception of existence: atheistic monism, theistic monism, theistic dualism, four-element no-spirit materialism, nine-element matter-spirit philosophy, and no-matter no-spirit monism. The lecture’s main argument focuses on the basic principle of cause and effect (*shōin shōka* or *inga*) according to which change occurs in the universe. The fundamental principle of Buddhist theory is *banbutsu engi* (Sanskrit *Praṭītyasamutpāda*, interdependent arising of all things). *Engi* posits that all existents are connected in a spatially and temporally infinite universe that is in a continuous state of change. Change originates in the shifting relationships that link all existents. Murakami lists three dimensions of *engi*: karma (*gōkan engi*), the eight consciousnesses (*raya engi*), and suchness (*shinnyo engi*). In addition, Murakami discusses the Three Marks of Existence (*sanbōin*) shared by all sentient beings according to Buddhist theory: impermanence (*shogyō mujō*), no-self (*shohō muga*), and dissatisfaction resulting from desire (*nehan jakujō*).

The Philosophy Hall lectures of Kiyozawa and Murakami brought Enryō’s thought into Higashi Honganji sect reform. The two set out from different starting points: Kiyozawa from cutting-edge training in modern philosophy, Murakami from traditional

¹⁴⁶ Kiyozawa Manshi, *Jitsuzai ron*, in *Kiyozawa Manshi Zenshū (KMZ)* 8 Vols. ed. Akegarasu Haya and Nishimura Kengyō (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1953-1957), Vol. 1, 2-69.

¹⁴⁷ Murakami Senshō, “*Butsugaku: Bukkyō ron*,” *Tetsugakukan kōgi roku* Vol. 1 (1888).

training in Buddhist theory. Yet they arrived at a common ground by incorporating the basic perspective of Enryō: a perspective that was in fact divorced from sect authority. Like the thought of Enryō, the point of view at work in the Kiyozawa and Murakami lectures is cosmocentric. From a state's vantage, they discerned a global picture of the structures of objective reality. Both lectures present ontologies – theoretical understandings of existence and how it operates. Kiyozawa's work was an extension of Enryō's Pure Philosophy, adding greater technical sophistication to it and bringing philosophy into Buddhist theory. Murakami, bringing Buddhist theory to philosophy, achieved the same result in a different theoretical language. In terms of reformism, Murakami's work was perhaps more radical than Kiyozawa's in that it overrode sect authority. While many scholars have looked at Murakami as a great “unifier” of Buddhist sects, I argue that his universal Buddhist theory challenged the authority of sects in that it made a portable theory of Buddhism. Brought into contact with the world of Western learning, Buddhist theory was, to borrow a phrase Joseph Levenson used to describe Chinese Confucianism in the nineteenth century, “shocked into a semblance of unity.” Together, Enryō, Kiyozawa, and Murakami collectively separated Buddhism from the sects and re-established it according to Enryō's Pure Philosophy. In this way, they advanced Enryō's quest for the re-enchantment of Buddhism in politics.

5. One Hundred Dreams of Atami

Inoue Enryō had one hundred dreams while convalescing in Atami and then back in Tokyo shortly thereafter.¹⁴⁸ He classified them into ten groups: dreams about work and scholarship (10); traveling (12); hiking (18); illness (9); world events (9); visiting (16); gatherings and banquets (13); monsters (*yōkai*) (2); recreation (6); and death rites (5). He kept this journal as an exercise in dream research. He offered a few points of analysis of his own dreams. The dream content was drawn mostly from life experience. The setting of the dreams was based on his recent locations. Despite the fact that he had spent two-thirds of his life in Niigata, most of the dreams were set in Tokyo (42). Moreover, he didn't dream about Atami until after he had left. He traced the causes of seven dreams to sensory or somatic sensation, but the origins of the vast majority were unknown to him. Of the life events that recurred in dreams, most were from long ago (27) and many dreams were based not upon experience but on his thoughts and imagination (25). The difference between the facts of the dreams and the facts of reality, Enryō notes, were great.

I cite this rather obscure and simple piece by Enryō for the perspective it gives on the grander, more complex works I have described above. This dream record, *One Hundred Dreams of Atami (Atami hyakumu)*, was published in the *Journal of the Philosophy Society* in June 1889. It points to two aspects of Enryō's thought. First, it indicates the importance of philosophical psychology in Enryō's work, which I have not yet touched upon. As noted above, Enryō divided philosophy into metaphysical (religion and Pure Philosophy) and physical (ethics, logic, and psychology) categories in his

¹⁴⁸ Inoue Enryō, “*Atami hyakumu*,” *Tetsugakukai zasshi* Vol. 2 No. 17 (June 1889): 267-273.

schematic “Divisions of the World.” Psychology was the physical analog to the metaphysical Pure Philosophy. Enryō was an early pioneer in psychological research, which was an integral component of his philosophy. In addition to the dream journal, Enryō lectured and published on hypnosis, memory, and the supernatural. His interest in psychology stemmed from his desire to modernize Japanese cultural life, and to bring thinking in line with the structures of reality described in his philosophy. Today, Enryō is better known for his work on the supernatural that grew out of this interest. He founded a research group, the Paranormal Research Association (*Fushigi kenkyūkai*), and pioneered a companion science, *yōkaigaku* (Ghostology), as a way of demonstrating that superstitions are rooted in psychic errors and not in external reality. He is better known today as “Dr. Ghost” (*Yōkai Hakase*) than as a philosopher.

More importantly, *One Hundred Dreams* points to the fundamental inwardness of Enryō’s work. Written at the height of his crisis period, over a decade before Freud’s *Interpretation of Dreams* was even published in Europe, *One Hundred Dreams* indicates the crucial importance of Enryō’s interior life for his thought. I have argued in this chapter that Enryō’s existential crisis, a lived experience, formed the foundation of his thought. His philosophy was an attempt to explain the undeniable reality of his crisis in the context of reality as defined by the Meiji Enlightenment. This largely forgotten work of dream analysis is a reminder of this point. Dream analysis, at its most basic, takes one of the most inward and subjective of experiences – the dream – as meaningful. Enryō’s thought, as well as that of his associated contemporaries, stressed the structures of reality. While Buddhologists and philosophers will probably find little worth salvaging in these works, I argue that, from an intellectual history standpoint, they are invaluable insights into mid-Meiji thought and politics. For like the theocracy-based Meiji Enlightenment, Enryō’s thought is a *sublimation*, a cultural manifestation not of violent power (as in Meiji theocracy), but of interior experience whose reality is denied by the “official reality” as defined by state power.

To read Inoue Enryō is to experience a dizzying vastness. The infinite totality of space and the boundless machinations of time provide the setting for the action, which is the transformation of consciousness over millennia through epochal turns of evolution’s wheel. Consciousness is conditioned by physical factors like geography, manifest in culture, and abstracted into its purest form in philosophy. The conflict between philosophical concepts is the engine of evolution. It began in the West, where the prevalence of rationality separated knowledge from feeling, and caused purely rational ideas to compete with each other. This began a dialectical process of evolution, leading to more sophisticated strains of rational philosophy. This process, however, takes place in one corner of a much larger stage. For the most part, ideas are not in conflict. Change takes place not dialectically, but circularly. The inevitable conflict of the West with the East will usher in the final stage of evolution. The rational is but one element of the infinity of existence. The language and structure for talking about this is Buddhism. It is the map of existence. Enryō’s thought is cosmology as psychology. It takes the given reality of the Meiji Enlightenment and embeds it in an infinitely larger context. His Buddhism is a language for talking about and understanding the interior world, and is in this way analogous to existential philosophy and psychoanalysis. Yet, it is fundamentally a science. The truths Enryō believes he is describing are not truths of the mind, but of the objective reality that exists apart from the mind. His Buddhism was intended as a

competitor for the state-sponsored evolutionism as the eternal and rational logic according to which reality changes. It was ultimately in his wish against reason that Buddhism be real and true in the Meiji Enlightenment. Herein lies the fundamental incongruity in Enryō's thought. Although it is rooted in existential crisis, Enryō's thought is not a first-person existential perspective, but a state-eye perspective that thinks in terms of universally true metaphysical principles.

6. Triumph of the Meiji Enlightenment

Inoue Enryō produced an alternative vision of a Japanese polity, founded on definitions of truth and reality that were different from those presented to him by the Meiji Enlightenment. The meaningfulness of his work is intelligible today only when read in historical context. During the 1885-1889 window in which Enryō produced his work, the ideology of the Meiji Enlightenment had assumed its mature form, as seen in chapter one. However, it had not yet become the official basis of the Japanese polity. The truth and reality according to which the state would be built was still, in those years, an open question. In that context, Enryō's work was utterly visionary. It was founded on faith born in existential crisis, and that existential crisis itself was born in an intellectual confrontation with the politically-conditioned values of truth and reality of the Meiji Enlightenment. Starting from an existential position, Enryō imagined a Japanese state in which Buddhism was part of state ideology. Enryō shared with Shimaji Mokurai the desire to preserve the meaning of Buddhism by preventing its separation from politics, by halting Buddhism's separation from the values of truth and reality upon which the new state was about to be built. Shimaji briefly worked with the Great Teaching Institute in the Ministry of Doctrine in the mid-1870s, when state ideology was still purely theocratic and had not yet sublimated into scientific knowledge. Enryō, himself an intellectual product of Tokyo University, lived in a different ideological world than Shimaji did. In the 1880s, Buddhism was separated from truth and reality as defined in scientific knowledge. Shimaji sought to use this to Buddhism's advantage by appealing to Western models of religion and codifying Buddhism's separation as a private matter of belief. Enryō, working against reason, sought to re-include Buddhism in official reality and truth. In the end, it was Shimaji's vision that triumphed. The Constitution of the Empire of Japan, promulgated in February 1889, codified Meiji Enlightenment as the official reality once and for all. In an instant, Enryō's visionary work became an anachronism.

The Constitution of 1889 was the final codification of the ideological structure of the Meiji Enlightenment. In chapter one, I traced the evolution of the Meiji Enlightenment as the sublimation of violent power into a theocratic ideology, and the further sublimation of that theocratic ideology into a scientific narrative of progress. The Constitution was the consummation of this process. It signaled the final sublimation of violent coercion to consensual obedience. It was the pinnacle of Meiji ideology. Accordingly, the ideological machinery of the Meiji Enlightenment was activated in its entirety for its promulgation. The promulgation consisted of several documents read at two ceremonies. Read as a single text, they enact the ideology of the Meiji Enlightenment in its mature and complete form: a future-oriented narrative of progress in which the mythic imperial institution advances toward modernity.

The Constitution was promulgated on February 11, 1889.¹⁴⁹ This date was chosen for its ideological significance as *kigensetsu*, one of the national holidays of the ritual calendar of 1873. *Kigensetsu* is the anniversary of the legendary founding of Japan by the mythic Emperor Jimmu. The intentional coincidence of the promulgation of Japan's modern social contract with the ritual observance of the mythic genesis of the nation incorporates the constitution into the ideological structure of Meiji theocracy described in chapter one, and invests it with its cosmic authority which, as we have seen, is sublimated violent power. On the morning of this day, the 2,549th anniversary of the nation's founding, the emperor Meiji made the scheduled ritual observances at each of the Three Imperial Palace Shrines (*kyūchū sanden*), dressed in the sacral vestments of Shintō and accompanied only by assisting Shintō ritualists. As demonstrated in chapter one, the Three Imperial Palace Shrines were the apex of the liturgical ideology that first sublimated violent power. Having conjured the aesthetic presence of the age of the gods through the performance of rites at each of the Palace Shrines, the emperor recited a Report (*otsugebumi*) to Amaterasu and to the Imperial Spirits (*kōrei*) at their respective shrines.¹⁵⁰ The Report projected the romantic nationalist narrative of the Revival of Ancient Kingship that unites the immediate present with the original genesis point in a sublime moment occurring outside of historical time. The Emperor vowed in the Report to uphold the divinely sanctioned forms of government of the imperial ancestors, a set of principles continuous between heaven and earth.

The promulgation of the Constitution and Imperial House Laws on this day, the Report continued, was necessitated by the progress of worldly affairs and the changing circumstances of civilization. This statement derived its ideological significance from the montage structure of the Great Teaching (*daikyō*), whose associative logic first commingled the charismatic authority of theocracy with modernization; from Shintō Non-Religion Theory (*Shintō hi-shūkyō setsu*), which distinguished Meiji theocracy from religion as “the Way of humanity in the age of the gods;” and from university evolutionism (*daigaku shinkaron*), which incorporated these innovations into the ideological mirror-structure of science. The Report thus proclaimed the cosmic authority of the imperial lineage, and the role of the imperial household as mediators between the invisible world of the gods and the visible world of humans. The constitution was heavenly authority made concrete, the transposition of divine principles into earthly law. Obedience to the law – the divine principles of the *kami* – is the obligation of the imperial subjects.

Following the rites at the Three Shrines, the ideological machinery of Meiji theocracy was activated. Messengers relayed the Report to the ancestral deities at the Ise Shrine, which, as shown in chapter one, synchronized rituals at the shrines throughout the country. The Report was also relayed to the war dead enshrined at Yasukuni Shrine (formerly the *Shōkonsha*), the critical link between the circuits of routinized charisma and

¹⁴⁹ Accounts of the promulgation ceremony from *MTK* Vol. 7, 204-218; Carol Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 42-49; Takashi Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy: Power and Pageantry in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 107-109.

¹⁵⁰ *Otsugebumi*, English translation in McLaren, *Japanese Government Documents*, 144-145.

the violent power it sublimated. It was relayed to the mausoleum of the emperor Kōmei, father of emperor Meiji. And it was relayed to the departed heroes of the restoration: Kido, Ōkubo and Iwakura, who died in 1883. The machinery of Meiji theocracy was complete and in operation.

From the innermost sanctum of theocratic power, the emperor proceeded to the palace throne room, opulently appointed in Western style pomp, to literally bestow the constitution. He had shed the sacramental Shintō robes and donned the dress uniform a Western general for this bestowal. He was accompanied by members of the imperial household, also in formal Western dress. All took their places in the front of the room as the national anthem was played, and flanked the emperor on his raised, red-carpeted dais. They faced the assembly standing before them, who were ready to receive the constitution from above. The waiting assembly consisted of ministers of state, high ranking civil and military bureaucrats, and members of the peerage. The Emperor received from Sanjō Sanetomi, Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, a scroll from which he read the official Rescript on the Promulgation of the Constitution.¹⁵¹ The Rescript reprised the narrative of the Report, addressed to those below the imperial household. It reiterated the cosmic authority of the imperial household, who would be subject to a separate body of laws and not the Constitution, and their role as transmitters of the divine principles of heaven into earthly law. Next, Itō Hirobumi, then-President of the Privy Council, handed the emperor another scroll, this one containing the text of the Constitution. The Emperor then handed the scroll downward to then-Prime Minister Kuroda, bowing deeply below the raised dais.

As the supreme law of Japan, the Constitution codified the ideological structure of the Meiji Enlightenment as the official and incontestable reality according to which the Japanese polity was built.¹⁵² It consisted of a preamble and seventy-six articles in seven chapters. The preamble restated yet again the narrative of the Report and the Rescript: that the imperial house bestows the constitution as the manifestation of divine principles in the world. It also called for the opening of the Diet in 1890, charging its ministers with carrying out the Constitution, and charging the subjects with obedience. Chapter I vests the sovereignty in the person of the Emperor: he is sacred and inviolable, the descendant of the line of emperors who have ruled Japan for “ages eternal,” who gives sanction to law and exercises legislative power with the Diet, and is supreme commander of the military forces of Japan. In short, the emperor is the sovereign. He is the nation itself, the highest value and the generative source of the meaning of the law.

The rights and duties of the imperial subjects, treated in Chapter II, are not natural and do not inhere in their humanity, but are conferred by the grace of the Emperor. The Emperor grants, rather than protects, rights. Two key articles from Chapter II (Rights and Duties of Subjects) are relevant to the present discussion. Article XXVIII grants freedom of religious belief.

¹⁵¹ English translation in McLaren, *Japanese Government Documents*, 133-134.

¹⁵² English translation of Preamble and Constitution in McLaren, *Japanese Government Documents*, 134-144.

XXVIII. Japanese subjects shall, within limits not prejudicial to peace and order, and not antagonistic to their duties as subjects, enjoy freedom of religious belief.¹⁵³

Article XXXI is an important supplement to Article XXVIII.

XXXI. The provisions contained in the present chapter shall not affect the exercises of the powers appertaining to the Emperor, in times of war or in cases of a national emergency.¹⁵⁴

Together, these two articles empower the government to police the ideological borders of the Meiji Enlightenment's official reality. Article XXVIII codifies into law the ideological Shintō/religion distinction articulated by Shintō Non-Religion Theory (*Shintō hi-shūkyō setsu*). Religious belief is separate from the observance of Shintō, which is the duty of Imperial Japanese subjects. Shintō, as the way of humanity in the age of the gods, was virtually indistinguishable from the law itself. Although freedom of belief is tolerated insofar as it is not "prejudicial to peace and order," the omission of any definition of what is "prejudicial" leaves open the possibility that anything may be construed as such. In short, law and religion are one, and there is no ideological position from which Imperial subjects could fail to observe their civic duties.

The bestowal of the Constitution by the Imperial House to the assembly of ministers and bureaucrats was a performance of the Meiji Enlightenment itself. It was enacted for the benefit of an audience, who were the real targets of this ideological ritual. Standing in back and to the left of the throne room were foreign diplomats. The Constitution itself was, to a significant degree, created to win their approval. As shown in chapter one, the original necessity of a constitution was created by the unequal treaties, imposed upon Japan and justified by Japan's second-class status within the international system of imperial nation-states.

Another group, in the back and to the right of the throne room, consisted of members of the press and prefectural governors. Their invitation signaled another turning point in the history of Meiji ideology. I have traced in this discussion the transmutation of restorationism from a radical ideology of action) into an orthodox ideology of rule, from the 1868 Restoration event to the promulgation of the Constitution.¹⁵⁵ The targets of ideology throughout this period have been members of the ruling class. The promulgation of the Constitution marked the final triumph of Meiji power, sublimated completely from violence into law. The target of Meiji ideology now shifted from the subjugated political

¹⁵³ McLaren, *Japanese Government Documents*, 138.

¹⁵⁴ McLaren, *Japanese Government Documents*, 138.

¹⁵⁵ For the genesis of the term *tennōsei* in Marxist scholarship see Germaine A. Hoston, *Marxism and the Crisis of Development in Prewar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986); for historical studies, see Maruyama Masao, *Thought and Behaviour in Modern Japanese Politics*, ed. Ivan Morris (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1963); Irokawa Daikichi, *The Culture of the Meiji Period*, ed. Marius Jansen (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths*; Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy*.

class to the masses of Japan. The age of *tennōsei*, or the Emperor System, begins now, on the eve of Japan's period of rapid industrialization and wars of empire, both of which required the consent and cooperation of the masses whose labor would make it possible. The inclusion of reporters and local representatives pointed to the strategy of *tennōsei*, in which the dissemination of the imperial image widely among the population replaced the emperor himself. Until this time, the Emperor had been made to undertake one hundred two imperial processions (*gyōkō*), traveling throughout the country for the express purpose of disseminating the image and symbolism of imperial rule. Following the promulgation of the constitution, the emperor withdrew into the mystique of the Three Imperial Palace Shrines while the manipulation of his image became the primary tool of ideological indoctrination of the masses.

The Constitution marked the final failure of the political reform advocated by Enryō. Until that time, the positive knowledge of the Meiji Enlightenment – a synthesis of national theocracy and national progress – had yet to be enshrined in the laws of a formal polity. The separation of Buddhism from power following the Meiji Restoration had disempowered the authority of Buddhism to represent reality as knowledge. Enryō, hoping to preserve the authority of Buddhism as truth in the Meiji Enlightenment, advocated the use of his Buddhist thought as a basis for the ideology of the Japanese state. His vision was meaningful only in the years before the Constitution, when the polity was still undefined and possibilities were open. The Constitution foreclosed this and all other possibilities by enshrining the Meiji Enlightenment as state ideology. Criticizing the Constitution's Article XXVIII, which provided the Separation of Religion and Politics (*seikyō bunri*) and freedom of belief (*shinkō no jiyū*), Enryō published a plea for the creation of an official religion (*kōninkyō*) based on both Buddhism and Shintō (*shinbutsu nikyō*) in an essay entitled "Thesis on Japanese Politics and Religion" (*Nihon seikyō ron*), published in September 1889.¹⁵⁶ This was a last-ditch attempt to reverse the separation of the Buddhas from the *kami* that had separated Buddhism from the representation of reality. But it was too late. Enryō's thought, visionary and cutting edge in the years preceding the Constitution, had instantly become an anachronism. The exclusion of Buddhism from the Meiji Enlightenment's official reality was final and incontestable.

Though a failure in terms of policy influence, Enryō's work had profound and permanent influence on later intellectuals. The antimodernist lineage of Buddhist thought begins with Enryō. His work was born in existential crisis, which was itself born in intellectual confrontation with the rational limits of the Meiji Enlightenment. His perception of an existential crisis of meaning was inseparable from the Meiji Enlightenment's politically-conditioned values of truth and reality. His attempt to overcome this crisis was, by definition, a critique of Meiji ideology. The existential religious subject position he developed was his lasting achievement. From this position, he was able to envision a truth and reality that embraced the non-rational and the rational, overcoming the ideological divide that separated Buddhism from truth and reality in the Meiji Enlightenment. For Enryō, Buddhism was real. Like the social Darwinist ideology of the Imperial Institution it challenged, Buddhism was a rational law of the cosmos. After the Constitution, such a vision was no longer tenable. But the antimodernist critique

¹⁵⁶ Inoue Enryō, *Nihon seikyō ron* (Tokyo: Tetsugaku Shoin, 1889).

continued. The existential religious subject position, the sense of a Buddhist crisis of meaning, and the intimate relationship of these with the Meiji Enlightenment's values of truth and ideology were the foundations of Japanese antimodernism.

Chapter Three. The Medieval Turn: Murakami Senshō and Kiyozawa Manshi

The 1889 promulgation of the Meiji Constitution consummated the ideology of the Meiji Enlightenment. Its synthesis of Shintō theology and evolutionary progress was now the official reality – the metaphysical blueprint according to which the Japanese polity would be built. As seen in previous chapters, the Meiji Enlightenment ideology evolved over two decades of conflict between the Meiji oligarchs and their challengers among the political class. The codification of the Meiji Enlightenment into a Constitution marked the end of this contest. The modern Japanese state was now the institutional embodiment of the Meiji Enlightenment's metaphysical vision. Alternative visions were not tolerated.

As I have argued so far, the empowerment of Shintō as the official language of authority depended upon the negation of Buddhism. Inoue Enryō attempted to reverse this separation by reincorporating Buddhism back into the Meiji Enlightenment's official reality, in the hopes that the emerging Japanese state would be modeled on a metaphysical blueprint of Buddhism. He produced his work on the eve of the Meiji Constitution, in the years between 1885 and 1889. His work was a product of Tokyo University. As argued in chapter one, Tokyo University was the ideological institution that translated the theocratic ideology of the Meiji Enlightenment into a scientific principle of evolution. It was the Meiji Enlightenment in its fully developed form, but was still not enshrined in a constitution. Along with Enryō's acceptance of the Meiji Enlightenment as reality came an existential crisis over the Meiji Enlightenment's negation of Buddhism. I argued in chapter two that his resolution to accept the reality of Buddhism while still accepting the reality of the Meiji Enlightenment (which negated Buddhism as illogical and not real) distinguished Enryō's thought as existentialist. It was his crisis that enabled Enryō to insist that Buddhism was true and real.

Despite the existential foundations of Enryō's work, his philosophy did not take the form of religious existentialism. Enryō produced work that was cosmocentric, dealing with metaphysical structures of universal truth. This was because Enryō was working on the eve of the Meiji Constitution's promulgation. His goal was to prevent the final separation of Buddhism from *kami*, and so he assumed a transcendental, state's eye perspective that viewed the world in terms of universal laws. His Buddhist philosophy appropriated the metaphysical structures of the Meiji Enlightenment, and grounded them on his existential Buddhist thought

Following the Constitution (the fourth negation of Buddhism after the Department of Divinity, the Ministry of Doctrine, and Tokyo University), Enryō's cosmocentric Buddhism became an anachronism. However, the existential foundation of his thought remained the basis from which Buddhist intellectuals would continue to argue for the reality of Buddhism. Antimodernist Buddhist thinkers, in other words, came down to earth. They gave up arguing about the metaphysical structures of reality, as these were no longer open to debate after the Constitution. Instead, they took an existentialist turn, assuming an enworlded, subjective, individual, first-person perspective. This existentialist turn followed to lines of thought: a vitalist strain of antimodernism, in which the individual connects directly to Buddhism's reality of undifferentiated being through experience; and a historicist strain, in which the meaningfulness of Buddhism is transposed from the timeless truths of metaphysics to the particular truths of cultural

history – in this case, Japanese cultural history. With this existentialist turn, the foundations of Japanese Medievalism began to take shape.

Antimodernist intellectuals were in search of a modern surrogate for Buddhism. For Enryō, it was metaphysics. For the post-Constitution intellectuals treated in this chapter, it was culture – a system of symbols that embedded them in a world of meaning. From their enworlded perspective, post-Constitution Buddhist antimodernists used their existential Buddhism to resist and even openly critique the ideological reality of the Meiji Enlightenment. For them, Buddhism was a tool for piercing through the illusions that cloud the experience of the phenomenal world, allowing the revelation of true reality. This critique was directed mostly against the Meiji Enlightenment's construction of a national morality – the ideological strategy that some call the Emperor System, designed to indoctrinate the general population of Japan. For post-Constitution antimodernist Buddhists, Buddhism was an existential philosophy that was beyond good and evil, i.e., beyond state ideology.

The antagonism between Buddhism and the Meiji Enlightenment, in this sense, became most acute in the years after the Meiji Constitution. And yet, as always, this antagonism was ambiguous. It was a religious revolt against the ideological restructuring of Japan as a capitalist nation-state. At the same time, it presumed the very premises against which it was supposedly in rebellion – the alienated individual and the Japanese nation. It was antimodernist.

1. The Meiji Enlightenment in the Age of National Morality.

The promulgation of the Constitution of the Empire of Japan in 1889 marked a turning point in the history of the Meiji Enlightenment. It was the culmination of an ideological process that legitimized the violent coercive power of the Meiji oligarchs, who took power in 1868, as supreme law. The oligarchs' violent power sublimated first into theocratic authority, then into scientific knowledge. The Constitution sublimated their power into law, masking any trace of the violent origins of the Meiji state and presenting Japanese law as a mere reflection of reality and truth.

After the sublimation of Meiji power into supreme law, the Meiji Enlightenment entered a new phase. The government, about to undertake two wars of empire (the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895 and the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905) and the industrialization of the Japanese economy, needed to prepare the general population for mobilization. It was the population, after all, that would do the fighting and the toiling necessary to build Japan. The Emperor System (*tennōsei*) is the name that some critics use to denote the ideology of the post-1889 period. I argue here that the Emperor System was a phase in the longer history of the Meiji Enlightenment, which began with the 1868 Restoration itself.

Three features distinguish the Emperor System from the pre-1889 phase of the Meiji Enlightenment. First, the target of Meiji ideology changed after the Constitution. Until its promulgation, the Meiji Enlightenment targeted members of the political class. The polity of Japan, in this sense, did not yet include the entire population. It was an elite society, and the general masses of Japan did not yet have a developed sense of national consciousness. It is a consensus among historians that widespread national consciousness

in Japan was a product of the 1895-1905 decade. The target of ideology thus shifted downward from the now-subjugated political class to the mass of society.

Second, the ideological strategy of the Meiji Enlightenment necessarily shifted away from in-person ritual performance by the Emperor to the use of education. The inclusion of reporters and local political representatives at the Constitution's promulgation ceremony pointed to the strategy of the Emperor System, in which the dissemination of the imperial image widely among the population replaced the emperor himself. Until this time, the Emperor had been made to undertake one hundred two imperial processions (*gyōkō*), traveling throughout the country for the express purpose of disseminating the image and symbolism of imperial rule. Following the promulgation of the Constitution, the emperor withdrew into the mystique of the Three Imperial Palace Shrines (*kyūchū sanden*) while the manipulation of his image became the primary tool of ideological indoctrination of the masses.¹⁵⁷

Third, and most importantly, the content of the Meiji Enlightenment changed. Before 1889, the ideology of the Meiji Enlightenment was concerned with defining theological and scientific structures of reality. The Constitution codified the Meiji Enlightenment's vision of reality as the basis of Japan's polity and law. They were now factual truths, separated from the private beliefs that the Constitution defined in Article 28, the freedom of belief provision. Targeting the masses of the new state, Meiji power underwent a further ideological sublimation from law into a code of national morality.¹⁵⁸ Securing the participation of the population in the state's modernization project required making them believe that it was their duty, as imperial subjects, to serve the state. A code of honor and duty, of right and wrong, was necessary to bind the Japanese to the state.

The Meiji Enlightenment thus sought to indoctrinate the mass of Japanese society into a code of national morality. The ideological battleground in this offensive moved inward. That is, the structures of the external world were no longer contestable. The goal now was to colonize the interior worlds of the Japanese. The Imperial Rescript on Education (*Kyōiku ni kan suru chokugo*), issued on October 30, 1890, was the main instrument in this new ideological offensive. The full text is as follows:

Know ye, Our subjects:

Our Imperial Ancestors have founded Our Empire on a basis broad and everlasting and have deeply and firmly implanted virtue; Our subjects ever united in loyalty and filial piety have from generation to generation illustrated the beauty thereof. This is the glory of the fundamental character of Our Empire, and herein also lies the source of Our education.

Ye, Our subjects, be filial to your parents, affectionate to your brothers and sisters; as husbands and wives be harmonious, as friends true; bear yourselves in modesty and moderation; extend your benevolence to all; pursue learning and cultivate arts, and thereby develop intellectual faculties and perfect moral powers; furthermore advance public good and promote common interests; always respect the Constitution and observe the laws; should emergency arise, offer yourselves

¹⁵⁷ See Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths*; Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy*.

¹⁵⁸ Richard M. Reitan, *Making a Moral Society: Ethics and the State in Meiji Japan*. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010).

courageously to the State; and thus guard and maintain the prosperity of Our Imperial Throne coeval with heaven and earth.

So shall ye not only be Our good and faithful subjects, but render illustrious the best traditions of your forefathers. The Way here set forth is indeed the teaching bequeathed by Our Imperial Ancestors, to be observed alike by Their Descendants and the subjects, infallible for all ages and true in all places. It is Our wish to lay it to heart in all reverence, in common with you, Our subjects, that we may thus attain to the same virtue.

The 30th day of the 10th month of the 23rd year of Meiji. (October 30, 1890)¹⁵⁹

Second in importance only to the Constitution itself, the 315-character Education Rescript was a moral injunction, written in the voice of the Emperor and addressed to his subjects. It stipulated in Confucian rhetoric of filial piety the moral obligations of the Japanese as subjects of the Emperor. All students in the Japanese education system were made to memorize and recite the Rescript. It was read at official school functions, and the physical document itself was treated as the object of ritual veneration, a religious icon.

The government immediately began policing the interior lives of its citizens in several well-known incidents. The first of these is a famous incident involving the Christian intellectual Uchimura Kanzō (1861-1930), who, in 1891, was a teacher at Ichikō (First Higher School), the preparatory higher school attached to Tokyo Imperial University and the apex of the higher school hierarchy. On January 9, 1891, Uchimura became the center of a national controversy for not having bowed deeply enough to the school's copy of the Imperial Rescript on Education at a function held for its formal reading. This may have been his intention, or it may have been a pretext for the government to make an example of the Christian Uchimura. In either case, the act of ideological discipline in the so-called Sacrilege Incident (*fukei jiken*) demonstrated that although the ban on Christianity had been lifted in 1873, its ideological position as heterodoxy kept the ban informally in practice.¹⁶⁰

The Uchimura incident sparked a public debate on the interference of private beliefs with the Meiji state's public morality. It was led by Inoue Tetsujirō (1855-1944), introduced in chapter two as Enryō's instructor in Eastern philosophy at Tokyo University.¹⁶¹ Inoue Tetsujirō succeeded Katō Hiroyuki as the intellectual voice of the state in post-1889 Japan. He had traveled to Germany in 1884, and returned to Japan as a professor at Tokyo Imperial University in 1890. Bringing back with him the neo-Kantian trends of Germany, Inoue set a new philosophical tone at Tokyo Imperial. He shifted the emphasis away from the materialist realism of Katō Hiroyuki and helped make German idealism the new philosophical lingua franca of Meiji intellectuals. This shift reflected the new ideological climate. Katō's task was to re-imagine the theological ideology of the

¹⁵⁹ Translation of the Imperial Rescript on Education in deBary, *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, 108-109.

¹⁶⁰ Hardacre, *Shintō and the State*, 123-124.

¹⁶¹ On Inoue Tetsujirō's background, see Sueki, *Kindai nihon no shisō saikō* Vol. 1, 62-85; Shimazono Susumu, Takahashi Hara, and Isomae Jun'ichi, "Kaisetsu," in *Inoue Tetsujirō shū* Vol. 9, ed. Shimazono Susumu, Takahashi Hara, and Isomae Jun'ichi (Tokyo: Kuresu Shuppan, 2003), 1-29.

Meiji state as the literal structures of the external universe. For Inoue, the task of ideology was to penetrate the inner world of belief. The Sacrilege Incident involving Uchimura provided the necessary pretext. An official interpreter of the Education Rescript,¹⁶² Inoue Tetsujirō launched a public critique on what he called the “collision” of education and religion (*kyōiku to shūkyō no shōtotsu*) in response to the Sacrilege Incident. Although directed at Christianity, its broader purpose was to police the new constitutionally mandated freedom of belief.

Private beliefs were thus policed in this way. Meanwhile, the reality of the Meiji Enlightenment ideology was not allowed to be challenged. An 1892 incident involving historian Kume Kunitake (1839-1931) illustrates this point. Kume was appointed professor of history at Tokyo Imperial University in 1888. An alumnus of the Iwakura Mission, Kume embraced an intellectual position based upon the concept of universal humanity, which I described in chapter one as an ideological linchpin of Western Enlightenment and contrary to the Meiji Enlightenment. In 1892, Kume published an academic article called “Shintō is an Outmoded Custom of Sky Worship” (*Shintō wa saiten no kozoku*). In this article he criticized Shintō from the perspective of Western progress narratives, in which a universal human subject progresses along a unilinear course from immaturity toward rational civilization. Shintō, he argued, may indeed have been a culturally and spiritually unifying force while Japan was in its infancy. But as a mature civilization taking its place among modern nation-states, Japan should no longer have any need for it. Kume was forced to resign from his post at Tokyo Imperial. Like Uchimura, Kume had transgressed an ideological fault line. The incident (*hikka jiken*) sent a chill throughout the academic world, preserving the imperial charisma and keeping universal humanity informally heterodox.¹⁶³

Most tellingly, the publication in 1910 of the *Handbook of the Constitution* (*Kenpō teiyō*) by Tokyo Imperial University legal theorist Hozumi Yatsuka (1860-1912) represented a crystalline statement of ideological orthodoxy as theoretical knowledge. Hozumi’s theory of the Japanese state centered on a concept called “family state” (*kazoku kokka*). The family state theory was essentially an application of university evolutionism (*daigaku shinkaron*, see chapter one) to the Meiji Constitution. The basic principle of power that drives the will to survive creates a state, argues Hozumi, when an ethnic group achieves unity and dominates others out of self-preservation. The collective will of the group inheres in the emperor-patriarch, who, in Hozumi’s famous phrase, is the state (*tennō wa sunawachi kokka nari*). Historical continuity is preserved in a state by ancestor worship, an emotional attachment and moral obligation for the emperor to protect the progeny of the descendants of the ancient lineage. This principle is incompatible with Christianity and liberal democracy, Hozumi argues, because of their emphasis on universal humanity. The affective and religious bond that unites the ethnic group throughout history, born of the will to power, is here rationalized in a scientific theory, a

¹⁶² Inoue Tetsujirō produced a widely influential commentary on the Education Rescript (*Chokugo engi*) that interpreted the document in the Meiji Enlightenment’s social evolution narrative. See de Bary, *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, 109-110.

¹⁶³ Hardacre, *Shintō and the State*, 129; Margaret Mehl, “Scholarship and Ideology in Conflict: The Kume Affair, 1892,” *Monumenta Nipponica* Vol. 48 No. 3 (Autumn, 1993): 337-357.

near-perfect cultural sublimation of the forgotten violent origins of the state a mere two decades prior.¹⁶⁴

The sublimation of Meiji power into a code of morality thus moved the front line of the Meiji Enlightenment to the inner life. Antimodernism accordingly met the Meiji Enlightenment on this interior battleground. The antimodernist yearning for a world enchanted by Buddhism was blocked and frustrated by the new ideological order of post-Constitution Japan. The antimodernist quest thus turned inward. Friedrich Nietzsche described such an inward turn in *The Genealogy of Morals*,

All instincts that are not allowed free play turned inward. This is what I call man's interiorization; it alone provides the soil for the growth of what is later called man's *soul*. Man's interior world, originally meager and tenuous, was expanding in every dimension, in proportion as the outward discharge of his feelings was curtailed.¹⁶⁵

Japanese antimodernists living in the age of national morality sought, to borrow the language of Nietzsche, to go beyond good and evil.

Buddhism, now classified as a religion, was tolerated insofar as it remained within the confines of state-regulated freedom of belief. Enryō and Murakami both wrote defenses of Buddhism in response to the “collision” debate, extolling Buddhism's compliance with the Education Rescript's values of patriotic filial piety. But as would soon become apparent, the new ideological configuration was a permanent roadblock for the antimodernist quest. Buddhism was permanently and irrevocably disenchanting in politics. For a time, Murakami and Kiyozawa remained dedicated to sect reform. But they grew impatient with what they saw as the sect's obsequious attitude toward the state. They believed that the sect, unlike them, was more interested in demonstrating its compliance with the state in exchange for economic favors than it was in propagating the Buddhist worldview. Eventually, both Murakami and Kiyozawa were temporarily expelled from Higashi Honganji. The following two sections present the works of Murakami and Kiyozawa, respectively, in the post-Constitution decades.

2. The Historicism of Murakami Senshō

Murakami Senshō was born Hirosaki Senshō in 1851, the eldest son of a True Pure Land (*Jōdo shinshū*) priest, in Tanba (present-day Hyōgo prefecture).¹⁶⁶ His early

¹⁶⁴ Richard H. Minear, *Japanese Tradition and Western Law: Emperor, State, and Law in the Thought of Hozumi Yatsuka* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).

¹⁶⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals: An Attack*, in *The Birth of Tragedy and the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. and ed. Francis Golffing (New York: Anchor Books, 1956), 217-218.

¹⁶⁶ Scholarship on Murakami is near non-existent both in Japanese and English. His work is treated mainly in general overviews of Meiji Buddhism; see Sueki, *Kindai nihon no shisō saikō* Vol.1, 86-109; Staggs, “In Defense of Japanese Buddhism;” Ama Toshimaro et al., eds. *The Eastern Buddhist New Series* Vol. 37, Nos. 1 & 2 (2005), a special issue

education consisted of recitation of the three Pure Land sutras at home. Murakami's family was too poor to raise him, and as a result he spent his childhood moving from temple to temple as a novice since the age of eight. Throughout his life, Murakami pieced together an education by studying under whatever masters he could find. Murakami acquired training in Chinese learning while a temple novice. Following the Restoration, Murakami resolved to defend Buddhism against its new persecutors as a scholar. Lacking the money, he began his education in theoretical Buddhism by working in exchange for lessons in Echigo under Higashi Honganji lecturer Takeda Yukitada from 1871 to 1874. In that time, he studied the *Thirty Verses on Consciousness-Only* (*Yuishiki sanjū ju*), the main text of Consciousness-Only (Japanese *hossō*, Sanskrit Yogacara), as well as Shinran's *Gutokusho* and *Kenjōdo shinjitsu kyōgyōshō monrui* (abbreviated *Kyōgyō shinshō*).¹⁶⁷ In 1874, Murakami enrolled in Higashi Honganji's Takakura Seminary (Takakura gakuryō, present-day Ōtani University), only to be expelled several months later for participating in a student strike in the name of sect reform. He then assumed the headship of a temple in Mikawa by marrying the daughter of its master, Murakami Kaio, who adopted Senshō as his heir and gave him the family name Murakami. Although financially secure, Murakami Senshō neglected his temple responsibilities and found new Buddhist masters with whom he studied *Nyāya* (Japanese *immyō*), an ancient form of Indian logic, from 1875 to 1880. He arranged to leave the headship to study *kusha* (a *hossō*-related sect) at the Higashi Honganji Normal School (*kyōshi kyōkō*) in 1880. He graduated and lectured at various schools in Kyoto before becoming a lecturer at the Sōtō sect academy (*Sōtōshū daigakurin*, present-day Komazawa University) in Tokyo in 1887.

That same year also saw Murakami's fateful encounter with Inoue Enryō, the Buddhist philosopher introduced in the preceding section. Enryō invited Murakami to lecture on Buddhism at his school, the Philosophy Hall (*Tetsugakukan*). Murakami's association with Enryō was an intellectual awakening. He was deeply moved by the call to revive Buddhism in Enryō's *Preface to Theses on the Vitality of Buddhism*, discussed in the previous chapter. Moreover, Murakami was as much a student as a lecturer at Philosophy Hall, which was his first formal introduction to the world of Western learning.

i. Murakami and Buddhist Theory

Murakami's earliest works – the 1888 lecture on the *Theory of Buddhism* (*Bukkyō ron*) he gave at Enryō's Philosophy Hall and the 1890 book based on that lecture, *An Essay on the Consistency of Japanese Buddhism* (*Nihon bukkyō ikkan ron*) – were the results of Murakami's association with Inoue Enryō.¹⁶⁸ Murakami used three of Enryō's

focusing on Murakami; Tamamuro Taijō, *Nihon bukkyō shi* Vol III (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1967); Tsunemitsu Kōnen, *Meiji no bukkyōsha* Vol. 1 (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1968); for biographical data, see also Murakami's autobiographical piece, *Rokujūichinen: Ichimei seki rara* (Tokyo: Heigo Shuppan, 1914).

¹⁶⁷ Shinran (1173-1263) is the founder of the True Pure Land sect of Buddhism.

¹⁶⁸ Murakami Senshō, “*Butsugaku: Bukkyō ron*,” *Tetsugakukan kōgi roku* Vol. 1 (1888); Murakami Senshō, *Nihon bukkyō ikkan ron* (Tokyo: Tetsugaku Shoin, 1890).

key concepts as his own starting points. First, he based his Theory of Buddhism lecture on “Pure Philosophy,” the subject that Enryō created as the master discipline in the curriculum of Philosophy Hall. Pure Philosophy was the study of what Enryō called *shinri*, or the “pure principle,” the great principle according to which all phenomenal change occurs.¹⁶⁹ Second, Enryō argued that of the many world philosophies that have described this principle, Buddhism was superior because it was both a philosophy and a religion. It appealed to the intellectual as well as the emotional life, to theory as well as lived experience.¹⁷⁰ Finally, Enryō argued that Buddhism was modern and rational by demonstrating that it obeyed the laws of evolution and had adapted to modern times.¹⁷¹

Murakami reproduced these ideas faithfully in his early works. Enryō crafted his ideas from a transcendental, scientific perspective because he viewed Buddhism as a metaphysical structure. This same perspective allowed Murakami to view the totality of Buddhist theory from above, without adopting the viewpoint of any one sect. Moreover, Murakami’s late encounter with Western learning forced him to isolate Buddhism’s distinguishing characteristics. As a result of Murakami’s experience at the Philosophy Hall, Buddhist theory was, to recall once more Levenson’s phrase, “shocked into a semblance of unity.”¹⁷² Murakami overrode sectarian intellectual conflicts in favor of unity not only in theory, but in sect organization as well. Although some scholars see Murakami as a progressive champion of Buddhist unity, his work was in fact highly subversive to sect authority and, as we shall see, brought about his forced withdrawal from the sect in 1901. For Murakami’s overarching theory of Buddhism was possible only by adopting Enryō’s standpoint outside the sect structure. It made Buddhist theory portable as an abstraction, separated from institutional structures and independent of sect authority. No one sect had an authoritative claim on Buddhism. The implicit separation of Buddhist theory from sect authority in Murakami’s work was the critical step that later enabled him to develop his historical interpretation of Buddhism, as I show in the following section.

The abstraction of Buddhist theory into a single structure is evident in Murakami’s earliest work, the 1888 *Butsugaku* lecture he gave at Philosophy Hall. Here, Murakami reproduced Enryō’s arguments about Pure Philosophy’s position as the foundation of all knowledge – the study of the principle of all principles for all phenomena. He also reproduced Enryō’s philosophy-religion distinction, noting that philosophy is intellectual and religion is emotional, and that Buddhism has since its origin contained both. Also like Enryō, Murakami posited that Buddhist philosophy evolved, citing six stages of evolution in the Buddhist conception of existence: atheistic monism, theistic monism, theistic dualism, four-element no-spirit materialism, nine-element matter-spirit philosophy, and no-matter no-spirit monism. The lecture’s main argument focuses on the basic principle of cause and effect (*shōin shōka* or *inga*)

¹⁶⁹ Inoue Enryō, *Tetsugaku issekiwa*, 33-84.

¹⁷⁰ Inoue Enryō, *Shinri kinshin zokuzoku hen*, 250-323.

¹⁷¹ Inoue Enryō, *Shinri kinshin zokuzoku hen*, 250-323.

¹⁷² Joseph R. Levenson used this phrase to describe Chinese Confucianism in the nineteenth century. See Levenson, “The Problem of Intellectual Continuity,” in *Confucian China and its Modern Fate: A Trilogy* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1965), 50.

according to which change occurs in the universe. The fundamental principle of Murakami's Buddhist theory was *banbutsu engi* (Sanskrit *Praṭīyasamutpāda*, interdependent arising of all things). *Engi* posits that all existents are connected in a spatially and temporally infinite universe that is in a continuous state of change. Change originates in the shifting relationships that link all existents. Murakami lists three dimensions of *engi*: karma (*gōkan engi*), the eight consciousnesses (*raya engi*), and suchness (*shinnyo engi*). In addition, Murakami discusses the Three Marks of Existence (*sanbōin*) shared by all sentient beings according to Buddhist theory: impermanence (*shogyō mujō*), no-self (*shohō muga*), and dissatisfaction resulting from desire (*nehan jakujō*). In short, Murakami re-examined his traditionally-acquired education in Buddhist theory from Enryō's scientific standpoint.

Murakami's Buddhist Theory lecture was the foundation for his first major work, *Thesis of the Consistency of Japanese Buddhism* (*Nihon bukkyō ikkanron*), published in 1890. Here, he again restated the philosophy-religion argument, and listed ten features of Buddhist theory, almost all taken from the lecture: 1. existence is spatially and temporally infinite, 2. all phenomena obey the laws of impermanence, no-self, and causality, 3. existents are not born and do not die, and are equal and undifferentiated, 4. interdependent arising (*engiron*) and actual existence (*jissōron*) are the two basic approaches in Buddhist theory, 5. *engi* is spatial and 6. subjective, 7. Buddhist practice is based on ethics, contemplation, and wisdom, and it requires 8. the abandonment of attachments and 9. its goal is enlightenment, which can be reached by 10. the Easy Path (*igyō*) or the Difficult Path (*nangyō*). The express purpose of *Consistency* was to demonstrate that despite the myriad Buddhist sects and sub-sect factions, each with its own differentiating theoretical position, there is a single set of ideas that may be called "Buddhism." In terms of reformism, Murakami's work was radical that it overrode sect authority. While many scholars have looked at Murakami as a great "unifier" of Buddhist sects, I argue that his universal Buddhist theory challenged the authority of sects in that it made a portable theory of Buddhism.

ii. From Theory to History

Thesis of the Consistency of Buddhism brought Murakami success. He was appointed head of Higashi Honganji's school in Asakusa, Tokyo, and was also appointed lecturer in Indian philosophy at Tokyo Imperial University in 1890. There, he laid the foundations for Indian philosophy as a modern academic discipline, replacing the earlier lectureships of Hara Tanzan (1819-1892) and Yoshida Kakuju (1843-1914) with his modern philosophy-infused lectures. Murakami trained the first generation of Indian philosophy scholars who returned from Europe with expertise in Sanskrit, including Takakusu Junjirō (1866-1945) and Nanjō Bunyū (1849-1927).

But Murakami's work took a different direction in the years following the 1889 promulgation of the Constitution. The exclusion of Buddhism from the ideologically-defined reality of the Meiji Enlightenment was now a permanent feature of the new Japanese polity. As noted above, the thought of Inoue Enryō was made obsolete by the Constitution. So, too, was the thought of Murakami Senshō. Murakami did not share Enryō's hopes to make Buddhism a state ideology. Unlike Enryō, who renounced the

priesthood, Murakami remained committed to sect reform. Nevertheless, Murakami built his Buddhist theory upon Enryō's intellectual premises. Its transcendental, scientific perspective allowed Murakami to see Buddhism as a single abstraction and objective truth. The Constitution's political disenchantment of Buddhism thus negated the premises of Murakami's thought. The exclusion of Buddhism from politics forced Murakami to re-evaluate his supra-sectarian Buddhist theory from a new perspective. No longer able to view Buddhist theory from Enryō's transcendental, scientific perspective, Murakami had to shift to the perspective of an individual now living in the modern Japanese polity: it was an enworlded, particularistic, subjective vantage. It was, in other words, a shift from Enryō's scientific and objective perspective to an individual and subjective perspective. With this shift in perspective came a shift in subject matter, from political ideology to culture. Accordingly, Murakami's work shifted from purely theoretical Buddhism to Buddhist historicism (*bukkyō no rekishiteki shisō*, literally, "Buddhist historical thought").¹⁷³

Murakami developed Buddhist historicism with his pupils Washio Junkyō (1868-1941) and Sakaino Kōyō (born Sakaino Satoshi, 1871-1933) in a journal called *Bukkyō shirin* (Literally, "The Forest of Buddhist History"). They launched *Bukkyō shirin* in 1894 on the birthday of the Buddha, April 8, and it ran until 1896. Murakami stated in the journal that he was critical of the existing approaches to the historical study of Buddhism. He divided historians of Buddhism, which included historical study of Buddhist theory (*kyōshi*) and biographies (*denki*) of historical Buddhist figures, into two camps: moral instructors who wanted to preserve Buddhism, and academic historians who wanted to eradicate it.¹⁷⁴ The former uncritically accepted the teachings and historical accounts of Buddhist texts, while the latter subjected them to empirical verification to separate truth from lie. Murakami sought a third position, a way between the reactionary conservatism of the sects and disenchantment of positivist skepticism.

Murakami's goal in *Bukkyō shirin* was the development of a third theoretical approach between faith and reason that he called "*bukkyōshugi*" (literally, "Buddhismism"), or the study of the historical development of Buddhism using the insights of Buddhism (*bukkyō no gankō*).¹⁷⁵ Academic historians, he explained, discounted tales of miracle and augury (*kizui reigen*) in biographies of historical Buddhist figures as legitimate evidence. Historians of Buddhist theory similarly discounted doctrines that were deemed empirically incorrect. Murakami did not want to defend such narratives and doctrines as literal truths, but neither did he believe that they were totally meaningless. *Bukkyōshugi* provided a perspective from which one could grasp the meaning of doctrines and narratives that were beyond the scope of empirical reason, without resorting to the kind of conservatism that was incompatible with the realities of the modern world. It was a hermeneutical approach to the historical study of Buddhism. It required the historian to adopt a Buddhist mindset in order to interpret the texts from the

¹⁷³ Murakami Senshō, "*Bukkyō shi kenkyū no hitsuyō wo nobete hakkan no yurai nashi awasete honshi no shugi mokuteki wo hyōhaku su,*" *Bukkyō shirin* Vol. 1. No. 1 (1894): 1-11.

¹⁷⁴ Murakami Senshō, "*Gosō ga bukkyō no rekishi wo kenkyū suru shisō (1),*" *Bukkyō shirin* Vol. 1 No. 2 (1894): 1-10.

¹⁷⁵ Murakami Senshō, "*Gosō ga bukkyō no rekishi wo kenkyū suru shisō (1),*" 2.

historically and culturally embedded perspective of their producers. The practice of *bukkyōshugi* was itself a religious exercise. It required the interpreter to mobilize both the rational and non-rational faculties to understand the worldview of a historical person living in a still-enchanted Buddhist world. For Murakami, the re-experiencing of historical Buddhist thought through its cultural residues was a way of re-enchancing Buddhism in the present. It allowed him to experience a bygone Buddhist world in which the miraculous was real in that it was meaningful.

To elaborate, Murakami cited the Buddhist concept of *kannō dōkō* (literally, “circuit of feeling and response”).¹⁷⁶ One can, according to this theory, elicit a divine response from the Buddha when experiencing overwhelming feelings of religious faith. Here, Murakami explained, the Buddha is understood in terms of the Three Bodies Doctrine (Sanskrit *Trikāya*, Japanese *sanjin*): Truth Body (Sanskrit *dharmakāya*, Japanese *hosshin*), which is the principle itself; Astral Body (Sanskrit *sambhogakāya*, Japanese *hōjin*), which are divine manifestations of the Buddha such as Bodhisattvas; and Incarnated Body (Sanskrit *nirmānakāya*, Japanese *keshin*), the historical Buddha. To grasp the meaning of these is not to know them, but to be moved by them (*kandō*), and to draw a response from the Buddha (*ō*). In the annals of Buddhist history, saints and the morally righteous were able to experience the miraculous through *kannō dōkō*. While empirical historians excluded such narratives from their research on the grounds that such events could not actually have happened, Murakami argued that they must be included as historical evidence. They were not empirical evidence of literal events. Nor were they merely allegorical, in that they did not point to a meaning outside of themselves. Rather, narratives and doctrines of the miraculous, as cultural artifacts produced by a historical worldview, were instruments for reproducing the worldview that gave them birth. For this reason, the biographies of the saints became a key form of historical writing in *Bukkyō shirin*. They were a means of achieving understanding, rather than knowledge, of Buddhism through the congealed experiences of the saints.

Sakaino and Washio elaborated *Bukkyō shirin*’s historicist approach to Buddhism. Sakaino argued for the idea of a “historical Buddhism” (*rekishiteki bukkyō*).¹⁷⁷ Through the history of Buddhism, he wrote, the historian can access both the metaphysical philosophy and the social history of a particular time and place. For in Buddhism, he wrote, practice and theory were one. He further argued that the history of Buddhism is the history of greater East Asia, and he criticized scholars for conflating world civilization with Western civilization.¹⁷⁸ Washio offered a more programmatic method of doing Buddhist history. He enumerated eight categories for the historical research of Buddhism in Japan: 1. Buddhism and the imperial institution; 2. Buddhism and the legal system; 3. Buddhism and education; 4. Buddhism and scholarship; 5. Buddhism and art; 6. Buddhism and diplomacy; 7. Buddhism and prosperity; 8. Buddhism and custom.¹⁷⁹ In short, Sakaino and Washio extended Murakami’s Buddhist historicism to the general study of medieval Japanese politics, culture, and society. Murakami’s *bukkyōshugi* was a

¹⁷⁶ Murakami Senshō, “*Gosō ga bukkyō no rekishi wo kenkyū suru shisō (I)*,” 6.

¹⁷⁷ Sakaino Kōyō, “*Rekishiteki bukkyō*,” *Bukkyō shirin* Vol. 1 No. 8 (1894): 1-12.

¹⁷⁸ Sakaino Kōyō, “*Sekaiishi to bukkyōshi*,” *Bukkyō shirin* Vol 1. No. 11 (1895): 1-9.

¹⁷⁹ Washio Junkyō, “*Bukkyō rekishi ika ga kenkyū semu*,” *Bukkyō shirin* Vol. 2 No. 15 (1895): 1-9.

hermeneutic strategy for reconnecting with the interior life of historical personages to understand their Buddhist worldview. Sakaino and Washio extended this to premodern Japanese society generally, arguing that Buddhism was inseparable from every other aspect of life, and its enchanted worldview therefore infused all of Japanese culture.

Sakaino also contributed to *Bukkyō shirin* a concept that became central to its historicist paradigm: New Buddhism (*shin bukkyō*). This concept was not original to Sakaino. It first appeared in the works of the now-forgotten Nakanishi Ushirō (1859-1930), a well-regarded contemporary of Enryō whose background is mostly lost to historians.¹⁸⁰ Nakanishi's New Buddhism was, I argue, a rather wooden attempt to fit Buddhism into the mold of Protestantism. Taking Western civilization as the normative model for the development of civilization, Nakanishi saw the Protestant Reformation as the key event in religious evolution, whereby the old religion became the new. Nakanishi listed the criteria for New Buddhism in his 1889 work, *Thesis on Religious Revolution* (*Shūkyō kakumeiron*):

1. New Buddhism is progressive, Old Buddhism is conservative
2. New Buddhism is open to common people, Old Buddhism is elitist
3. New Buddhism is spiritual, Old Buddhism is materialistic
4. New Buddhism is based on faith, Old Buddhism is based on learning
5. New Buddhism is active in society, Old Buddhism is satisfied as it is
6. New Buddhism is historical, Old Buddhism is dogmatic
7. New Buddhism is based on reason, Old Buddhism clings to superstition¹⁸¹

In addition to these seven criteria, Nakanishi also advocated the unification of Buddhism across sects, and the free investigation of religion.

Sakaino most likely became interested in New Buddhism through the influence of Furukawa Rōsen (1871-1899), a True Pure Land priest from Wakayama prefecture and an ardent promoter of Nakanishi's New Buddhism.¹⁸² In 1894, the same year as the launch of *Bukkyō shirin*, Sakaino joined Furukawa's reform group, called the Young Buddhists (*Seinen Bukkyōto*). With members drawn from the Young Buddhists, Furukawa formed the Warp and Woof Society (*Keiikai*). The intellectual agenda of this study group was taken straight from Nakanishi, though Nakanishi himself never intended to start a movement. The Warp and Woof Society and its journal, *Buddhism* (*Bukkyō*), were dedicated to the free investigation of Buddhism, and to progressive Buddhism.

Sakaino brought the concept of New Buddhism into the historicism of *Bukkyō shirin*. In a series of articles on the transmission of Buddhism from China into sixth-century Japan, Sakaino argued that the development of Japanese Buddhism in the late Heian (794-1185) and Kamakura (1185-1333) periods marked a rupture with the Chinese Buddhism that had prevailed at the Nara court. This, he argued, was the dawn of New Buddhism. Separated from politics and from institutional Buddhism, Buddhist monks

¹⁸⁰ Hoshino Seiji, "Reconfiguring Buddhism as a Religion: Nakanishi Ushirō and His 'Shin Bukkyō,'" *Japanese Religions* Vol. 34 No. 2 (July 2009): 133-154.

¹⁸¹ Hoshino, "Reconfiguring Buddhism as a Religion," 143.

¹⁸² Winston Davis, "Buddhism and Modernization," in *Japanese Religion and Society: Paradigms of Structure and Change* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1992), 153-188.

went into the world to spread Buddhism and, as a result, transformed Buddhism into a religion of interiority (*naimen*). This New Buddhism blossomed in the late Heian and Kamakura periods with the rise of the Zen, Nichiren, and Pure Land sects. Medieval Japan was an age in which feeling-based Buddhism prevailed after the separation of Buddhism from both politics and church. The term “Kamakura New Buddhism,” which is still widely used to describe the distinctive Buddhism of Japan’s medieval era, thus originated in *Bukkyō shirin*.

The three volumes of *Bukkyō shirin* produced a narrative of the emergence of New Buddhism in medieval Japan, covering the transition of Buddhism from China into Japan in the sixth century and its development into New Buddhism medieval Japan. The journal included several regular features: Geography of Ancient India, Doctrinal History, Historical Investigations, and Record of the Crown Prince (Shōtoku Taishi). The authors contributed research essays on the development of Buddhism in China and its relationship to Taoism; on the transition of Buddhism to Japan’s Nara court; on the special features and relationship of Nara and Heian Buddhism; on the harmonization of Japan’s native gods with the Buddhas; and on the dual morality of Shinran and Nichiren in the Kamakura age. *Bukkyō shirin* also included biographical portraits of the medieval Japanese saints, including Dōshō (629-700), Nichiren (1222-1282), Shinnyo (?-865), Gien (643-728), Rōben (689-773), and Gyōki (668-749). These portraits populated *Bukkyō shirin*’s medieval world of Japanese Buddhism with personalities whose experiences embodied the teachings.

In sum, the works of Murakami Senshō and his associates in *Bukkyō shirin* demonstrate how the antimodernist quest to preserve the meaningfulness of Buddhism in the Meiji Enlightenment shifted from politics to culture in the years following the promulgation of the Meiji Constitution. In his pre-Constitution works (his Buddhist Theory lecture at the Philosophy Hall and his book, *The Consistency of Japanese Buddhism*), Murakami’s approach to Buddhism was purely theoretical. He abstracted from the multitude of warring schools and factions a single theoretical structure that he argued was the essential theory of a single entity called “Buddhism.” This work was made possible by adopting the transcendental perspective of Inoue Enryō, who, as shown above, sought to preserve Buddhist metaphysics as scientific law. Viewing Buddhism from Enryō’s transcendental vantage, Murakami saw Buddhism as an abstract set of laws, ahistorical and unattached to institutions. The Constitution invalidated Enryō’s transcendental perspective by denying the reality of Buddhism as a metaphysical principle. In the post-Constitution works by Murakami and his circle in *Bukkyō shirin*, the point of view necessarily shifted from a transcendental to an enworlded one. Murakami’s strategy shifted from the construction of a metaphysical Buddhism as a political ideology to the construction of a historical Buddhism as cultural meaning.

Three innovations distinguished the approach of *Bukkyō shirin* as historicist. First, the hermeneutical method of *bukkyōshugi* required the historian of Buddhism to adopt the worldview of the period that produced the document or artifact of study. To study medieval narratives of miracles and doctrines that contradict science, one had to utilize emotional and intuitive faculties as well as rational empiricism. The historian’s purpose in employing *bukkyōshugi* was to understand the meaning of medieval Buddhism from the cultural perspective of the medieval worldview, not to empirically verify historical facts from an outside position. Second, *Bukkyō shirin* did not aim to study the history of

Buddhist thought, but rather, it studied Buddhist historical thought (*bukkyō no rekishiteki shisō*) or historical Buddhism (*rekishiteki bukkyō*). Unlike the trans-historical Buddhist theory of Murakami's early works, historical Buddhism was intelligible only in historical context. It implied that Buddhist thought changes over time but does not necessarily progress toward a terminus, as in Enryō's evolutionary schema. Rather, in *Bukkyō shirin*, truth and meaning itself were historical and immanent, not eternal and transcendental. Finally, the concept of New Buddhism allowed *Bukkyō shirin* to construct a narrative in which Buddhism as a religion of individual experience, separate from sect institutions, was the defining feature of medieval Japanese Buddhism.

Taken together, *Bukkyō shirin*'s three innovations (*bukkyōshugi*, historical Buddhism, New Buddhism) provided the intellectual foundations for Japanese Medievalism. Part empirical history and part romantic fantasy, Japanese Medievalism posited medieval Japan as a world enchanted by Buddhism. It was a Japan accessible to the historian through *bukkyōshugi*, or an intuitive sympathy for historically conditioned meaning. The historian of medieval Japan experienced New Buddhism, the distinctly Japanese strain of Buddhism that emphasized the individual experience and was detached from the sect. New Buddhism was the organizing principle of medieval Japan, the medieval Japanese worldview embodied in all aspects of medieval culture. In short, Murakami's historicism was a way of re-enchanting the present by experiencing the enchanted world of *Bukkyō shirin*'s medieval Japan.

iii. Clash with the Sect

After *Bukkyō shirin* finished its run in 1896, Murakami became involved in the Shirakawa Faction, a reform society founded by Murakami's fellow True Pure Land priest Kiyozawa Manshi (1863-1903) to agitate for reform at the Higashi Honganji temple complex. Murakami's involvement with Shirakawa marked his further separation from sect authority. Kiyozawa and other Shirakawa leaders were expelled from the sect in 1897. Murakami, though not expelled, was stripped of all official sect duties as a reprimand. In the years following his clash with sect authority, Murakami honed his Medievalism into a more acute critique of the sect that, finally, led to his forced resignation from the sect in 1901. This critique of the sect also challenged the exclusion of Buddhism from the Meiji Enlightenment. For the further that Murakami separated Buddhism from sect authority, the more deeply he anchored it in the historical culture of medieval Japan.

In 1898 and 1899, Murakami composed a historical survey of Japanese Buddhism called *Historical Thread of Japanese Buddhism (Nihon bukkyō shikō)*.¹⁸³ *Historical Thread* incorporated the concepts and insights of *Bukkyō shirin* into a grand narrative that traced Japanese Buddhism back to the Heian (794-1185) court, and thus re-wrote Buddhism into the history of Japanese political ideology. In a narrative that mirrored that of the Meiji period, Murakami traced the development of Old Buddhism into New Buddhism through the separation of Buddhism from politics in the Heian and Kamakura periods. He argued that Empress Suiko (554-628) and her nephew, the regent Prince

¹⁸³ Murakami Senshō, *Nihon bukkyō shikō* (Tokyo: Kinkōdō, 1899).

Shōtoku (574-622), imported Buddhism from the continent and incorporated it into their ruling ideology. This “Political Buddhism” (*seiji bukkyō*) of the Nara and early Heian courts ended with the separation of Buddhism from political rule following the reign of Emperor Shōmu (701-756). Separated from politics, Buddhist monks began to spread Buddhism beyond the temple and, as a result, transformed Buddhism into a religion of interiority (*naimen*). New Buddhism blossomed in the late Heian and Kamakura periods with the rise of Japan’s distinctive Zen, Nichiren, and Pure Land sects.

Most interestingly, *Historical Thread* brings the story all the way up to the Separation of Buddha from *Kami* Edicts of the Meiji period. With this, Murakami critiqued the sect by tracing the movement of Buddhism from Buddhist institutions to Japanese culture. He also critiqued the state by presenting the Meiji period reforms as the destruction of Japan’s Buddhism-based culture. The Buddhism that developed in the medieval period was the essence of Japanese culture, and was a qualitatively different entity from the Old Buddhism imported from the continent. It was, in a way, not really Buddhism.

Murakami theorized this last point in his 1901 work, *Thesis of the Great Thread* (*Daikō ron*), the first in a series of works called *Theses of the Unity of Buddhism* (*Bukkyō tōitsu ron*).¹⁸⁴ Here, Murakami argued that Mahāyāna Buddhism, which included all medieval Japanese Buddhism, was in fact not Buddhism, in that it was not based on the teachings of Shakyamuni. This argument (*daijō hi-bussetsu*) had existed already in Buddhist discourse, but only as a criticism of how Buddhism had degenerated. For Murakami, the distinction of Mahāyāna as something other than Buddhism was not a critique, but rather a re-statement of his historicism. For Murakami, the New Buddhism of medieval Japan was a distinctive but valid expression of the spirit of an age.

Murakami built his historicist argument for Mahāyāna non-Buddhism with a concept he called *jōshiki*, which translates as “common sense” or “ordinary awareness.” He did not use the term *bukkyōshugi*, as he had in *Bukkyō shirin*. *Jōshiki* is a kind of empirical approach based on observation. Using this approach, Murakami isolated Mahāyāna as something completely unverifiable. From the perspective of *jōshiki*, the Buddha was human, albeit a superior human. He was a member of a natural hierarchy of geniuses of knowledge, morality, or in Buddha’s case, of spirit. Buddha’s particular genius was the achievement of perfect contentment (*enman*). Murakami traced the development of Buddhism’s textual traditions along two lines: the interpretation of the Buddha’s words, and theoretical conceptualizations of his Nirvana. Each of these lines, he argued, developed in a circular fashion: the studies of the Buddha’s words developed from studies of his personality toward idealization of Buddha as a superhuman being, while theories of Nirvana went from idealistic abstraction toward personification of Nirvana in Buddha. The result of this trend was the Three-Bodies theory already discussed above: the Truth Body (the theory of the law itself), the incarnated Body (the historical Buddha), and the Astral Body. Of these three, the Astral Body was the only one that, for Murakami, was unacceptable to *jōshiki*. The Astral Body theory posited infinite Buddhas existing in 100,000 worlds. These divine beings were abstractions, and were neither historically verifiable nor theoretically logical. These abstractions were only

¹⁸⁴ *Thesis of the Great Thread* is reprinted in Murakami Senshō, *Shinpen Bukkyō tōitsuron: taikōron genriron budaron*, ed. Ōta Yoshimaro (Tokyo: Gunsho, 1997).

really influential in Mahāyāna Buddhism, which was the New Buddhism of Japan. In conclusion, New Buddhism was not Buddhism, in that it was based upon concepts that were neither original to the historical Buddha nor theoretically logical.

Rather than conclude that Mahāyāna was wrong or inauthentic, Murakami reasoned that Mahāyāna was “developed” Buddhism (*hatten*). He reprised Enryō’s language of evolutionism to argue that all things change and adapt to different historical conditions, but did not adopt Enryō’s scientific perspective and progress narrative. His perspective was rather inside the historical period, and viewed that period from within as a coherent whole. In his historical narrative, he argued that in Japan, New Buddhism was a development that excelled the Old Buddhism (*kyū bukkyō*) that was transmitted directly to Nara from China. It synthesized the independent trends of Buddhism into a new whole, and transcended the inferior types of faith those trends created. Bad faiths, for Murakami, were the “biased faith” of adhering to one sect, and the “sick faith” of belief in superstitions. “Healthy faith” was that which adhered to the empirical demands of common sense, yet employed mental faculties beyond that of reason by seeking transcendental truths in phenomena. The Heian synthesizers of Tendai, he argued, achieved this healthy faith. They not only unified the many sects of Old Buddhism, they also transcended the Old Buddhism by reorienting faith toward reality instead of mere phenomena or superstition. In this way, Murakami Senshō completely transposed Buddhism from politics to culture, from theory to history, and from the sect to the individual. It was, in fact, no longer even Buddhism. His Mahāyāna non-Buddhism Theory caused a sensation, and led the sect to call for Murakami’s resignation, which he submitted in 1901.

iv. The Fellowship of New Buddhists

As noted above, Sakaino was a member of Furukawa Rōsen’s study group, the Warp and Woof Society. Following the death of Furukawa in 1899, Sakaino assumed leadership of the group and reorganized it as the Fellowship of New Buddhist Puritans (*Shin bukkyō seito dōshikai*), and in 1903 changed its name again to the Fellowship of New Buddhists (*Shin bukkyōto dōshikai*). The journal *New Buddhism* (*Shin bukkyō*), launched in 1900, was its intellectual organ.¹⁸⁵ In *New Buddhism*, Sakaino and Fellowship members Watanabe Kaikyoku (1872-1933), Takashima Beihō (1875-1949), Tanaka Jiroku (?), Katō Genchi (1873-1965), and others drew on the historicist view of Buddhism to critique the national morality of the Meiji Enlightenment.

The stated goal of the Fellowship was, in essence, the use of New Buddhism for the purposes of social progress. The Fellowship’s manifesto appeared in the first issue of *New Buddhism*:

1. Our fundamental principle is the healthy (*kenzen*) faith of Buddhism.

¹⁸⁵ Yoshida Kyūichi, *Nihon kindai bukkyōshi kenkyū* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1959), 355-433; Ikeda Eishun, *Meiji no shin bukkyō undō* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1976), 282-297; Hisaki Yukio, “*Meiji makki no kyōiku jiken to shin bukkyō dōshikai*,” *Yokohama Kokuritsu Daigaku Kyōiku Kiyō* Vol. 12 (1972): 1-22.

2. We strive to foster and disseminate healthy religious beliefs, knowledge, and moral principles for the fundamental improvement of society.
3. We advocate the free investigation (*jiyū tōkyū*) of Buddhism in addition to other religions.
4. We resolve to destroy superstition.
5. We do not accept the necessity of preserving traditional religious institutions and rituals.
6. We believe the government should refrain from favoring religious groups or interfering in religious matters.¹⁸⁶

The language and concepts of the group were drawn from the historicism of Murakami, Sakaino, and their associates. They fashioned an individual subject position from this historicism that they used to critique the moral ideology of the Meiji Enlightenment.

The basis of this subject position was a rejection of the Meiji Enlightenment's separation of religious and secular life. Unlike Enryō, the Fellowship rejected the use of Buddhism as a state ideology, and aggressively protected Buddhism's autonomy from the state. In this way, they enforced the exclusion of Buddhism from the Meiji Enlightenment's ideological reality. But in another sense, the Fellowship defied the state's authority to separate one's inner beliefs from public life. Religious authority for the Fellowship lay within the individual, not with the state or with the sect. In an article titled "Thesis on No Priesthood" ("*Musō ron*"), Sakaino argued that the separation of life into priestly and secular realms was unnecessary.¹⁸⁷ Murakami helped to underscore this point by publishing his resignation from the sect in *Shin bukkyō*, declaring that Buddhist intellectuals had to be free of sect control.¹⁸⁸ For the Fellowship, the individual was an autonomous religious and moral authority.

The philosophical basis for this individual authority was drawn from the historicism of Murakami, Sakaino, and their peers. Sakaino invoked the concepts of *jōshiki* (ordinary awareness) and free investigation (*jiyū tōken*) to describe the religious subjectivity of the Fellowship. As explained above, these two concepts posited a phenomenological understanding of reality. The individual, free from sectarian or doctrinal constraints, was able to examine reality as it appeared in the perceivable phenomena of everyday life. It was a kind of empirical, even positivistic reliance on sensory experience to explain reality. With this standpoint, Sakaino and the Fellowship sought to purge Buddhism of superstition and engage it with reality.

Yet, as noted above, historicism was not an exercise in positivist skepticism. It was a religious exercise, an attempt to experience a world enchanted by Buddhism. Murakami used the term *bukkyōshugi* to describe a hermeneutical reading strategy that allowed the historian to re-experience the enchanted world of medieval Japan. The Fellowship of New Buddhists went a step further, declaring their present world

¹⁸⁶ "*Kōryō oyo kiyaku*," *Shin bukkyō* Vol. 1 No. 1, reprinted in Yoshida, 1959, 368-369.

¹⁸⁷ Sakaino Kōyō, "*Musō ron*," *Shin bukkyō* Vol. 2.No. 12 (1901), reprinted in "*Shin bukkyō ronsetsū shū* (*SBR*) 3 Vols., ed. Akamatsu Tesshin, Fukushima Kanryū (Kyoto: Nagata Bunshōdō, 1978-1982), Vol. 1, 393-397.

¹⁸⁸ Murakami Senshō, "*Murakami hakase sōseki o dasu*," *Shin bukkyō* Vol. 2 No. 12 (1901).

enchanted. Their guiding principle was pantheism (*hanshinron*), the idea that all reality is a manifestation of the sacred. Sakaino explained in an article called “Monotheism and Pantheism” that religion has the power to create a “unified life” (*tōitsuteki seikatsu*) by uniting the various activities of the Whole Person (*hito zentai*).¹⁸⁹ Pantheism, Sakaino argued, is the viewpoint of one who understands *tathatā* (Japanese *shinnyo*), the Buddhist insight that all differences are illusory and that all existents are fundamentally equal.

The pantheism of the Fellowship was an extension of historicism. It posited a subject that viewed the phenomenological world of experience as holy. The Fellowship’s model for this subject position was Shinran, the founder of the True Pure Land sect. Fellowship member Umehara Tsūan, for example, in his essay “Anti-Clericalism,” analyzed Shinran as the model for living religiously in the world, defying the categories of the secular and the priestly.¹⁹⁰ Shinran became the model for the political subjectivity of the Fellowship of New Buddhists. This important point illuminates the relationship of the social and political critique of the New Buddhists to the historicist thought on which they were based. Previously, the historicists had looked to Shinran’s medieval Japan to reconnect with an enchanted world. Now, they used Shinran himself as a model to experience their own world as enchanted. The Fellowship of New Buddhists thus represented the political face of Japanese Medievalism. Its members drew upon the historicist interpretation of medieval Japanese Buddhism as its historical referent. Over the course of its publication, *Shin bukkyō* used its pantheist subject position to critique the moral ideology of the Meiji Enlightenment, but without opposing capitalism or imperialism. They aimed instead to awaken Japan’s middle class. They viewed the middle class as the crux of modern society, and so to promote the healthy faith of new Buddhism throughout Japan, they argued that the salvation of the middle class must be a priority. Though they often saw themselves as fellow-travelers with socialists, theirs was a philosophy for Japan’s rising new middle class and the industrial economy produced them, not for the working class and the overthrow of capitalism.¹⁹¹

3. The Vitalism of Kiyozawa Manshi

Kiyozawa Manshi was born Tokunaga Manosuke to a lower samurai family in Nagoya.¹⁹² Impoverished following the Meiji Restoration, Kiyozawa’s father Tokunaga Eisoku was reduced to selling tea door to door. The young Kiyozawa attempted to make his way in the world through education, beginning in 1872 when his neighborhood school

¹⁸⁹ Sakaino Kōyō, “*Isshinkyō to hanshinron*,” *Shin bukkyō* Vol. 2 No. 6 (1901) reprinted in *SBRS* Vol 1, 287-295.

¹⁹⁰ Umehara Tsūan, “*Hi sōryō ron*,” *Shin bukkyō* Vol. 1 No. 2 (1900), reprinted in *SBRS* Vol. 1, 51-53.

¹⁹¹ Takashima Beihō, “*Mushiro chūtōmin no kyūsai*,” *Shin bukkyō* Vol 13 No.8 (1912), reprinted in *SBRS* Vol. 3, 219-222.

¹⁹² Biographical data for Kiyozawa Manshi is compiled from Fujita Masakatsu and Yasutomi Shin’ya, *Kiyozawa Manshi – sono hito to shisō* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 2002); Imamura Hitoshi, *Kiyozawa Manshi no shisō* (Kyoto: Jinbun shoin, 2003); Nishimura Kengyō, *Kiyozawa Manshi Sensei* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1951).

was incorporated into the national education system. Subsequent attempts to further his education, first at a foreign language school and then at a medical school, were thwarted by school closings. In 1878, at the age of fifteen, Kiyozawa joined the Buddhist priesthood simply to be eligible for a scholarship offered by Higashi Honganji in Kyoto. He subsequently graduated from Higashi Honganji's Ikueko high school in 1881 and entered the preparatory course at Tokyo University the following year. In 1883, he enrolled in the department of literature's degree course in philosophy, and in 1884 came into Enryō's circle by joining the Philosophy Society. He obtained his degree and began lecturing at Philosophy Hall in 1887, at the age of twenty-four.

As with Murakami, Kiyozawa's association with Enryō and the Philosophy Hall was a key stage in his intellectual development. He incorporated Enryō's scientific, transcendental perspective early on. But like Murakami, Kiyozawa shifted to the subjective, enworlded perspective of the individual in the age of national morality. But unlike Murakami, who aimed that gaze outward onto the world to develop a historicist understanding of Buddhism, Kiyozawa turned the individual viewpoint inward. He explored the inner world of consciousness, describing it as a flow or a flux. This inner flow of consciousness was what constituted the individual in Kiyozawa's understanding. This inner flow paralleled the flux of time that Murakami perceived in the outer world. It was a vitalist interpretation of Buddhism, positing the inner life as the site at which one lived one's faith. In this way, it prized lived faith and action over rational knowledge.

i. Philosophy of the Skeleton Period

Like Murakami, Kiyozawa's earliest works date back to his tenure at the Philosophy Hall, where he lectured on Pure Philosophy (*junsei tetsugaku*) along with Enryō and Miyake Setsurei. Enryō lectured on the theory of Pure Philosophy, introducing the concept as already described above. Miyake's lectures focused on the history of philosophy. Kiyozawa's Pure Philosophy lecture focused on technical philosophy. The lecture he gave was called *Jitsuzai ron*, which translates literally as "Theory of Actual Existence" but which is closer in meaning to "Ontology" (*sonzai ron* in Japanese).¹⁹³ This was the first of a projected three-part lecture that was to include "Cosmology" (*uchū ron*) and "Theory of the Psychic" (*shinrei ron*). The Ontology lecture shows the influence of Enryō on Kiyozawa, and also points to the originality of Kiyozawa's early work, *Skeleton of a Philosophy of Religion* (*Shūkyō tetsugaku gaikotsu*).

Drawing on German philosopher Hermann Lotze (1817-1881), Kiyozawa's *Ontology* lecture is a philosophy of existence that introduces the concept of organic structure (*yūki renraku*) as an explanation of Pure Philosophy. All things, Kiyozawa argues, are one (*banbutsu ittai*). They are related in that they comprise a single organic structure in which they are in continuous flux (*hendō*). Philosophy, for Kiyozawa, is the study of the principle by which things change, or come into and out of existence. While science seeks to grasp the principles of change of things apprehended by experiment and observation, philosophy, Kiyozawa states, extends the inquiry to things beyond human observation and thought unknowable. In these ways, Kiyozawa incorporated many of

¹⁹³ Kiyozawa Manshi, *Jitsuzai ron*, in *KMZ* Vol. 1, 2-69.

Enryō's assumptions and perspectives. Kiyozawa's philosophy, like Enryō's, was not antithetical to science, but was superior to it in that it contained science. In this sense, philosophy was the superior science, a more complete and detailed picture of existence because it accounted for the mystery of human feeling and unreason – things that science excluded from its picture of reality. And, most importantly, Kiyozawa shared Enryō's scientific, transcendental perspective. The viewpoint of Kiyozawa's philosophy was not yet that of an enworlded individual. It was a cosmic perspective, drawing a map of existence by viewing it from above.

Again, like Murakami, the work that Kiyozawa produced during his association with Enryō became the basis for the works that won him his early fame. An ambitious member of Japan's intellectual elite, Kiyozawa hoped to become a professor at Tokyo University. In 1888, however, he accepted an offer to become the principal of *Jinjo*, Higashi Honganji's prestigious middle school in Kyoto. He also lectured at Takakura Seminary and Okazaki Gakkan. During this Kyoto period, Kiyozawa produced his first major work, *Skeleton of a Philosophy of Religion* (*Shūkyō tetsugaku gaikotsu*, published 1892).¹⁹⁴ This work develops the ontological concept of organic structure (called *yūki renraku* in the *Ontology* lecture, *yūki soshiki* in the *Skeleton*) as a foundation for philosophy-based religion. Each individual unit that comprises the organic structure of existence is finite, and their totality is infinite.

While philosophy, as argued in the *Ontology* lecture, was superior to and contained science in that it extended its inquiry beyond what is observable, in *Skeleton* Kiyozawa further argued that religion was superior to both. Philosophy investigates the infinite by use of reason, whereas religion seeks to believe the infinite through faith. The goal of religion is not to *understand* the infinite, but to *be* it. A soul, defined as a finite existent comprised of the unity of experience in consciousness, acts religiously when it takes the infinite as its object of perception. A finite soul does not merely believe or understand the infinite in religion, but *becomes* the infinite. This is only thinkable in the context of organic structure, in which the infinite is in fact the totality of all finite existents in continuous flux. Each existent, Kiyozawa argues, is in a continuous process of becoming. This understanding of change, interestingly, does not necessarily denote evolutionary progress. It also includes regression and extinction (changing from infinite to finite). Change, in other words, is not necessarily directional. A finite soul may become infinite through one of two routes: the path of self-power (discovering the potentially infinite within oneself) or other-power (discovering the actually infinite in external reality) in order to attain ultimate action (virtue) and ultimate knowledge (peace of mind).

Kiyozawa, from the very beginning, was concerned with the practice of Buddhism – how to *be* a Buddhist. As early as the *Skeleton*, we can see that the practice of Buddhism for Kiyozawa was an individual activity. In this way, he shared the antagonism toward the sect that both Enryō and Murakami displayed in their work. Yet, like Murakami in his earliest period, Kiyozawa did not yet write from the perspective of the individual. Like Enryō, the early Kiyozawa viewed the individual from above, using a transcendental perspective and taking a scientific approach to philosophy as a technical exposition of actual reality. Kiyozawa's shift from a transcendental to an individual

¹⁹⁴ Kiyozawa Manshi, *Shūkyō tetsugaku gaikotsu*, in *KMZ* Vol. 2, 2-100.

perspective, as with Murakami, came after the promulgation of the 1889 Constitution and the subsequent construction of national morality.

ii. The Inward Turn

Kiyozawa left Tokyo in 1888 to accept a prestigious offer from Higashi Honganji to head its middle school. That year, he married Kiyozawa Yasuko, was adopted as the family heir, and took the family name. By 1889, he had reached the pinnacle of professional accomplishment and material success. The Sunrise Newspaper (*Hinode shinbun*) named Kiyozawa one of the three most distinguished scholars in Kyoto.¹⁹⁵ This anecdote adds even greater profundity to the already profound events that followed immediately thereafter.

Following the promulgation of the 1889 Constitution, Kiyozawa became increasingly critical of the sect's obsequious attitude toward the state. He believed that the sect was concerned only with maintaining its institutional and economic infrastructure and was completely neglecting its spiritual mission. Kiyozawa renounced his opulent lifestyle in 1890 and began living as an ascetic monk. He shaved his head, wore kimono and *geta* instead of Western clothes, limited himself to a diet of pine needles and resin, saw little of his new family, and practiced mendicant begging around Kyoto. He spent most of this time visiting with other priests and reading the works of Shinran, the founder of the Higashi Honganji sect. The death of Kiyozawa's mother in 1891 intensified his ascetic practices, as well as his criticism of the sect. This episode dramatically illustrates the turn that Kiyozawa's thought took in the age of national morality. Concerned as he was with the practice of Buddhism as an individual experience, Kiyozawa began to live his philosophy. He began his intellectual life writing a theory of ontology in the technical language of systematic philosophy. Now, he began to *embody* it, experiencing the crisis of Buddhism in his own person. This is the foundation for the development of Kiyozawa's vitalism, the insistence that a philosophy be lived and embodied. While his *Skeleton* was being read in English translation at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893, Kiyozawa was living a beggar's life.

Kiyozawa thus shifted to the perspective of an enworlded individual in his own life, becoming a living example of religious subjectivity separate from the sect. His philosophy after this point became less a technical academic exercise and more of an outlet for his personal religious quest. This quest was given even greater gravitas by Kiyozawa's frank confrontation with death. In April 1894, the same month as the launch of Murakami's *Bukkyō shirin*, Kiyozawa was diagnosed with tuberculosis. Gravely ill, he was brought the following month to a sanatorium in Tarumi, Hyōgo prefecture, where he remained for a year. Upon arrival, Kiyozawa cryptically remarked that, "The Tokunaga who has lived until now is dead."¹⁹⁶ Later, in a journal from this period, Kiyozawa said that, "I have confessed to my wife all that is in my heart."¹⁹⁷ Scholars have called this period of existential crisis Kiyozawa's "*Ishimizu*" period, after the pen name *Ishimizu*

¹⁹⁵ Nishimura, *Kiyozawa Manshi Sensei*, 116-117.

¹⁹⁶ Nishimura, *Kiyozawa Manshi Sensei*, 142-145.

¹⁹⁷ Kiyozawa Manshi, *Hoyō zakki*, in *KMZ* Vol. 5 p. 80.

(Stones and Water) that Kiyozawa adopted at this time. Kiyozawa scholar Fujita Masakatsu has noted that Kiyozawa worked in this period as if he were writing his final testament.¹⁹⁸

The contrast of Kiyozawa with Enryō is instructive. Enryo had developed his philosophical system in response to his own illness-induced existential crisis. Kiyozawa had built his own technical philosophical work upon Enryō's antimodernist Buddhist evolutionary theory. Unlike Enryō, whose crisis *preceded* and precipitated his intellectual work, Kiyozawa experienced existential crisis *after* he had already developed his Buddhism as a philosophical system. His thought became the structure *through which* Kiyozawa understood his crisis. The result was a fundamental rethinking of Buddhist antimodernism. Like Murakami's historicism, Kiyozawa's philosophy narrowed in emphasis to emotion, feeling, and existential experience. The use of Buddhist antimodernism to describe or explain the evolutionary development of the cosmos was replaced by a pronounced emphasis upon subjective experience, feeling, and intuition. The *practice* of philosophy itself became existentialized, just like Murakami's practice of history.

This shift is discernible in Kiyozawa's journal from the *Ishimizu* period. As seen in chapter three, Kiyozawa had extended Enryō's Buddhist antimodernism into an ontology. The totality of existence is infinite, but comprised of finite entities that are in continuous flux. Philosophy – the study of *shinri* – seeks the principle whereby finite things change. Religion, furthermore, is the means by which a finite soul can become infinite through faith. This may be done either through the difficult, intellectual path of *jiriki* (self-power), or through the easy, emotional path of *tariki* (other-power). In his *Recuperation Miscellany* (*Hoyō zakki*), Kiyozawa began to explore death – not an abstract concept of death, but the reality of *his own death* experienced in existential crisis – through this philosophical system as early as September 1894. Death, he wrote, was the mysterious and infinite, life is the finite and knowable.¹⁹⁹ “Life is motion and change (*ui tenpen*), death is stillness and eternal (*mui fuhen*). Therefore these dual aspects of life and death are the changes of all phenomena. This is called Nirvana. Therefore, I say life and death is Nirvana.”²⁰⁰ And elsewhere, “Life is death, death is life, the non-differentiation of life and death resides in the wonderland of Nirvana.”²⁰¹

In 1895, Kiyozawa wrote two major works in which he reexamined his Buddhist philosophy from the perspective of existential crisis: *Record of Sickbed Confessions* (*Zaishō zange roku*) and *Outline of a Skeleton of a Philosophy of Other-Power* (*Tarikimon tetsugaku gaikotsu shikō*).²⁰² Both works remained unpublished until 1913, ten years after Kiyozawa's death, and retained their original draft form. In these works, Kiyozawa confronted death through an exploration of the fundamental teaching of True Pure Land Buddhism: the Eighteenth Vow of the *bodhisattva* Amida. This teaching

¹⁹⁸ Fujita Masakatsu, “*Kaisetsu*,” in *Gendaigo yaku: Zaishō zange roku*, ed. Fujita Masakatsu (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 2007), 113-114.

¹⁹⁹ Kiyozawa Manshi, *Hoyō zakki*, in *KMZ* Vol. 5, p. 39.

²⁰⁰ Kiyozawa Manshi, *Hoyō zakki*, 38.

²⁰¹ Kiyozawa Manshi, *Hoyō zakki*, 40.

²⁰² Kiyozawa Manshi, *Zaishō zange roku*, in *KMZ* Vol. 4, 358-391; *Tarikimon tetsugaku gaikotsu shikō*, in *KMZ* Vol. 4, 392-469.

derives from the Infinite Life Sutra (Sanskrit *Sukhāvataṅgavaiśvānara Sūtra*, Japanese *muryōju kyō*), one of the foundational texts of True Pure Land Buddhism. In the Infinite Life Sutra, the Buddha recounts the story of Amida, a *bodhisattva* who, having achieved rebirth in the Pure Land, made Forty-Eight vows to save all sentient beings. The Eighteenth, or Primal Vow, states that Amida will save anyone who, sincerely trusting in Amida, calls his name (a practice called *nenbutsu*). In Kiyozawa's two philosophical explorations of the True Pure Land doctrine, he emphasizes the emotion-based easy path of other-power (*tariki*) – the complete reliance on Amida for salvation – over the intellect-based difficult path of self-power (*jiriki*).

Record consists of twenty-three entries, composed in January 1895. In these entries, Kiyozawa explores the fundamental principles of True Pure Land through a reading of sect founder Shinran's 1224 masterwork, *The True Teaching, Practice, and Realization of the Pure Land* (*Kenjōdo shinjitsu kyōgyōshō monrui*, abbreviated *Kyōgyō shinshō*). *Record* explores the principles of True Pure Land by meditating on the main themes of Shinran's text: the teachings (*kyō*) of the Infinite Life Sutra, the practice (*gyō*) of the *nenbutsu*, total faith (*shin*) in other-power, and the realization (*shō*) of enlightenment. *Record* develops the idea that the easy path of other-power (*tariki*) is the true path of Amida. The Infinite Life Sutra is unique among the many Buddhist sutras, in that it reveals the divine and unknowable powers of Amida. Only complete faith in and reliance upon Amida, not self-power (*jiriki*), is the path to salvation. This other-power is manifested in the practice of *nenbutsu*. For Kiyozawa, the *nenbutsu* is not an exercise of self-power, in that it is not the *cause* of salvation. Rather, it is an expression of gratitude, recognizing the obligation (*hōon*) to Amida. The true feeling of total faith (*shinjin*, or heart of faith) in Amida that gives the *nenbutsu* its power is itself a gift from Amida. This consists of Three Faiths (*sanshin*): true sincerity (*shishin*), which is the initiative of the practitioner; true belief (*shingyō*, which is bestowed by Amida); and true desire for rebirth in the Pure Land (*yokushō*). In short, only other-power makes this possible, in that the primary cause of one's rebirth (*ōjō*) is Amida.

This meditation on Shinran's masterwork served as a sketch for the *Outline of a Skeleton of a Philosophy of Other-Power*, which Kiyozawa wrote immediately after *Record of Sickbed Confessions*, from February to March 1895. The two works are identical in philosophical content, theme, and are even parallel in structure. The forty-five entries of *Outline* mirror the structure of *Record*, in some cases borrowing the same entry titles. But unlike *Record*, the *Outline* was written as a sequel to Kiyozawa's previous work, *Skeleton of a Philosophy of Religion*. It translates the confrontation with death that Kiyozawa explored in *Record* into the technical philosophical language of religious philosophy (*shūkyō tetsugaku*) that Kiyozawa developed in *Skeleton*.

As discussed earlier, the main theme of *Skeleton* was the relationship of the finite to the infinite. In *Skeleton*, Kiyozawa argued that the finite and infinite are one, in that the infinite is the totality of finite existents in a continuous state of flux, coming into or going out of existence. He further argued that through religion, a finite existent can become infinite by taking the infinite as its object of perception. This argument is reproduced in *Outline*, but with qualification. In *Outline*, Kiyozawa points out a contradiction of the finite-infinite relationship. The infinite is the undifferentiated totality of *all existents*, and in this sense all things are one. However, a single existent is an individual, differentiated entity. In this sense, the infinite does contain differentiation and divisions. The disclosure

of this contradiction points out the changed perspective from which Kiyozawa wrote the *Outline. Skeleton* was written from the perspective of the infinite: the omniscient point of view of the scientist. *Outline* re-examined the religious philosophy of *Skeleton* from the point of view of the single existent, an enworlded individual confronting mortality. From this new perspective, Kiyozawa reproduced the other-power argument of *Record* in technical philosophical language, with explicit reference to Buddhism.

The works of Murakami and Kiyozawa, in this mid-1890s period following the debate on the collision of religion and education, share a new concern with the inner world of the individual and its affective connection to the mysterious power of the infinite. This marked a shift away from the omniscient, scientific perspective of the earlier period. As I argued in chapter two, Enryō and his *junsei tetsugaku* were born from existential crisis. However, this crisis led Enryō to infuse the unknowable, the emotional, and the intuitive into the scientific perspective of Tokyo University. His perspective emphasized the compatibility of reason and emotion. His philosophical worldview embraced both the knowable and the unknowable as equally real. Kiyozawa and Murakami, drawn into Enryō's orbit, also incorporated the unknowable and the emotional into their worldview, while writing from the omniscient, scientific perspective of the state.

iii. The Shirakawa Reform Society

As discussed in the section on Murakami above, Kiyozawa organized the Shirakawa Faction – a group dedicated to the reform of Higashi Honganji – in 1896. Kiyozawa's reformism stemmed from his new conviction that the sect had abandoned its spiritual mission, and that the spiritual quest must be taken up in lived experience. Kiyozawa was motivated to organize a reform group after a failed attempt to reform the educational policies at *Jinjo*, Higashi Honganji's prestigious middle school where Kiyozawa was principal in 1888. The city of Kyoto had asked Higashi Honganji to take over a failing municipal middle school. The sect amalgamated this school with *Jinjo*. The schools separated again in 1893, and the sect tapped educator Sawayanagi Masatarō (the future president of Kyoto University and central villain in the infamous 1913 Kyoto Imperial University Incident, or *kyōdai jiken*) to reform the educational policies *Jinjo*. Sawayanagi collaborated with Kiyozawa, and together they tried to push through educational reforms that reflected Kiyozawa's new conviction that the spiritual mission must be lived. Somewhat comically, the students went on strike to protest Kiyozawa's program of religious austerity and practice. Sect official Akumi Kaien killed the reforms and fired Sawayanagi.

Having recovered enough strength to return to Kyoto, Kiyozawa formed the Shirakawa Faction, named for the Kyoto neighborhood in which it was based. Many of Higashi Honganji's intellectual elite, including Murakami and Nanjō Bunyū, were among its members. Akumi resigned from his sect post and led an opposition to the Shirakawa, calling Kiyozawa a heretic and a socialist. Kiyozawa and five other Shirakawa leaders were expelled from the sect in 1897, despite assistance from Akumi's successor at Higashi Honganji, Ishikawa Shundai. Murakami, though not expelled, was stripped of his duties as a reprimand.

In the Shirakawa Faction's newsletter, *Kyōkai jigen*, Kiyozawa criticized the sect from the perspective of his philosophy. In an 1898 piece titled "Buddhists, Why Do You Lack Self-Esteem?" (*Bukkyōsha nanzo jichō sezaruka*), Kiyozawa wrote, "Long ago, there was a Buddhist monk who would not bow to the king. And since he did not bow to the king, he did not bow to anyone below the king, either. What about Buddhist monks today?"²⁰³ Kiyozawa proceeded to lambaste the Buddhist clergy for their embarrassingly obsequious attitude toward secular authority, their utter lack of learning and intelligence, and their apparent inability to do anything other than administer death rites and officiate funerals. No one, he railed, any longer took seriously the religious path of Buddhism. In the same article, Kiyozawa delivered the following reprimand:

A Buddhist must live simultaneously in two worlds . . . the worlds of the mundane (*seken*) and the supra-mundane (*shussekan*), the worlds of supreme truth (*shintai*) and common sense (*zokutai*), the Absolute (*zettai*) and the Relative (*sōtai*), the Infinite (*mugen*) and the Finite (*yūgen*) . . . A Buddhist transcends the mundane world in his heart (*kokoro*), from which he can see the equality of all things. At the same time, his body remains in the depths of the mundane world, where he uses his ability to see the equality of all things for the salvation of others (*saisei rishō*).²⁰⁴

In this piece, written at the time Kiyozawa's formal separation from sect authority, we see the beginnings of Kiyozawa's mature thought. His intellectual break with the sect was complete, and the remainder of his work would be dedicated to the development of the individual as a religious authority. Kiyozawa's excoriation of the Buddhist priesthood recalls that of Inoue Enryō just a decade earlier. But Enryō would not have understood Kiyozawa's instruction to live in "two worlds." Enryō, as seen in chapter two, envisioned Buddhism and modern Japan as one world. He wanted to prevent the exclusion of Buddhism from the state's regime of truth, the Meiji Enlightenment. Enryō saw the state replacing the sect as the worldly institution that mediated between the cosmic laws of Buddhist truth and the everyday lives of those living under its rule. But his vision was obsolete after 1889, when the Meiji Constitution permanently separated Buddhism from politics. And, like Enryō, Kiyozawa believed that Higashi Honganji had forgotten its religious mission. Thus, Kiyozawa argued that a Buddhist had to live in two worlds. With no institutional link between Buddhist law and the individual, the individual had to seek the higher Buddhist truth directly, in one's interior world, while remaining in the non-Buddhist world of modern Japan.

iv. Spiritism and the *Kōkōdō*

Kiyozawa's thought assumed its mature form in the 1898-1903 period. Following the failure of his reform movement and his expulsion from the sect, Kiyozawa retired in 1898 to Saihōji, the family temple of his wife, in Ōhama, Aichi prefecture. Still suffering

²⁰³ Kiyozawa Manshi, "*Bukkyōsha nanzo jichō sezaruka*," in *KMZ* Vol. 4, 337-345.

²⁰⁴ Kiyozawa Manshi, "*Bukkyōsha nanzo jichō sezaruka*."

from his illness, Kiyozawa was attended by his wife and his father, who moved there to care for him. Kiyozawa attempted to be of use there, but ultimately felt himself an unwanted burden. Although the sect reinstated Kiyozawa as a priest, the temple was not in need of another minister. And besides, the temple's congregation viewed Kiyozawa as either a heretic or an incomprehensible pedant. As he did during his convalescence in Tarumi, Kiyozawa adopted a pen-name during this time: *Rōsen*, or "December Fan," a useless thing. During this *Rōsen* period, Kiyozawa continued to read the works of Shinran. He also began reading the Agama sutras (the earliest collected Buddhist scriptures) and the works of the ancient Roman philosopher of stoicism, Epictetus (55-135). Kiyozawa's mature thought emerged by confronting the existential problems of death and existence through these works.

Kiyozawa's *December Fan Diary* (*Rōsen ki*), written in 1898 and 1899, manifests his mature thought.²⁰⁵ The first point to note about the *Diary* is its form. It is a manual for personal religious practice. His previous works had been existentialist meditations on death and existence, but had the form of technical philosophy. Like the *Enchiridion* (the "Manual" of stoic endurance) of Epictetus, which the *Diary* quotes at length in English, the *Diary* is a collection of epigrammatic lessons. Its intended reader is a student, one who wishes to learn the *practice*, not the philosophy, of the religious peace of mind that derives from other-power. The experience of reading these epigrams engages a reader's sense of interiority. That is, the epigrams address the problems of anxiety that arise from the existential awareness of one's own death, and offer advice on how to alleviate this suffering. The foundational assumption of these epigrams, in both form and content, is that the tools of spiritual practice are completely within the reader. Buddhism is a subjective experience of the Infinite, achieved through renunciation of responsibility for all that is beyond one's control and trusting in the Other-Power of Amida. In *December Fan Diary*, Kiyozawa's existential ontology is realized as spiritual practice for individuals.

December Fan Diary presents a clear exposition of Kiyozawa's vitalistic view of life as flow or a flux. He described the relationship of the finite to the individual as a "flowing out" (*ryūten*) and "striving back" (*genmetsu*). The finite flows out from the infinite, its original source, and must then strive back to the nothingness of existence, losing itself by re-merging with the infinite. Kiyozawa writes,

After tens of millions of years of roaming in the dark, since leaving the lofty castle of truth at the instigation of demons, we human beings have finally settled down into human societies. Now we begin to long for an exquisite world, but some doubts still mingle with our longing and admiration for it. Gradually as the result of deep meditation we are captured by the thought of returning to our old home, the source of these varied phenomena. Now the eternal tide has turned, and striving back will follow. This is another way of saying that evolution has reached a certain stage in the appearance of man, and physical evolution is about to become spiritual evolution. This tide of flowing out and striving back is never of short duration, and this is enough to suggest that striving back is an age-long process. But there is no need to be worried over the length of time it may take.

²⁰⁵ Kiyozawa Manshi, *Rōsen ki*, in *KMZ* Vol. 7, 343-465.

The important problem is to know the real factors that bring about the striving back to the infinite, and how to facilitate this return. Do we possess the heavenly wisdom, and the ability to use it? Have we the elements of striving back within us? Other questions also arise. What is the aim of life? What is the entity of our mind? We cannot really say that we have succeeded in observing the flowing out and striving back. We are in the midst of life.²⁰⁶

In the few years left to him, Kiyozawa developed this personal spirituality as his great intellectual legacy. He returned to active duty in Higashi Honganji in 1899, when he was asked to become the president first president of Shinshū University (formerly Takakura Seminary, later Ōtani University). He accepted the position with the condition that the sect not interfere with his work. For this purpose, he secured a budget of three years, and insisted that the university move from Kyoto to Tokyo to escape sect influence. In 1900, Kiyozawa and his family moved into the *Kōkōdō*, or “Vast Cavern” dormitory, in the Morikawa neighborhood of Hongō, in the vicinity of both Tokyo Imperial University and Enryō’s Philosophy Hall, where Shinshū University was being built. At *Kōkōdō*, Kiyozawa met the students who, as we shall see, became the legatees of his thought: Akegarasu Haya (1877-1954), Sasaki Gesshō (1875-1926), and Kanae Tada (1875-1937). Though his intellectual legacy would be secure, his efforts as a sect reformer did not come to fruition. In April 1902, less than one year after the opening of the university in October 1901, Atsumi Kaien resumed the headship of the sect. Atsumi, the opponent of Kiyozawa’s Shirakawa reform group, moved the university back to Kyoto and undermined Kiyozawa’s educational policies. Kiyozawa resigned in November 1902.

This end to Kiyozawa’s professional life was accompanied by major personal crises. His son, Shin’ichi, died of sarcoma on June 5, 1902, and his wife Yasuko died of tuberculosis on October 6. Kiyozawa returned to Saihōji in November. His third son, Kōsai, died in April of 1903. Kiyozawa himself died on June 6, 1903, at the age of 39. A week before his death, Kiyozawa composed his swan song, *My Faith (Waga shinnen)*.²⁰⁷ This work of a few pages culminates Kiyozawa’s philosophical work, combining his technical philosophy and personal spirituality into his final testament. There is no believer and believed, writes Kiyozawa. There is only trust in *shinnyo* (Sanskrit Tathagata), the fundamental unity of existence. Faith in this unity relieves the anxiety of death, for it grants the insight that life and death are one. The way to this faith is beyond the intellect, which is finite self-power. Only through exhaustion of reason does one learn to trust, for one cannot help but trust. With this relinquishing of control, one gains the power of the infinite. One can live with infinite peace in this world, for faith in *shinnyo* liberates one from the burden of ethics. What is good and what is evil are the stuff of ethics, the domain of the intellect. Total trust in the infinite grants infinite power, for one has faith that the infinite will provide for everything, and ethical decisions are not the responsibility of the individual.

²⁰⁶ Kiyozawa Manshi, *Rōsen ki*. 373-374.

²⁰⁷ Kiyozawa Manshi, *Waga shinnen*, in *KMZ Vol. 6*, 227-234; English translation in *December Fan: The Buddhist Essays of Manshi Kiyozawa*, trans. Nobuo Haneda (Kyoto: Higashi Honganji Publication Department, 1984), 53-60.

Kiyozawa's personal spirituality lived on beyond his death. During his last years, he was living in the *Kōkōdō* dormitory of Shinshū University, where he served as a kind of tutor and mentor to its student residents. It was here that he developed what he called *seishinshugi*, or "Spiritism," the culmination of his personal religiosity in the form of an instructional teaching. *Seishinshugi* was the crystallization of Kiyozawa's antimodernism. On the one hand, it posited the individual as a religious authority, who possesses the tools for religious enlightenment in his or her interior life. But it was not a withdrawal from or renunciation of the world. It was a strategy for living in "two worlds," as Kiyozawa wrote in 1898. Kiyozawa writes,

It is a mistake to believe that *seishinshugi* necessarily rejects all external things. But it asserts that they need not worry or annoy us even when we are compelled to mix with them and that they can be controlled according to the attitude of our mind. . . . As *seishinshugi* makes much of our own mind, it sometimes seems as though it were inclined to defend only our own good and refuse to take notice of others. Genuine *seishinshugi*, however, neither aims at our own profit nor disregards others. . . . Thus *seishinshugi* its own and others' happiness by being in contact with outside men and things. It is eager to do this. *Seishinshugi* is not a policy of retirement, nor a principle of retrogression. It encourages peaceful cooperation to enhance the prosperity of the community and the state.²⁰⁸

In short, *seishinshugi* was an antimodernist strategy for re-enchanting the world, not denying it. This re-enchantment is based on giving priority to the subjective experience of the external world. As Kiyozawa argues,

Our interpretation of life should start from a complete acceptance of this present life. In other words, we must find our contentment in our own daily living. And in no other way but in *seishinshugi* can this end be attained. But our first concern is how *seishinshugi* can solve this pressing question. The strength of *seishinshugi* is based on our firm belief that Truth pervades every nook and corner of the world. If the omnipresence of truth is thus accepted, we are compelled to admit that Truth is present both in our subjective and objective worlds. And, because Truth in the objective world can only be known through Truth in our subjective world, it is evident that our consciousness of subjective truth must precede our awareness of objective truth.²⁰⁹

Seishinshugi thus posits the subjective experience of the individual as the basic unit of religious authority.

Seishinshugi advocates the discovery of the sacred in one's everyday world as it exists. This is, on one hand, an acceptance of the ideological order of the Meiji

²⁰⁸ Kiyozawa Manshi, "Seishinshugi," in *KMZ* Vol. 6, 2-5; English translation in *Selected Essays of Manshi Kiyozawa*, trans. Kunji Tajima and Floyd Shacklock (Kyoto: Bukkyō Bunka Society, 1936), 3-6.

²⁰⁹ Kiyozawa Manshi, "Seishinshugi to busshitsuteki bunmei" in *KMZ* Vol. 6, 17-21; Tajima and Shacklock, *Selected Essays of Manshi Kiyozawa*, 6-9.

Enlightenment. Like Murakami's historicism, Kiyozawa's vitalism does not reject the capitalism or imperialism of Japan. But, also like Murakami, Kiyozawa does challenge the ideology of the Meiji Enlightenment. In the age of national morality, Kiyozawa claimed that *seishinshugi* was beyond ethics. Good and evil, right and wrong, he says, are concepts that cause the ego to feel anguish and worry. They trouble only those who have not overcome their ego and embraced the working of *shinnyo* (Tathāgata). He writes,

We must arrive at a great spiritual peace that goes beyond ethics and enables us to be calm in any given situation. We must arrive at a great spiritual peace that will enable us to live calmly in the present moment. Some people are so overwhelmed by mental anguish that they are driven to suicide. This is because . . . their lives are centered around limited ethical principles. They are ignorant of the inconceivable, wondrous workings of Tathāgata. . . To know the working of Tathāgata is to know that no matter what we do, no self exists. In everything there is only the working of Tathāgata. Because there is no self, there is no self-responsibility. . . We must leave everything in the hands of Tathāgata and simply follow as Tathāgata guides us. That alone is the basis of the great peace of mind that surpasses all ethical principles. Shinran expressed his own conviction by saying: "My mind is firmly established in the Buddha-land of the deepest universal aspiration. My heart is embraced in the inconceivable Dharma-ocean." (*Kyōgyōshinshō*, *Gojo*). It is no wonder that he also said: "I, Shinran, am totally ignorant of good and evil." (*Tannishō*, *Kechimon*).²¹⁰

There is little concrete reference to the events and problems of Meiji Japan in the works of Kiyozawa Manshi. But read in the context of late Meiji, the ideological age of national morality, his thought is an antimodernist critique of the ideological order. It lives in the world of Meiji Japan, but recognizes an inner authority that transcends state-sponsored ethics.

Like most of Kiyozawa's late-period works, his *seishinshugi* philosophy was written in a series of short epigrams. As with the *December Fan Diary*, the epigram form is as significant as the content for Kiyozawa's thought. Its voice is personal, its approach is pragmatic, and its form is episodic. It does not demand that the reader study and master a grand philosophical system. Rather, each vignette assumes that the reader contains within him or herself the capacity for religious experience. Each short entry, in a sense, makes the same point over and over again: that all things are one, that the capacity to recognize this truth is a gift of Amida's other-power, and that once realized the individual can live in accordance with the law of Buddhism by experiencing his or her phenomenological world through the lens of this higher understanding. The epigrams address the reader, they dialog with the reader, and are intended as a manual for living.

The epigram form of *seishinshugi* reflects the form of the *Tannishō* (*Lamentations on Divergences*), a collection of entries ostensibly compiled near the end of Shinran's life by Shinran's disciple Yuien for the purpose of clarifying Shinran's teachings for posterity. The *Tannishō* was not, in other words, one of the tomes of technical Buddhist

²¹⁰ Kiyozawa Manshi, "Rinri ijō no an'I," in *KMZ* Vol. 6, 174-179; English translation in *December Fan: The Buddhist Essays of Manshi Kiyozawa*, trans. Nobuo Haneda, 37-44.

theory that Shinran produced. It is rather a series of transcribed quotations from Shinran himself. The *Tannishō* was essentially an obscure work, unread for many centuries until rescued from oblivion by Kiyozawa. Many scholars have noted that the *Tannishō* has, since its rediscovery by Kiyozawa, become a kind of modern Bible in Japan, a masterpiece of religious thought that speaks seemingly directly to the modern reader. In this sense, Kiyozawa did not so much rediscover as invent the *Tannishō*. That is, he used the *Tannishō* as an instrument for the development of an interiorized, personal spirituality, a kind of text that requires a modern reader. More importantly, Kiyozawa invented Shinran himself. For the *Tannishō* is not a philosophical tract, but a series of entries in which Shinran appears as a living, breathing person. For Kiyozawa, the personality of Shinran itself became a medium for imagining the world of spiritual interiority.

The *seishinshugi* epigrams were published in a journal called *The Spirit World* (*Seishinkai*). This journal was the intellectual organ of the *Kōkōdō*, who were the original pupils of Kiyozawa's *seishinshugi*. Kiyozawa's pupils Akegarasu, Tada, and Sasaki carried on the publication of *The Spirit World* for many years after Kiyozawa's death, and continued the dissemination of Kiyozawa's thought and the study of the *Tannishō* for the rest of their lives. *The Spirit World* was, mainly, an outlet for Kiyozawa's writings on *seishinshugi*, but it expanded to include contributions by *Kōkōdō* members on Kiyozawa's thought and on the reading of the *Tannishō*. It was in the pages of *The Spirit World* that Kiyozawa's invented Shinran reached the Japanese public. Even more astonishing than Kiyozawa's invention of Shinran as the embodiment of inner spiritual life was Kiyozawa's posthumous invention as a modern-day prophet. After Kiyozawa's death, *The Spirit World* began to carry pieces on Kiyozawa that reflected his pupils' perception of him as a charismatic religious authority, another living embodiment of inner spirituality second only to Shinran.²¹¹

4. Conclusion: The Discovery of Japanese Medievalism

This chapter has traced the parallel development of historicism and vitalism as twin trends of Buddhist antimodernism in the age of national morality. Though they were separate intellectual trends, they developed according to a common timeline: an association with Inoue Enryō in the late 1880s; then a shift from Enryō's cosmocentric perspective to an existentialist perspective beginning with the Meiji Constitution's 1889 promulgation; then becoming especially pronounced after Inoue Tetsujirō's "Collision" critique in 1893; breaking with sect authority after the Shirakawa Reform Movement of 1896; and finally developing into critiques of late Meiji ideology in two separate journals starting in 1900.

The historicist and vitalist threads of antimodernism shared some basic features. They both took the existentialist core of Enryō's antimodernism and, following the Constitution, separated Buddhism from both the temple (which Enryō had already done) and state (Enryō tried to re-unite Buddhism with the state). Without these two institutions to act as the worldly embodiment of Buddhism, one that could align quotidian life with

²¹¹ Fukushima Eiju, *Shisōshi to shite no "seishinshugi"* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 2003).

Buddhist reality, the historicists and vitalists crafted an individual-based Buddhism that could bypass both institutions and access Buddhist reality directly. They thus immanentized Enryō's cosmocentric Buddhism in the world of culture.

From their immanent, first-person perspectives, the historicists and vitalists produced complementary bodies of work. The historicists pointed their gaze outward onto the world, abandoning the study of transcendental principles and looking instead for historically bounded truths. The vitalists looked inward, exploring the inner labyrinths of existential crisis as the foundation for Buddhism. Together, the historicists and vitalists produced a Buddhism for the individual. It was an inward experience of faith for individuals embedded in a cultural network of Buddhist symbols.

In terms of content, the vitalist and historicist strains of antimodernist Buddhism converged in their focused attention on medieval Japan. For the historicists, medieval Japan saw the flowering of Buddhism as the authentic culture of Japan. For the vitalists, the imagination of the personality of medieval Buddhist monk Shinran, the founder of the True Pure Land sect, was the vehicle for exploring existential experience. Together, the vitalist and historicist modes of antimodernist Buddhism constituted the twin pillars for Japanese Medievalism. Part empirical history and part romantic fantasy, Japanese Medievalism evoked a bygone Japanese world in which Buddhism was still real and true, not as a cosmic principle but as a cultural principle. In this way, intellectuals on the antimodernist quest to recover the truth and reality of Buddhism in post-1889 Japan looked an imaginary past world of spiritual wholeness, where Enryō had looked to the real world in the present.

Japanese Medievalism was the form of antimodernism in the post-Constitution ideological order. Now the official reality, the Meiji Enlightenment could not tolerate any alternative vision of reality. In this way, the immanentized, cultural antimodernism of Japanese Medievalism was permanently at odds with the Meiji Enlightenment. As argued above, it was used as a tool for piercing through the illusion of national morality to reveal true reality. It was beyond the ethical. And yet, the final goal of Japanese Medievalism was to eventually win reconciliation with state power. Although at odds with the Meiji Enlightenment, Japanese Medievalism presumed the very premises against which it rebelled: individual alienation and the Japanese nation. It was an alternative vision of Japan, but a vision of Japan nonetheless.

Chapter Four. Japanese Medievalism in Taishō and Early Shōwa Thought

The antimodernist thought of Buddhist intellectuals changed after the promulgation of the Meiji Constitution in 1889. Prior to 1889, the ideology of the Meiji Enlightenment underwent several transformations: from theocratic ideologies of ritual and doctrine to a scientific ideology of social evolution, finally culminating in the supreme law of the Meiji Constitution. After the Constitution, the ideology of the Meiji Enlightenment assumed the form of a code of national morality. The antimodernist thought of Buddhist intellectuals changed in response to this new ideological form. Whereas Buddhist intellectuals had previously conceived of Buddhism as a metaphysical structure that should provide a model for state ideology, post-1889 Buddhist intellectuals viewed Buddhism as a religious experience that was beyond morality. The individual's experience of the phenomenological world became the site at which one could bypass the ideological structure of national morality and connect directly with the totality of undifferentiated existence. For historicists like Murakami Senshō and Sakaino Kōyō, this form of Buddhism was the ground for a frontal critique of national morality. For vitalists like Kiyozawa Manshi, Buddhism was an ascetic practice of cultivating the inner world. Taken together, these two strands of antimodernism were the foundations for what I call Japanese Medievalism: the idea that Japanese culture is a manifestation of medieval Japanese Buddhism, and that one must live in accordance with these values through self-cultivation.

In a sense, the development of Japanese Medievalism in the early twentieth century marked the climax of a narrative that began with the Separation of *kami* from Buddha (*shinbutsu bunri*) Edicts of 1868. A handful of Buddhist intellectuals who were among Japan's intellectual elite experienced a profound spiritual crisis as a result of the exclusion of Buddhism from the state's ideological definition of the real. They were Japan's first antimodernists, striving to build a modern Japan while simultaneously trying to preserve the meaningfulness of Buddhism. The development of Japanese Medievalism was the result of their antimodernist quest, which was born in spiritual crisis.

But in another sense, the development of Japanese Medievalism in the early twentieth century was only the beginning of an even bigger story. The Meiji Buddhists who developed this antimodernist interpretation of Buddhism were what Jackson Lears has called "point men" in the intellectual history of modern Japan, intellectuals who "experienced and articulated moral and psychic dilemmas which later became common in wider society."²¹² Because of Buddhism's unique predicament in the Meiji Enlightenment, Buddhist intellectuals among Japan's modernizing elite perceived and responded to the problem of spiritual nihilism early on in Japan's modern experience. In the years following the Russo-Japanese War, the problem of spiritual nihilism in modernity began to preoccupy intellectuals in the wider world beyond Buddhism. For many, the Japanese Medievalism of the early twentieth century provided the cultural tools needed to deal with the antimodernist crisis of modernity in Japan. Japanese history and philosophy, as imagined by the Meiji Buddhists, became absorbed into mainstream intellectual life, and provided the basis for modern Japanese thought.

²¹² Lears, *No Place of Grace*, xvii.

1. After Enlightenment: The Taishō Crisis.

The Emperor Meiji died on July 30, 1912. The succession of his son, the Emperor Taishō (1879-1926), inaugurated the Taishō era (1912-1926). The Meiji-Taishō periodization is highly artificial, in that it does not mark a real political or economic rupture in the way that the Tokugawa-Meiji transition did. But it did mark a significant turning point as an event in the history of the Meiji Enlightenment. The death of the Emperor Meiji touched a nerve throughout Japan. It called forth widespread feelings that an old, familiar world was disappearing, and that the Japanese were left orphaned in a strange new world. The heroic mission of the Meiji Enlightenment was achieved, its leader had departed, and the Japanese were on their own in an unfamiliar new world.²¹³

No one expressed this sentiment more poignantly than novelist Natsume Sōseki in his 1914 novel *Kokoro*. Speaking of the meaning of the death of the Emperor Meiji, the character Sensei declares in the novel, “I felt as though the spirit of the Meiji era had begun with the Emperor and had ended with him. I was overcome with the feeling that I and the others, who had been brought up in that era, were now left behind to live as anachronisms.”²¹⁴ Without the heroic leadership of the glorious Meiji era, characters like Sensei found themselves stranded, unable to return to the old familiar bonds of family, community, or religion. “Loneliness,” declared Sensei, “is the price we have to pay for being born in this modern age, so full of freedom, independence, and our own egotistical selves.”²¹⁵ Having crossed the threshold of modernity, the Japanese found themselves living in the modern condition: as individuals, alienated from community, nature, and one another.

The death of the Emperor Meiji served to crystallize, not create, those feelings of alienation and yearning. They had been growing since at least 1905. The Russo-Japanese War marked the fulfillment of the Meiji Enlightenment’s mission. The military victory of Japan over a Western power, the industrialization of the Japanese economy, the high level of national consciousness, and – most importantly – the reversal of the unequal treaties had all been achieved. The great mission of the Meiji Enlightenment for which everything had been sacrificed was a success. Japan had crossed the threshold into modernity. Its goals met, the high ideals of the Meiji Enlightenment began to lose their power to emotionally inspire the Japanese to serve the nation.

The incentives to work hard for the sake of the nation weren’t just diminishing in terms of ideals – they were declining in a real sense. The Meiji Enlightenment created a

²¹³ For an overview of the intellectual themes of Taishō, see H.D. Harootunian, “Introduction: A Sense of an Ending and the Problem of Taishō,” in Harry Harootunian and Bernard Silberman, eds. *Japan in Crisis: Essays in Taishō Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 3-28; Oka Yoshitake, “Generational Conflict after the Russo-Japanese War,” in *Conflict in Modern Japanese History*, ed. Tetsuo Najita and J. Victor Koschmann (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 197-225; J. Thomas Rimer, ed. *Culture and Identity: Japanese Intellectuals During the Interwar Years* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity*.

²¹⁴ Natsume Sōseki, *Kokoro*, trans. Edwin McClellan (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 1999), 245.

²¹⁵ Natsume Sōseki, *Kokoro*, 30.

prosperous middle class by creating a new world of educational and professional opportunities, and by unleashing a new socially mobile work force to fill them. The phrase *risshin shusse* (“Rising in the World”), popularized in Meiji-era “success” literature, encapsulated the new ethic of self-reliance and meritocratic success for those who aspired to the wealth and prestige of lending a hand in Japan’s national mission.²¹⁶ By 1905, however, the bonanza decades of the Meiji Enlightenment were over. Degree-holders were rising in number, positions were decreasing, and the routes to success were becoming more bureaucratic than meritocratic. The growing ranks of educated youth without career prospects were increasingly disillusioned with the Meiji Enlightenment’s noble rhetoric.

Of course, times were even harder for the laboring masses who did the heavy lifting of Japanese modernization. In 1905, they began protesting their precarious situation in a string of violent uprisings in the city and the countryside. These started right after the Russo-Japanese War in September 1905 with the Hibiya Riot (*Hibiya yakiuchi jiken*). The two-day destruction of buildings and police boxes by some 30,000 rioters in the center of Tokyo was provoked by the terms of the Treaty of Portsmouth, which denied Japan a war indemnity. The Hibiya Riot was the first in a decade of violent mass uprisings over political and economic outrages, reaching a climax in the 1918 Rice Riots (*kome sōdō*), a violent outburst involving two million people in rural and urban Japan. It was sparked by tenant farmers who, already living precariously, were lashing out against the increase in rice prices caused by war inflation. Both in the city and in the countryside, popular dissatisfaction among the laboring classes in Japan was coming out in violent conflict.

The government recognized early on that the ideological power of the Meiji Enlightenment was weakening after the Russo-Japanese War. It tried, in vain, to sustain the Meiji Enlightenment’s ideological power by keeping the Japanese in a continuous state of mobilization even after the Meiji mission was effectively over. The government issued in 1908 the Boshin Rescript (*Boshin chokusho*), a kind of moral injunction to the Japanese people, written in the voice of the Emperor Meiji, intended to rekindle enthusiasm for a national mission. Even the name – Boshin Rescript – was intended to evoke the romantic nationalism of the Boshin War. The Rescript called upon the Japanese to be frugal, to be obedient, to be sincere, to toil arduously, and to avoid the temptations of hedonism, individualism, and socialism.²¹⁷ Middle-class individualism and mass protests against economic hardships were ideologically coded by the state as moral crimes, the privileging of private desires over public service, branded detrimental to the *kokutai*.

A term that took on a new significance in post-1905 ideology was *bushidō*, or the samurai “Way of the Warrior.”²¹⁸ A mania for *bushidō* erupted following the Russo-

²¹⁶ Earl H. Kinmonth, *The Self-Made Man in Meiji Japanese Thought: From Samurai to Salaryman* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981).

²¹⁷ See Harootunian, “Introduction: A Sense of an Ending and the Problem of Taishō.”

²¹⁸ Oleg Benesch, “Bushidō: The Creation of a Martial Ethic in Late Meiji Japan,” (PhD diss., University of British Columbia, 2011); G. Cameron Hurst, “Death, Honor, and Loyalty: The Bushidō Ideal,” *Philosophy East and West* Vol. 40 No. 3 (October 1990): 511-527.

Japanese war of 1904-5, but the discourse itself originated earlier, and somewhat paradoxically, in an English-language work by a Quaker internationalist, Nitobe Inazō (1862-1933). His *Bushidō, The Soul of Japan* (1900) was written, he states in the preface, to explain to foreigners the moral and religious instruction he received as part of his formal education.²¹⁹ He argues (with an arsenal of Japan-West analogies) that there was no formal doctrine of moral instruction, but that the grooming of character that evolved over centuries of military experience constituted an unwritten code of action, comportment, and feeling. A product of Japanese “feudalism,” which Nitobe says was still in existence when he was educated, *bushidō* taught the masculine, martial values of the samurai: rectitude, valor, courage, benevolence, politeness, veracity, sincerity, honor, and loyalty. These virtues of virility trivialized theoretical knowledge in favor of direct action, unswerving commitment, and unpretentious attitude. Even women, Nitobe argues, were taught the manly virtues.

Bushidō originated, writes Nitobe, from a mix of Buddhism (resigning oneself to fate), Shintō (loyalty to ancestors), and Confucianism (observation of duty) that defined the samurai culture of Japan’s middle ages. It was analogous to the chivalric code of European knights. Although Nitobe praises *bushidō* as the genius of Japan that allowed the country to deal with modernization, his ultimate point was that *bushidō*, like the feudal system that produced it, has become a thing of the past. Christian love, he argued, must succeed *bushidō* as Japan’s moral and religious doctrine. Only Christianity can deal with the utilitarianism and materialism of progress, and can cope with the needs of private individuals. Nitobe’s argument was a restatement of the Christian critique of Meiji ideology already discussed in chapter one, although here it is adjusted for the post-1889 ideological environment in which the new moral and religious instruction of the Imperial Rescript on Education had been implemented. In this context, however, Christian critique had already been defeated. Nitobe instead opened a discourse of Japanese martial values that was easily appropriated by chief ideologue Inoue Tetsujirō, who edited the three-volume *Bushidō sōsho* in 1905.

The emphasis on virility in character building was appropriated by the state in the years following the Russo-Japanese War. In the Higher Schools, many turned away from ideals of public service for the empire and strove for personal success instead. An emphasis upon athleticism as a counter-measure was instituted. Indeed, the headmaster at the First Higher School was none other than Nitobe Inazō. But nowhere was *bushidō* as a character-building concept more severe than at the Peers’ School (*Gakushūin*), the exclusive higher school for children of the aristocracy. From 1906 to 1912, the headmaster of the Peers’ School was Nogi Maresuke (1849-1912), the military commander who had become famous for leading the successful occupation of Port Arthur in the Sino-Japanese War, and the long, costly re-occupation of Port Arthur in the Russo-Japanese War. He became virtually immortal as a paragon of *bushidō*, committing ritual suicide with his wife in 1912 after the death of the Emperor Meiji. *Junshi*, the feudal ritual of following one’s master into death, had been renounced by modern Japan, but nevertheless struck a deep emotional chord.

²¹⁹ Nitobe Inazō, *Bushidō, The Soul of Japan: An Exposition of Japanese Thought* (Rutland, VT: C.E. Tuttle, 1969).

During his tenure as headmaster of the Peers' School, Nogi imposed a *bushidō*-inspired program that emphasized austere martial training and athletic achievement. The severe ideological environment of the Peers' School became an important crucible of the new Taishō thought. Some students were alienated by the competing value systems of materialistic success and patriotic *bushidō*. They turned inward, searching the inner world of the self for a higher spiritual purpose that transcended materialism and state morality. They pursued their inward spiritual quest through an immersion in culture (*bunka*). This self-cultivation through cultural refinement in Taishō Japan was known as *kyōyōshugi*. This was a drastic shift from Meiji intellectual discourse. Meiji intellectuals, concerned with the practical problems of modernization, viewed the world through the category of civilization (*bunmei*), or a materialistic conception of how societies progress over long periods of time. Taishō intellectuals were no longer interested in such practical problems. They plumbed the inner world of feeling through immersion in European romantic literature and German idealism, which had become the *lingua franca* of Japanese intellectual life in the late Meiji period, and by the Taishō period had penetrated into the higher schools. The publication of *Tetsugaku sōsho*, a twelve-volume collection of translations of Western philosophy published by Iwanami in 1915, attested to the wide interest in these philosophers among the educated youth of Taishō.²²⁰

Most emblematic of Taishō *kyōyōshugi* was the White Birch Society (*Shirakaba-ha*), a literary group formed by students at the Peers' School. The group, which over the years included Shiga Naoya (1883-1971), Mushanokōji Saneatsu (1885-1976), Arishima Takeo (1878-1923), and Satomi Ton (1888-1983), officially formed in 1910 with the production of their own literary paper, *Shirakaba*. The young intellectuals of the White Birch Society were leaders in the development of the I-Novel (*shi shosetsu*).²²¹ Perhaps the most representative literary product of *kyōyōshugi*, the I-novel was a first person, confessional style of literary writing that blurred the lines between author and narrator, and between fiction and autobiography. The purpose of existence – not social or political problems – was the concern of the new youth. Abe Jirō's *Santarō no nikki* (*Diary of Santarō*), the iconic work of *kyōyōshugi* confessional literature, appeared in 1914.

In short, the spiritual crisis of modernity overtook intellectual life after 1905. Taishō intellectuals, like their Meiji predecessors, still saw themselves as an elite class, but they saw themselves as a kind of aristocracy of culture. They were uninterested in the crude materialism that now seemed to define “success” for the middle class. They were in search of higher truths and meaning that seemed to have been lost. That search led within, into the world of feeling and spirit, that elevated them above petty materialism and even national morality. In this way, they were traveling a philosophical road that had been blazed by Meiji Buddhists. As I have argued, the historical predicament of Buddhism in the Meiji Enlightenment forced Buddhist intellectuals to perceive and confront the spiritual crisis of modernity early on. I have characterized their thought as antimodernist – simultaneously enthusiastic about material progress, but despairing over the spiritual costs. As I argued in chapter three, their antimodernist quest led them to the

²²⁰ Donald Roden, *Schooldays in Imperial Japan: A Study in the Culture of a Student Elite* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).

²²¹ Donald Keene, *Dawn to the West: Japanese Literature of the Modern Era – Fiction* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1984), 441-555.

discovery of medieval Japanese culture, a discourse that I call Japanese Medievalism. For them, the Buddhism of medieval Japan was a vehicle for exploring the inner world, and it was also the essential worldview of medieval Japanese cultural expression. Their invention of Japanese culture as a salve of the spiritual ills of modernity predated the invention of Japanese culture in the wider intellectual world of Taishō Japan. In the following pages, I will explore the ways in which Taishō intellectuals turned to Japanese Medievalism to overcome the spiritual crisis of Taishō. For many, Buddhism was the cultural path that led inward. Their discovery of Buddhism, I argue, was mediated by the works of the Meiji Buddhists treated in chapters two and three.

2. The Zen Turn: Suzuki Daisetsu and Nishida Kitarō

Nishida Kitarō (1870-1945) and Suzuki Teitarō (1870-1966) were dropouts. Both were born in 1870 near Kanazawa on Japan's western coast. As young men of Meiji, they were ambitious, idealistic, restless, and eager to serve a higher purpose. For them, the opening of the Fourth Higher School (*shikō*) in Kanazawa in 1887 represented the royal road to the Meiji Enlightenment. The construction of the Fourth Higher School marked the intrusion of the Meiji Enlightenment into the Kanazawa area, which had been pro-Tokugawa and was still nostalgic for the rule of the Maeda clan. Indeed, Ōkubo Toshimichi's assassin was a pro-Maeda samurai. Minister of Education Mori Arinori believed that Kanazawa had to be disciplined, and so established the Fourth Higher School there, with a pronounced militaristic environment.²²² Both Suzuki and Nishida became disenchanted with the national morality of the Meiji Enlightenment. Disaffected from national morality, they went in search of a higher meaning on their own. This search led them to Buddhism. In this section, I argue that Nishida and Suzuki's encounter with Buddhism was mediated by the late-Meiji antimodernist thought that I call Japanese Medievalism.

Suzuki and Nishida were young Meiji intellectuals, not Taishō youths. But they were the earliest significant non-Buddhist discoverers of Japanese Medievalism, in that they used the Buddhist vision of Japanese Medievalism to confront their own spiritual crises. In this way, they were key bridging figures between the early spiritual crisis of the Meiji Buddhists and the later spiritual crisis of Taishō intellectuals. Just as their spiritual crises were mediated by Japanese Medievalism, Taishō intellectuals' discovery of Japanese Medievalism was mediated by Nishida and Suzuki. For Nishida and Suzuki, the key to overcoming alienation lay in the practice of Zen meditation. It was the experience of Zen that showed them how to achieve a consciousness that transcended the moral ideology of the Meiji Enlightenment. It allowed them to bypass the secular/religious binary and to live as Shinran – as neither monk nor layman. Their achievement was to make Zen, and the analysis of its mode of consciousness, the main focus of Japanese Medievalism as it was understood in the secular world of non-Buddhist educated elites in Taishō Japan, and after.

²²² Michiko Yusa, *Zen and Philosophy: An Intellectual Biography of Nishida Kitarō* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002), 17.

The intellectual and spiritual journeys of Nishida and Suzuki were intertwined. Suzuki encouraged Nishida to take up Zen meditation, and Nishida subsequently spent his life bringing the language of Western philosophy to the Zen experience. Nishida, conversely, encouraged Suzuki to pursue Western philosophy at Tokyo University, and Suzuki subsequently spent his long life bringing Zen to the Western intellectual world (he is best remembered today as the international ambassador of Zen). Although their careers followed divergent paths, they were both grounded in the desire to understand and articulate the consciousness achieved through Zen practice as a mode of being in the world. Nishida pursued a line of thought that developed the vitalist line of thought represented by Kiyozawa Manshi, focusing on the structures of experience. Suzuki's thought was closer to the historicism of Murakami and Sakaino, focusing outward with a pantheistic view of the world. Together, they found in Japanese Medievalism a spiritual practice for the modern alienated individual.

i. The Iron Hammer of Self-Improvement: Suzuki Daisetsu

Suzuki Teitarō was born in October 1870 in Kanazawa to a samurai family who, before the Restoration, had served as physicians to the Hondas, a family attached to the Maeda clan of Kaga.²²³ Suzuki's family was impoverished after the Meiji Restoration, and the death of Suzuki's father Ryōjun in 1875 worsened the family's financial predicament. In 1883, thirteen-year-old Suzuki entered the middle school attached to the Ishikawa Senmon Gakkō, where he studied English and modern Western subjects along with a more traditional curriculum. He first encountered the Bible at middle school, through the introduction by a Greek Orthodox priest. He also encountered Zen there through a math teacher who was studying Zen practice under Imakita Kōsen (1816-1892) at the Rinzaï temple Engakuji in Kamakura. The teacher gave Suzuki a copy of *Orategama (My Little Iron Kettle)*, a Zen primer by Hakuin Ekaku (1686-1768).

In 1887, Suzuki entered the newly established Fourth Higher School, where he first befriended fellow student Nishida. However, his family's financial hardships forced Suzuki to drop out in his second year. Now on his own, Suzuki fell back on his interest in the *Orategama* that his middle school math teacher had sparked in him. He began inquiring at local temples for help understanding the book, and was finally referred to Setsumon Rōshi, a priest living in the town of Takaoka. Suzuki made the thirty-mile journey, but was abruptly dismissed for his ignorance. His departure from the Fourth Higher School thus set him on a spiritual quest. It also insulated him from the ideological onslaught of the Meiji Enlightenment. Suzuki dropped out of the Fourth Higher School before the introduction of the Imperial Rescript on Education. Nevertheless, Suzuki was without purpose in these early years, and eventually took a job teaching English at a

²²³ Biographical data for Suzuki is compiled from A. Irwin Switzer III, *D.T. Suzuki: A Biography* (London: The Buddhist Society, 1985); Masao Abe, ed. *A Zen Life: D.T. Suzuki Remembered* (New York: Weatherhill, 1986); Hisamatsu Shin'ichi, Yamaguchi Susumu, Furuta Shōkin, eds., *Suzuki Daisetsu – hito to shisō* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1971).

primary school on the Noto peninsula in 1889, and then at a school in Ishikawa Prefecture in 1890.

Though Suzuki was clearly spiritually restless and in touch with Buddhist priests about his primitive interest, he did not find his place until he went to Tokyo in 1891. Following the death of his mother in 1890, Suzuki's brother arranged for him to study at Tokyo Senmon Gakkō (present-day Waseda University). Upon arrival, Suzuki reunited with Nishida, who was in Tokyo studying philosophy at Tokyo Imperial University as a Limited Status (*senka*) student. Six months after Suzuki's arrival, Nishida convinced him to enroll at Tokyo Imperial University as a limited status student too. Suzuki remained at Tokyo Imperial until 1894, where he was exposed to the cutting edge of philosophy in Japan.

But by this time, Suzuki's spiritual interests were overtaking his ambitions to be a professional scholar. While in Tokyo, he spent as much time as he could practicing Zen at Engakuji under Imakita Kōsen, the same Zen master who had taught Suzuki's math teacher from middle school. The resolute Suzuki made the journey from Tokyo to Kamakura every weekend on foot, leaving in the evening and arriving by morning. Imakita started Suzuki on his Zen training by giving him the "Sound of One Hand" *kōan* to meditate upon. Following Imakita's death in 1892, Suzuki continued under Imakita's successor, Shaku Sōen (1860-1919), who gave Suzuki the "Nothingness" (*mu*) *kōan* to study.

In 1893, Shaku Sōen traveled to Chicago as a Japanese delegate to the World Parliament of Religions, where he met religion scholar and Parliament organizer Paul Carus (1852-1919), a German-American philosopher interested in the "Science of Religion," an approach to religion as a scientific truth, purged of superstition and magic. At the Parliament, Sōen read speeches that Suzuki had translated into English for him. When Carus asked Sōen to recommend a Japanese translator for his book, *Gospel of the Buddha*, Sōen suggested Suzuki. Suzuki dropped out of Tokyo Imperial University to work on the translation, which was published in 1895.

Also in 1893, Suzuki began contributing short pieces to intellectual journals, including *Shūkyō* (the journal of the Unitarian Society) and *Hansei zasshi* (journal of the *Hanseikai*, or "Introspection Society." The *Hanseikai*, founded by Takakusu Junjirō, stressed alcoholic temperance. The journal became *Chūō kōron* in 1887). These earliest works by Suzuki reflect his new interest in Carus' science of religion, as well as an immersion in the most current intellectual developments in the Japan of the 1880s and 90s. Suzuki read Inoue Enryō's *Preface to the Thesis on the Vitality of Religion* (*Bukkyō katsuron joron*), as well as the journals *Tetsugakukai zasshi*, *Nihonjin*, and *Kokumin no tomo*.²²⁴ Suzuki early on endorsed the compatibility of religion, science, and philosophy,

²²⁴ On Suzuki's earliest intellectual development, see Kirita Kiyohide, "Young D.T. Suzuki's Views on Society," *The Eastern Buddhist* New Series Vol. 29. (Spring 1996): 109-133; Moriya Tomoe, "'A Note from a Rural Town in America': The Young Suzuki Daisetsu and the Significance of Religious Experience," *The Eastern Buddhist* New Series Vol. 38 Nos. 1&2 (2007), 58-68; Moriya Tomoe, "Social Ethics of "New Buddhists" at the Turn of the Twentieth Century: A Comparative Study of Suzuki Daisetsu and Inoue Shūten," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 32/2 (2005): 283-304.

which dealt with the senses, reason, and emotion, respectively.²²⁵ Suzuki expressed a desire to reform Buddhism to be compatible with modernity, and he also wanted it to be a moral force in society. His views thus anticipated those of the Fellowship of New Buddhists, which was established a few years later.

Suzuki was also contributing pieces to two Zen-related journals: *Zenshū* and *Zengaku*. Suzuki had been practicing Zen in Kamakura since 1891, but by 1895 Zen had become something of an intellectual fashion in Japan. More precisely, “Zengaku” (“Zen Thought” or “Zen Learning”) was emerging as a new category of intellectual inquiry. Commentators at the time speculated that it had to do with Zen’s accessibility through practice instead of study, or with spiritual weariness caused by the Sino-Japanese War.²²⁶ Suzuki contributed to the increasingly lively discussion of Zengaku, focusing on the notion that Zen was, above all, experience. In an 1896 essay titled “Is Zen a Mysticism?” Suzuki compared Zen to Western forms of mystical thought arguing that, although both seek a kind of experiential knowledge, Zen cannot be called a mysticism as defined in the West because Western mysticisms are predicated on the duality of the worldly and the divine. For Zen, experience is not the revelation of something outside of the human world, but the revelation of the human world itself.²²⁷

As early as 1896, then, three elements that define Suzuki’s work were already apparent. He stressed the importance of Zen in everyday life experience, he conceived of it as a piercing through illusion to true reality, and saw it as a distinctly Asian way of looking at the world. In the context of the Meiji Enlightenment in the age of national morality, Suzuki’s thought was a spiritual critique of national ideology. These ideas crystallized in his first book-length work, *New Thesis on Religion* (*Shin shūkyōron*). Suzuki did not explicitly discuss Zen in this work, but the view of religion he presented in *New Thesis of Religion* was an articulation of his experience-based Zen. His religion was a kind of pantheism (*hanshinron*), but with a qualification.²²⁸ Suzuki argued that the idea of pantheism was insufficient, because it posited that all phenomena are manifestations of God, and are therefore good. Such a definition of pantheism thus fails to account for the existence of evil. For Suzuki, God (*kami*) is all phenomena, and as such is the “vital energy of primal nature.”²²⁹ Suzuki viewed existence itself as divine. It creates both prosperity and mayhem as expressions of its omnipotence, and is therefore beyond good and evil. In a chapter on the relationship of religion to morality, he argued that there was a “religious morality” (*shūkyōteki dōtoku*) separate from ordinary morality.²³⁰ Religious morality arises from the “great principle of the cosmos” and is operant in everyday existence. Conventional morality concerns the relationships between individuals in society, while religious morality concerns the relationship of the individual to the cosmos (*uchū*). Suzuki writes,

²²⁵ Suzuki Daisetsu, “*Anjin ritsume no chi*,” *Shūkyō* no. 28 (5 February 1894), 152-161.

²²⁶ See Kirita, “Young D.T. Suzuki’s Views on Society.”

²²⁷ Suzuki Daisetsu, “*Zen ha shinpiyō naru ka*,” *Zenshū* No. 20 (1896), reprinted in *Suzuki Daisetsu Zenshū* (SDZ) 32 Vols. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1968-1971), Vol. 31, 34-37.

²²⁸ Suzuki Daisetsu, *Shin shūkyōron*, in SDZ Vol. 23, 29-41.

²²⁹ Suzuki Daisetsu, *Shin shūkyōron*, p. 40.

²³⁰ Suzuki Daisetsu, *Shin shūkyōron*, 112-116.

The realization of the relationship of the finite to the infinite, of change to eternity, of self to no-self, of the part to the whole, of life and death to no-life no-death, of *mui* to *ui*, of individual life to cosmic life – that I call religion.²³¹

For Suzuki, the ethical life does not concern right or wrong, but living in accordance with the great principle of non-differentiation, existing as one with the universe. The individual connects directly to the infinite through feeling. Buddhism is totally compatible with science, and needs philosophical theory for understanding, but subjective feeling is the foundation.

In short, Suzuki sees the individual as existing in a world of immanentized (*keijika-ka*) spirituality.²³² This perspective, like that of the Buddhist thinkers treated in chapter three, was an enworlded, existential perspective. It placed the individual in an enchanted world, defined by the cultural forms of phenomenal experience. For this reason, it was quite different from the universal perspective taken by the “science of religion” (*shūkyōgaku*).²³³ Suzuki claimed that religion was a relationship of the finite individual to the infinite cosmos, but preserved the culturally particular perspective of the enworlded individual. This fact becomes clear when considering Suzuki’s views on religion and the state.²³⁴ For Suzuki, religion represents a higher authority than the morality of the state. In this sense, he says that religion and the state are incompatible, for the state is particular and finite, while religion is universal and infinite. Yet Suzuki goes on to argue that the state, itself a finite entity, can also become one with the cosmos and act in a religious way. Working hard for the prosperity of society is for Suzuki “peacetime religion.” By the same token, waging war is “religion in a time of emergency,” an act that preserves national independence against the “unruly heathens” (*jama gedō*) who obstruct it. Industriousness in peacetime and fighting in wartime are both equally good insofar as they are in accord with the higher truth of non-differentiation. Working and killing are religious acts, in that the infringement of Japan’s autonomy is a violation of the higher principle of religion, and individuals who live in accordance with the cosmos will simply discharge their duty without care.

In 1897, Suzuki left Japan for the United States. Suzuki was very impressed with Paul Carus, and arranged through Shaku Sōen to go and work under Carus in La Salle, Illinois. Under the pressure that mounted as the departure date drew near, Suzuki achieved *kenshō* (the initial breakthrough to Buddhist awakening) in December 1896, one

²³¹ Suzuki Daisetsu, *Shin shūkyōron*, 19-20.

²³² Suzuki Daisetsu, *Shin shūkyōron*, 48.

²³³ Sueki, *Kindai nihon no shisō saikō* Vol. 1, 171.

²³⁴ The subject of Suzuki’s beliefs regarding religion, the state, and war are a matter of lively debate. Two pieces that exonerate Suzuki of war complicity are Kirita Kiyohide, “D.T. Suzuki on Society and the State,” in *Rude Awakenings*, 52-76; and Kemmyō Taira Satō, “D.T. Suzuki and the Question of War,” trans. Thomas Kirchner, *The Eastern Buddhist* 39/1: 61-120; Brian Daizen Victoria has written responses to each of these, arguing for Suzuki’s war complicity. For response to Kirita, see Brian Daizen Victoria, *Zen at War* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 22-30; For response to Satō, see Victoria, “The “Negative Side” of D.T. Suzuki’s Relationship to War,” *The Eastern Buddhist* Vol. 41 No.2 (2010): 97-138.

month after the publication of *New Thesis on Religion*. As he recounted in a memoir decades later, Suzuki experienced a state in which he became “one with *mu*,” a state called *samadhi* (Japanese, *sanmai*), from which he awakened to achieve higher consciousness (Sanskrit *prajna*, Japanese *hannya*) and then understood his experience. He recalled that the moon-illuminated trees “looked transparent, and I was transparent too.”²³⁵ Suzuki was given the name by which he would become internationally known: “Daisetsu,” or “Great Simplicity.”

Suzuki spent the next twelve years outside of Japan, mostly in La Salle, Illinois, working for Paul Carus, then spending 1908 in Europe before returning to Tokyo the following year. Throughout this period, Suzuki continued to follow and contribute to journals of religious thought in Japan. Distanced from the ideological onslaught of the 1895-1905 period of war mobilization, the spiritual critique of Suzuki’s thought emerged in full form. His outward-oriented, pantheistic view of religion was analogous to that of the Fellowship of New Buddhists.²³⁶ Suzuki contributed some sixty pieces to the *New Buddhism* journal over the course of its fifteen-year run, and even became a board member upon his return to Japan in 1909.²³⁷ Like the Fellowship, Suzuki embraced a rational, this-worldly pantheism and wrote of the need for a religious view that was compatible with the realistic worldview of science. Also, following the Fellowship’s main priority, Suzuki used his pantheism as the basis for a critique of the official state morality of the Meiji Enlightenment in the post-Constitutional order. He contributed critiques of Meiji ideology to *New Buddhism* as well as *Cosmos (Rikugō zasshi)*, the trans-sectarian Christian journal, where he wrote a brief but concise assessment of the structure of Meiji Enlightenment ideology in 1898:

They say, “Obey the rescripts on the Imperial Restoration,” “Study the Imperial Rescript on Education,” “Display a nation-building spirit,” “Honor the ancestors of the country.” All of this is fine. But while these people on the one hand proclaim reason as their supreme sword and shield and talk on and on about the results of nineteenth-century historical research, on the other hand they manipulate the weaknesses of the Japanese people, co-opting the imperial family and the imperial rescripts and attempting to imbue them with a religious significance. The hypocrisy of it all quite overwhelming. . . . Let us stop pretending that the Japanese are a great people merely because their imperial family has continued unbroken for the past 2,500 years.²³⁸

²³⁵ Suzuki, “Early Memories,” in *The Field of Zen: Contributions to the Middle Way, the Journal of the Buddhist Society*, ed. Christmas Humphreys (London: Buddhist Society, 1969).

²³⁶ Moriya Tomoe has argued for the affinity of Suzuki’s early thought with that of the Fellowship of New Buddhists, noting that Suzuki never contributed to *The Spirit World* because his own thought was more outward looking and socially engaged. See Moriya, “A Note from a Rural Town in America.”

²³⁷ Moriya, “Social Ethics of “New Buddhists” at the Turn of the Twentieth Century,” 291.

²³⁸ Suzuki Daisetsu, “*Tabi no tsurezure*,” *Rikugō zasshi* No. 210 (1898); translation in Kirita, “D.T. Suzuki on Society and the State,” 54.

Suzuki's contributions were thus in line with the general thrust of *New Buddhism*. He railed against pseudo-religious ideological indoctrination in education, and against the exploitation of the Japanese people. He expressed religious sympathies with the Japanese socialist movement, also in line with the Fellowship. But like the Fellowship, Suzuki's critique only went so far. From his Zen standpoint of experiencing the infinite directly, Suzuki sought to go beyond the state morality that he saw as an ideological illusion, but he did not question the basic material realities that the Meiji Enlightenment created: a nation-state with a capitalist economy and imperial possessions. His critique was a spiritual and moral one, not a materialist or economic one.

At the same time, Suzuki continued to articulate his vision of Zen as an experience that pierces the veil of illusion and reveals true reality. The Japanese victory in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-5) provided occasion for him to clarify the basis of his supra-moral religion. His writings on the war itself reproduced the "religion in a time of national emergency" rhetoric of his 1896 *New Theory of Religion*. Commenting on Japan's progress in 1904, Suzuki wrote, "Let us then shuffle off this mortal coil whenever it becomes necessary, and not raise a grunting voice against the fates. . . Resting in this conviction, Buddhists carry the banner of Dharma over the dead and dying until they gain final victory."²³⁹ In a 1906 piece titled "The Zen Sect of Buddhism," Suzuki attributed Japan's victory to the influence of Zen upon Japanese culture,

The Lebenschauung of *bushidō* is no more nor less than that of Zen. The calmness and even joyfulness of heart at the moment of death which is conspicuously observable in the Japanese, the intrepidity which is generally shown by Japanese soldiers in the face of an overwhelming enemy; and the fairness of play to an opponent so strongly taught by *bushidō* – all these come from a spirit of the Zen training, and not from any such blind, fatalistic conception as is sometimes thought to be a trait peculiar to Orientals.²⁴⁰

In this passage, Suzuki asserts that the Japanese are culturally conditioned to exist in the Zen mode of experience.

In the years around 1905, Suzuki began to grow suspicious of the reasoning and logic of philosophy as inimical to the true spirit of Zen. He started to think of Zen as a kind of living poetry, a mode of existence that reveals meaning as it is in itself, rather than as an analysis of that meaning, writing,

As I get older, I come to appreciate poetry rather than philosophy. I do not like an aggressively argumentative person who is like a walking skeleton ... I used to think philosophy could clarify the questions of life and nature, probably within a few years. Now, I realize that what I thought to be negative turns out to be positive, and what seemed to be *satori* comes out as illusion.²⁴¹

²³⁹ Suzuki Daisetsu, "A Buddhist View of War," *Light of Dharma* 4 (1904): 181-82.

²⁴⁰ Suzuki Daisetsu, "The Zen Sect of Buddhism," *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 5 (1906): 8-43.

²⁴¹ Suzuki Daisetsu, "*Beikoku inaka tayori*," *Shin bukkyō* Vol. 6. No. 5 (1905): 348-54; quoted in Moriya, "A Note from a Rural Town in America, 63-64.

Beginning with this “poetic turn,” Suzuki began to emphasize the existentially and culturally subjective dimensions of Zen over its logical philosophical aspects.

The links between Japanese national culture, personality, Zen experience, and transcending Japan’s imperialist ethics formed the core of Suzuki’s mature thought, which blossomed after his return to Japan in 1909. After a decade of openly critiquing Japan’s ideology of national morality from a safe distance across the Pacific, Suzuki found himself in 1909 suddenly inside one of Japan’s most important ideological institutions: the Peers’ School (*Gakushūin*), the exclusive school for the Japanese aristocracy. Suzuki spent twelve years as a housemaster and English professor at the Peers’ School, from 1909 to 1921, where for one year (1909) he was reunited with Nishida Kitarō. As discussed in the previous section, the Peers’ School was an important center of Taishō *kyōyōshugi* (self-cultivation), the intellectual and aesthetic movement to seek higher spiritual values in one’s inner world. Suzuki belonged to the generation of Meiji youth, but intellectually, he was ahead of his time. His disillusionment with state morality and his turn inward through Zen prefigured *kyōyōshugi*. Having returned to find his thought on the cutting-edge of intellectual change in Japan, Suzuki began to intellectually champion Zen as a form of spiritual self-cultivation. Prior to 1909, his Zen interest was limited to short contributions to journals, while his main work was as a kind of authority on Eastern thought in the West. Though he is best remembered for this latter role, I argue that his role as a Taishō intellectual was his most significant. Suzuki helped introduce Buddhism into Taishō thought as a spiritual critique of Japan’s official values, and thus linked Taishō thought to the antimodernism of the Meiji Buddhists, who established Buddhism as a spiritual critique.

As a teacher of the aristocracy working under the supervision of Nogai Maresuke, Suzuki sought to help the youth cultivate a spiritual personality through immersion in the national culture of Japan, in order to help them transcend the martial values of loyalty to the emperor.²⁴² He continued to write open criticisms like this for *Shin bukkyō* until the journal ended its run in 1915. After that, he focused exclusively on writing about Zen and self-cultivation. He published his first five major works on Zen between 1913 and 1916 – *Outline of Zen Thought (Zengaku taiyō, 1913)*, *The First Principle of Zen (Zen no daiichi gi, 1914)*, *The Iron Hammer of Self-Improvement (Kōjō no tettsui, 1915)*, *From the Standpoint of Zen (Zen no tachiba kara, 1916)*, and *Studies in Zen (Zen no kenkyū, 1916)*.²⁴³ These works brought together Suzuki’s vision of Zen as a mode of experience that pierces through illusion and reveals true reality. *The Iron Hammer of Self-Improvement*, however, stands out as distinctively Taishō in character. For while the other works rehearse arguments made earlier, *Iron Hammer* is in the spirit of *kyōyōshugi*, advocating “Zen Cultivation” (*zenteki shūyō*) among youth.

Suzuki is world-famous among both intellectuals and general readers as the face of Japanese Buddhism. Many scholars argue over whether or not Suzuki was a nationalist, either proving or explaining away his often-explicit endorsements of war and Japan’s national rights to empire. Others see Suzuki as a self-Orientalizing Asian, looking

²⁴² Suzuki Daisetsu, “*Ryokuin mango*,” *Shin bukkyō* 11 (1910): 711-715.

²⁴³ Suzuki Daisetsu, *Zengaku taiyō* (Tokyo: Kōyūkan, 1913); *Zen no daiichi gi*, in *SDZ* Vol 18, 243-390; *Kōjō no tettsui*, in *SDZ* Vol. 17, 1-191; *Zen no tachiba kara*, in *SDZ* Vol. 16, 179-342; *Zen no kenkyū*, in *SDZ* Vol 16, 343-540.

at Buddhism through the Western gaze of the British Pali Text Society, the London Buddhist Society, the Theosophists, the Transcendentalists, and other groups that made a mystical Other of Buddhism.²⁴⁴ These divisive questions share the criticism that Suzuki was simply wrong about Buddhism – that it should be insulated from both nationalism and Western interpretation. I argue instead that Suzuki can only be understood by analyzing the complex relationship of his thought to national ideology. His Zen was a spiritual critique in that it sought to piece the ideological illusion of national morality. He was an heir to the antimodernism of the Meiji Buddhists, who made the same spiritual critique of state morality. Suzuki was a bridging figure, bringing that critique to Taishō intellectual life.

ii. Philosophy Should Be for Life: Nishida Kitarō

Like his lifelong friend Suzuki Daisetsu, Nishida Kitarō belonged to the generation of Meiji youth but intellectually anticipated the subsequent Taishō era.²⁴⁵ Nishida and Suzuki contrast in many ways. Coming from a financially stable family that had a tradition of scholarship, Nishida was far more ambitious for scholarly fame and success than Suzuki. While Suzuki wandered in and out of academia – and Japan – as his spiritual quest dictated, Nishida’s search for meaning was largely within the official channels of academic life. Like Suzuki, he chafed at the moral ideology of education in the 1890s, but he saw his divergences from a professional career as demoralizing setbacks. Nishida remained committed to philosophy, eventually becoming the greatest philosopher of modern Japan, while Suzuki renounced philosophy for a poetic approach to the problem of existence. Furthermore, Nishida lived a more conventionally middle-class life than the globetrotting Suzuki, who stayed single until 1911, when he married an American woman who shared his intellectual interests. Nishida, who married at the age of twenty-five and had several children, felt anxiety over the attention that family life demanded. Finally, Suzuki was prolific and engaged with the world, writing topical pieces on contemporary social issues and exploring the intellectual world beyond Japan throughout his early period. Nishida, who never once left Japan in his life, wrote only a private journal during his early period (starting in 1897, about the same time Daisetsu wrote *New Thesis on Religion*), and did not even begin his serious philosophical work until the age of thirty-five, in 1905. Though they diverged on all these points, Suzuki and Nishida were equally committed to finding a language to articulate the experience of Zen, which for them was a religious transcendence of the moral ideology of Japan. The outwardness of Suzuki and the inwardness of Nishida were complementary, much in the same way that the outwardness of *New Buddhism* (where Suzuki published) complemented the inwardness of *The Spirit World* (where Nishida published).

Nishida was born in 1870 in Mori, a village twenty miles outside of Kanazawa. He hailed from an elite commoner family that lived as samurai, and held the hereditary position of mayor for several villages. In 1883, Nishida entered the preparatory school for

²⁴⁴ See Robert Sharf, “The Zen of Japanese Nationalism,” *History of Religions* Vol.33 No.1 (Aug. 1993): 1-43.

²⁴⁵ Biographical data for Nishida Kitarō is compiled from Yusa, *Zen & Philosophy*, 2002.

the Ishikawa Senmon Gakkō, and also studied Chinese classics under Inokuchi Sei, a distinguished scholar whose pedigree stretched back to Hayashi Razan. Believing that he could seek better preparation elsewhere, Nishida dropped out of the prep school in 1884 and sought private instruction in math and English. He entered the Senmon Gakkō in 1886, and for one year thrived in a nurturing environment that encouraged open inquiry. The following year, however, the Senmon Gakkō was converted into the Fourth Higher School (where Nishida first met Suzuki). The new militaristic atmosphere in the school alienated Nishida. Yet, he continued to perform academically, and was filled with a sense of noble purpose upon the promulgation of the 1889 Constitution. He dreamed of being a great scholar in the service of the nation – the mission of the Meiji Enlightenment. However, he was rebellious against the school's militaristic atmosphere. He was frequently absent and was reprimanded for misconduct. As a result, Nishida was made to repeat the year in the science track – a major blow to his pride. In 1890, Nishida dropped out of the Fourth Higher School with the idea that he could simply prepare himself for university. No sooner had he dropped out, however, when he incurred an eye injury and was forbidden to read for an entire year. At the age of twenty, Nishida's prospects for becoming a great scholar in the service of the nation were practically zero. Yet, like Suzuki, Nishida's dropping out before the promulgation of the Imperial Rescript on Education insulated him from indoctrination into the new state morality.

Nishida's only hope was the Limited Status (*senka*) course at Tokyo Imperial University. Katō Hiroyuki created this program in 1878 to help diversify the student body. Students who could pass the entrance exam were open to pursue most subjects, but could not earn the highly coveted university degree (the passport to elite employment). Though this was really Nishida's only option, there was a stigma attached to the Limited Status course. Its students were seen as inferior to the glory-bound degree students. They were treated indifferently by both professors and students alike, and enjoyed far fewer privileges than regular degree students. Nevertheless, this course brought Nishida into contact with the philosophical world of Japan. He was immersed in the world of philosophy by Japan's leading professors, including Inoue Tetsujirō and Raphael von Koeber. He joined the Philosophical Society and heard all the luminaries, including Enryō, Katō Hiroyuki, Miyake Setsurei, and Murakami Senshō.

Nishida buried himself in his studies, and was made especially introspective by the isolation he felt as a Limited Status student. Suzuki, meanwhile, was studying Zen in Kamakura while attending Tokyo Senmon Gakkō. In late November 1891, Suzuki invited Nishida to partake in Zen practice with him at Engakuji in Kamakura. Soon after, Nishida convinced Suzuki to enroll at Tokyo Imperial University as a Limited Status student. Nishida was intrigued by Zen practice, but it would be several years until he practicing seriously.

Nishida graduated with a certificate from the Limited Status course in 1894. The paths of Nishida and Suzuki diverged for the next fifteen years. While Suzuki dropped out of the Limited Status course to work on translating Carus' *Gospel of the Buddha* and begin his own scholarly career, Nishida went back to Kanazawa in search of work. He found a job as an English teacher at a remote branch campus of the Ishikawa Middle School, and got married in 1895. The school closed the following year, however, and Nishida then took a job as a German teacher at the Fourth Higher School. His first child was born that year as well. With no real prospects for a scholarly career, Nishida spent

the next years as a family man trying to make a living. Feeling that his ambitions were now permanently beyond his reach, Nishida's attention was pulled downward from the lofty heights to which he had previously aspired, toward the mundane and the everyday. His wife's sudden decision to leave him in May 1897 and the loss of his job at the Fourth Higher School a few weeks later only aggravated his sense of dissatisfaction and anxiety.

Nishida's early life is a story of high ideals and ambition ending in frustration and failure, culminating in an existential crisis in 1896-97. It seems that his desire to be a great scholar with a prestigious job was motivated more by status-consciousness deriving from his family background than any genuine intellectual quest. He was not on the spiritual quest that Suzuki seemed to have been on from the start. Around 1897, though, Nishida experienced an existential crisis that changed his relationship to philosophy. Like Inoue Enryō and Kiyozawa Manshi, Nishida used philosophy to analyze his existential anxiety. He assumed a personal, first-person perspective on philosophy, and began to explore the meanings and significance of his own quotidian experience. Life, as he was living it, became the starting point for a spiritual quest. But unlike Enryō or Kiyozawa, Nishida's crisis was not directly linked to the separation of Buddhism from Meiji ideology. It was instead a response to his alienation from the Meiji Enlightenment. Yet, his search for meaning led him to Buddhism. Like Suzuki, Nishida's Buddhism was mediated by the antimodernism of Meiji Buddhists. That is, it was not a discovery of ancient truths, but a discovery of a contemporary critique of modernity.

Starting in 1897, Nishida undertook a kind of ascetic regimen of self-discipline. His goal was to cultivate himself by exploring the depths of his interior life. In January, he started keeping a journal that he maintained until his death in 1945.²⁴⁶ On the cover of his first journal he inscribed the following principles:

Anyone wishing to become an extraordinary person of extraordinary wisdom needs a will that does not move even if the heavens fall, and strength so great that even the demons will avoid you.

A heart that is not charmed by worldly glory, a righteousness that does not yield to authority, carry out justice without running from flood of fire.

More than reading other people's books, thinking deeply in self-reflection is paramount.

A great man must have the courage to make peace with his own ignorance and lack of wisdom.

Think and act independently on all matters and do not rely on others.

Do not devour many books.

Read books of the great writers past and present in close detail.

First-class thinkers are people who do not read a great deal of books.

The method of reading is: read, think, write.

Do not move on to another book until thinking about the last one; do not start a new book until you have finished the last one.

²⁴⁶ Nishida Kitarō, *Nikki*, in *Nishida Kitarō Zenshū* Vol. 17, ed. Abe Yoshishige (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1965-1966); See also Lothar Knauth, "Life is Tragic: The Diary of Nishida Kitarō," *Monumenta Nipponica* Vol. 20 No. 3/4 (1965): 335-358.

Non Multa Sed Multum (Not quantity but quality).²⁴⁷

And, on the back, a list of books and authors, followed by more principles of self-discipline:

The Four Books, Laozi and Zhuangzi, Wang Yang-Ming, the Bible, Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Klopstock, Lessing, Goethe, Schiller, Kleist, Lenau, Heine, Rückert, Grimm, Volkslied.

Do not believe blindly what people say.

Do not say things you have not reflected on.

Do not squander precious time joking with people.

Do not speak badly of people.

If something must be done correctly ignore other matters and do it immediately.

Decide and carry out in the morning the things that must be done that day.²⁴⁸

In the diary (which he kept in German until October 1897), Nishida registered the mundane details and personal dramas in his private and professional life. He also noted what he was reading in his philosophical self-study. Finally, he wrote of his spiritual struggles with Zen meditation, which he began to pursue seriously in the summer of 1897. Read as a single text, Nishida's diary is a literary exercise in self-cultivation that prefigured the confessional literature of *kyōyōshugi*. Nishida began his original work in philosophy in 1905, but I argue that his diary can be read as a literary preface to that work, in which he first turned his existential anxiety into a narrative that collapsed everyday life, spiritual self-cultivation, and philosophical rigor into an increasingly clear and focused vision of life lived in the moment.

The journal consists mostly of one- or two-line entries of the events of each day – the weather, visits with friends, his reading, goings-on at school. Nishida joined a *sesshin* (intensive Zen practice) in the summer of 1897, and then reconciled with his wife. He then traveled alone to Yamaguchi to take a job at the Yamaguchi Higher School. With his house in order and now living on his own in Yamaguchi, Nishida began to immerse himself more deeply in his Zen and philosophy pursuits, and as his regimen became more austere, signs of struggle and despair began to register in the diary. Consider the following entries from late February 1899:

2.19.1899. I must repent in my heart for the sin of treating coldly the officer who interrupted my reading time. I think of Kyoto while doing Zen.

2.20.1899. I writhe in agony. I am ashamed that this even obstructed my Zen. I rose from Zen to write letters. I must sincerely repent the weakness of my will.

Could not sit Zen at night.

2.21.1899. I rose early to do Zen, and my spirit felt tremendous. When I rose from Zen I again began to feel agitated, and ended up sending two letters. I still felt somewhat agitated at school in the morning. My mind quieted down in the

²⁴⁷ Nishida Kitarō, *Nikki*, 3.

²⁴⁸ Nishida Kitarō, *Nikki*, 22.

afternoon. In the evening I took great pleasure reading *Enzan hōgo*. Zen at night. Felt sluggish.

2.22.1899. Rain. Today was the same as yesterday. First was peaceful in Zen. I lacked only earnestness.

2.23.1899. Rain. Rose and did Zen. The thought that I should be studying obstructed my practice many times . . . By the evening, although my will was frustrated and I felt extremely dissatisfied, I cleared my mind and did Zen. Nevertheless, I had many useless idle thoughts about what I should read or how I should do it. It should be sufficient to read only those books that are necessary for solving the problems in my heart.²⁴⁹

Throwing off the desire to be a famous scholar was very difficult for Nishida, who wrote in August 1899,

8.6.1899. Every day I repent again and again that I writhe in turmoil. Don't seek profit. Don't seek fame. Don't seek academic pursuits. Don't seek to satisfy the desires of the senses. Only persevere in pursuit of the Way.²⁵⁰

From 1897 to 1900, Nishida's narrative of spiritual self-cultivation became increasingly anxious in this way. He returned to Kanazawa in September 1899 to take a job at the Fourth Higher School teaching German and logic. He reunited with his wife, and settled into family life. Perhaps overburdened with his new family and professional duties, he did not keep his journal for the year 1900.

After a yearlong silence, Nishida resumed the journal on January 1, 1901. This time, the diary expressed a stronger sense of resolve in Nishida's struggle to overcome himself. He seems to have developed a new understanding of the purpose of Zen – not as a tool to help him focus his mind on studying, but as a means to seeing true reality. He seems, in other words, to have achieved some success in his religious quest. In January 1901, he wrote,

1.6.1901. The point of *sanzen* is the difficulty of the practice. People always want to accomplish some other purpose by means of Zen, but this is a great mistake. The point of Zen is to liberate oneself from life and death, there is nothing else.²⁵¹

And later wrote,

1.15.1901. Sunny. School in the morning. Reading and a walk in the afternoon. Reading and *zazen* in the evening. When I read a book, I constantly feel rushed. I feel a desire for fame and cannot calm my mind. I must reflect on this. My vulgar mind seeks achievements. How can I forget all the many Nishidas and not concern myself with every little thing?²⁵²

²⁴⁹ Nishida Kitarō, *Nikki*, 35-36.

²⁵⁰ Nishida Kitarō, *Nikki*, 44.

²⁵¹ Nishida Kitarō, *Nikki*, 46.

²⁵² Nishida Kitarō, *Nikki*, 47-48.

An observation in March about his new domestic life as the head of a growing family indicates Nishida's growing appreciation for lived experience as the true reality.

3.25.1901. Under a dim lamp, the family gathered and dined. It was so modest. Human happiness is not in high places or natural scenery, but in the uneventful and ordinary. The beautiful moon illuminated the heavens.²⁵³

The stream of everyday life observations, philosophical research, and spiritual exercises of Nishida's diary began to converge into a single experience that Nishida referred to as life,

2.24.1902. Scholarship is ultimately for the sake of life, life is the highest thing, without life scholarship is has no use.²⁵⁴

And again,

10.9.1902. Life (*jinsei*) as the foundation of scholarship.²⁵⁵

Shifting from the study of philosophy to a philosophical investigation of his own existence, Nishida's struggle became acute.

1.1.1903. Zen meditation all day. I meditated but could not get into it. I think about things like studying abroad or becoming a university professor. My mind drifts away to things like that; moreover, my body ached and I could not meditate earnestly. Kawai and Gordon said that to accomplish great things one must live as though dead. However hard I try to imagine that I died on December 31 1902, I cannot do it. The Ancients said to let go of everything, but unless one lives as though dead, one cannot let go of everything.²⁵⁶

And again,

7.23.1903. I read a borrowed copy of the magazine *Zenshū*. It is wrong to practice Zen for the sake of scholarship. I must practice for the sake of heart (*kokoro*), for the sake of life (*seimei*). I shall not think about religion and philosophy until I attain *kenshō*.²⁵⁷

Nishida finally achieved *kenshō* shortly after the above entry, on August 3, 1903.

Nishida's diary continued on until July 1904, and did not resume until January 1905. His younger brother, Hyōjirō, was killed in August 1904 in the battle against the Russians at Port Arthur. A transformation took place in the silence that separated

²⁵³ Nishida Kitarō, *Nikki*, 54.

²⁵⁴ Nishida Kitarō, *Nikki*, 74.

²⁵⁵ Nishida Kitarō, *Nikki*, 94.

²⁵⁶ Nishida Kitarō, *Nikki*, 101.

²⁵⁷ Nishida Kitarō, *Nikki*, 117.

Nishida's last entry on 1904 and his new entries of 1905. The death of his brother in the Russo-Japanese War marked the first intrusion of the ideology of the Meiji Enlightenment into the existential space of life that he had been cultivating for the past nine years. The ideology of national morality was insufficient to convince Nishida that his brother's death for the sake of the nation was not in vain.

1.5.1905. *Zazen* in the morning. Since last night I've been possessed by doubt . . . I have no choice but to proceed with full vigor in the direction I have chosen. I'm too old now to change the course of my life. *Zazen* in the afternoon. At noon there was a rally in the park to celebrate the fall of Port Arthur. I could hear people shouting "Banzai!" They are going to have a lantern procession this evening to celebrate the victory. How fickle are human hearts that give themselves to such foolish festivities. People don't think about the many lives that were sacrificed and about the fact that the war still has a long way to go before it ends.²⁵⁸

The intrusion of the war into the carefully cultivated existential space of Nishida's life forced him to confront and transcend it. He gradually stopped Zen meditation, with his last formal practice in August 1905, and re-engaged the world.

In January 1905, he began composing the philosophical essays that later made him world famous when published as the book, *An Inquiry into the Good (Zen no kenkyū)* in 1911. They were expositions in philosophical language of the structure of consciousness that he had cultivated in his nine years of ascetic self-discipline. Like Suzuki, who also strove to articulate his Zen experience in his "poetic" language, Nishida produced a philosophy in which the individual connects directly to the infinite through the unmediated experience of reality. This union of self and the infinite is the achievement of the highest good, and is therefore above conventional ethics. Nishida wrote the essays that became *An Inquiry into the Good* over five years: "Ethics" in 1905, "On Reality" in 1906 (published in *Tetsugakukai zasshi* 1907), "Pure Experience" in 1908 (published in *Tetsugakukai zasshi* the same year), and "Religion" in 1909.

The essay on Pure Experience (*junsui keiken*) was instantly lauded when published in 1908 and, though not written first, was the first chapter of *A Study of the Good*. Drawing on the philosophical descriptions of experience Nishida found in William James and Henri Bergson, the idea of Pure Experience is the pre-intellectual understanding of that which one perceives.

The moment of seeing a color or hearing a sound, for example, is prior not only to the thought that the color or the sound is the activity of an external object or that one is sensing it, but also to the judgment of what the color or the sound might be. In this regard, pure experience is identical with direct experience. When one directly experiences one's state of consciousness, there is not yet a subject or an object, and knowing and its object are completely unified. This is the most refined type of experience.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁸ Yusa p. 77; Nikki, 130.

²⁵⁹ Nishida Kitarō, *An Inquiry into the Good*, trans. Masao Abe and Christopher Ives (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), p. 3.

Pure experience grasps the fundamental reality, in that it is reality in its non-differentiated totality. In order to grasp this base reality, one must have relinquished the perceiving “I” that takes the external world as its object and fractures it into meanings by making judgments about it. In this way, the experience itself is the space in which individual consciousness arises, as it were, out there in the world.

Thinking and experience are identical. Although we can see a relative difference, there is no absolute distinction between them. I am not saying that thinking is merely individual and subjective. Pure experience can, as discussed earlier, transcend the individual person. Although it may sound strange, experience knows time, space, and the individual person and so it is beyond them. It is not that there is experience because there is an individual, but that there is an individual because there is experience. The individual’s experience is simply a small, distinctive sphere of limited experience within true experience.²⁶⁰

In this way, Nishida’s philosophy is a supra-individual union with the world.

Nishida’s is a voluntaristic philosophy, or a philosophy of the will, in that the will is the faculty that strives to unify all the activities of the thinking mind to recover the fundamental oneness of reality. This activity of the will is a demand of individual consciousness, and its consummation is the highest good. Nishida refers to this type of ethics as Energetism (*katsudōsetsu*), citing the ancient Greek concept of *eudaimonia* as a reference.²⁶¹ This vitalistic understanding of the ethical sees the highest good as the fulfillment of the force of the will that demands unity of reality. He contrasts this with “heteronomous ethics,” which “locates the standard of good and evil as outside us.”²⁶² For Nishida’s Energetism, the ultimate moral authority resides with the individual, who is the result of the experience of true reality.

There is only one true good: to know the true self. Our true self is the ultimate reality of the universe, and if we know the true self we not only unite with the good of humankind in general but also fuse with essence of the universe and unite with the will of God – and in this religion and morality are culminated. The method through which we can know the true self and fuse with God is our self-attainment of the power of the union of subject and object. To acquire this power is to kill our false self and, after dying one to worldly desire, to gain new life . . . Christianity calls this event rebirth, Buddhists call it *kenshō*.²⁶³

Thus, the unifying activity of the will is not only an expression of the power of life, it is fundamentally a religious yearning. This religious yearning, Nishida argues, is the primary driver of life and the highest goal an individual can attain.

²⁶⁰ Nishida Kitarō, *An Inquiry into the Good*, 19.

²⁶¹ “Energetism” is Abe and Ives’ translation of *katsudōsetsu*.

²⁶² Nishida Kitarō, *An Inquiry into the Good*, 123.

²⁶³ Nishida Kitarō, *An Inquiry into the Good*, 145.

The religious demand concerns the self as a whole, the life of the self. It is a demand which the self, while perceiving its reality and finitude, yearns to attain an eternal, true life by uniting with an absolutely infinite power. . . True religion seeks the transformation of the self and the reformation of life . . . Religion is a human being's goal, it is not a means to something else . . . The religious demand is the demand for the unity of consciousness and, further, the demand for union with the universe. The religious demand is the deepest and greatest demand of the human mind . . . Religion does not exist apart from the life of the self, and the religious demand is the demand of life itself . . . Those who try to think seriously and live seriously cannot help but feel an intense religious demand.²⁶⁴

Interestingly, there is not a single word in *An Inquiry into the Good* about Zen practice or theory, despite the fact that it is essentially a philosophical articulation of the insights into reality that Nishida acquired through his Zen practice.

When Nishida does reference Buddhism, he talks about Shinran. This fact is important, for it helps link Nishida's thought to the discourses of Japanese Medievalism circulating in the late Meiji period. Tellingly, the final section of *A Study of the Good* – a meditation on Other-Power (*tariki*) written to deal with the sorrow of his daughter's death in 1907 – was first published in Kiyozawa Manshi's journal *The Spirit World*. In this piece, Nishida reasons that to know something is to love it, for it entails a selfless union of the self with the object of knowledge.²⁶⁵

In sum, Nishida's philosophy was part of a continuous process of self-discipline starting with his existential crisis in 1897. Nishida's turn to Zen was a turn away from the ideological world of the Meiji Enlightenment. But in 1905 – which I consider the dawn of the Taishō period – the moral ideology of the Meiji Enlightenment intruded into Nishida's life with the death of his brother at Port Arthur. Re-engaging with the word, Nishida turned his spiritual self-cultivation into a philosophical transcendence of conventional morality, one that was, like Suzuki's, based on the selfless union of the individual with the infinite. For both, Zen was a piercing of the veil of illusion to uncover true reality.

Nishida reunited with Suzuki for a year in 1909, when he took a job as German teacher at the Peers' School, the same year that Suzuki returned from America. Nishida did not stay long, however, as the fame he had so desired finally came to him. Kyoto Imperial University recruited him to its philosophy department in 1910. The Faculty of Letters at Kyoto Imperial opened in 1906. In an attempt to distinguish itself from Tokyo Imperial, Kyoto Imperial sought to recruit men of talent who did not come up through the conventional channels. Without this recruitment policy, Nishida, who did not even have a university degree, would never have been appointed professor at an imperial university. The publication of *An Inquiry into the Good* in 1911 brought Nishida even greater fame and success. It became a veritable manual for the culture of *kyōyōshugi* that was about to grip the intellectual youth of Taishō, a blueprint of philosophical and religious searching. Today, it is considered the foundational work of modern Japanese philosophy and even the first substantial non-Western response to Western philosophy.

²⁶⁴ Nishida Kitarō, *An Inquiry into the Good*, 149-152.

²⁶⁵ Nishida Kitarō, *An Inquiry into the Good*, 173-176.

3. Fantasies of the Medieval: Hara Katsurō and Kurata Hyakuzō

Nishida and Suzuki were, as I argued, bridging figures between late Meiji Japanese Medievalism and Taishō thought. Japanese Medievalism became part of the cultural orthodoxy of the Taishō period. The historicist narrative of Buddhism became a narrative of Japanese culture, and vitalist self-cultivation became a personal pursuit. The absorption of Japanese Medievalism into secular mainstream thought marked an important transition from the temple to the individual, a process begun in 1886 with Inoue Enryō's renunciation of the priesthood. By the Taishō period, Japanese Medievalism was part of the intellectual landscape in the secular world beyond the temple.

In this section, we will examine the absorption of Japanese Medievalism into Taishō thought through two representative thinkers: the historian Hara Katsurō (1871-1924) and literary author Kurata Hyakuzō (1891-1943). Hara, an established academic in the Imperial University system who served in the Russo-Japanese War, transformed Japanese Medievalism's historical narrative of Buddhism into a historical narrative of Japan, and became an early champion of cultural history (*bunkashi*) in Japan. Kurata, on the other hand, was the very archetype of Wertheresque longing and romanticism that characterized Taishō youth and *kyōyōshugi*. He brought the vitalism of Japanese Medievalism into *kyōyōshugi* literature through the image of Shinran created in *The Spirit World*, and also through the narrative of religious longing in Nishida's *An Inquiry into the Good*. The works of Hara and Kurata are representative of the general fascination for Japanese Medievalism that spread through the Taishō intellectual world.

Most interestingly, we may find in their works an expression of the spiritual despair that characterized Taishō thought. For Hara, medieval Japanese Buddhism was the religion of the samurai warrior. For Kurata, it was an exploration of the powers of human feeling. Taking a psychoanalytic view, we may see Japanese Medievalism in Taishō culture as a kind of wish fulfillment, a projection of power that belies real feelings of powerlessness. Moreover, it was explicitly male-gendered. The Japanese Medievalism of Hara was tough and warlike; Kurata's was sexually virile. These complementary narratives of power – one violent and one erotic – express elite male status anxiety as mass politics and feminism encroached on their privilege. This “muscular Buddhism,” as it were, conflated spiritual regeneration as physical vitality. The power that enchanted this medieval world was, it can be argued, a sublimation of destructive and libidinal power. In this way, the original spiritual crisis of Buddhist antimodernism became a language of general cultural expression for the elite male stratum.

i. Religion of War: Hara Katsurō

The historian Hara Katsurō was the eldest son of a samurai family in Morioka domain, present-day Morioka city in Iwate prefecture. He attended the First Higher

School and graduated from the history course at Tokyo Imperial University in 1896.²⁶⁶ Hara had no ties to the Buddhist world. And unlike the thinkers described so far, his work does not feature a personal voice or existentialist orientation. However, his work is central to the evolution of Japanese Medievalism. Hara wrote the first modern academic histories of medieval Japan before World War I.²⁶⁷ Until that time, academic history writing adhered to the official twin narratives of the Meiji Enlightenment: a leap backward to Japan's divine age of the gods, and a leap forward into the Western-led world of modern progress. The intervening centuries were not of great importance in the official national narrative. They were considered the period of degeneration in which authority passed from the imperial institution (the true subject of history) to the warrior class. Hara championed the concept of the medieval (*chūsei*) as a way of revising the "dark ages" characterization of the middle period in the historical narrative.

Scholars have often explained this, like so many other facets of modern Japanese thought, as yet another response to the West. According to this argument, the imposition of Western historical categories of ancient, medieval, and modern upon Japanese history was intended to make Japan appear more Western, and produced an artificial reading of Japanese history. As I have been arguing throughout this dissertation, however, the ideology of the Meiji Enlightenment was predicated upon the synthesis of theocratic authority and Western-style progress. Western ideas were implemented only once they could be disentangled from the Western ideological structure. For Hara, as a revisionist, the same was true. Hara's work was not merely another case of Japanese tradition responding to Western ideas. In the context of the Meiji Enlightenment, it was a challenge. For Hara sought to make medieval Japan the key creative period in the Japanese national narrative. Achieving this required, in part, the adoption of Western notions of the medieval. But it also required the adoption of the historicism of Japanese Medievalism. For, as shown above, the Buddhist historicists of the Meiji period recast medieval Japanese Buddhism as "New Buddhism." For them, the Buddhism of the medieval period in Japan was the flowering of a unique cultural system that infused the institutions and spirit of the age. Hara incorporated this basic assumption into his national history. In this way, Hara's work drew as much upon original products of modern Japanese thought as it did upon Western concepts. Ideologically, it wedded the narrative of national progress to medieval Buddhism, instead of the imperial institution.

Two events established the historical context for Hara's work. First, in 1895, the Ministry of Education established the Historiographical Institute (*shiryō hensanjo*) at Tokyo Imperial University, after some twenty-five years of failed attempts to create an official history-writing office.²⁶⁸ In 1869, while still in its early Restoration of Ancient

²⁶⁶ Biographical data for Hara Katsurō from Nagahara Keiji, "Hara Katsurō," in *Nihon no rekishika*, ed. Nagahara Keiji and Kano Masanao (Tokyo: Nihon Hyōronsha, 1977), 86-94.

²⁶⁷ Thomas Keirstead, "Inventing Medieval Japan: The History and Politics of National Identity," *The Medieval History Journal* Vol. 1 No. 1 (1998), pp. 47-71.

²⁶⁸ John S. Brownlee, *Japanese Historians and the National Myths, 1600-1945: The Age of the Gods and Emperor Jinmu* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1997); Margaret Mehl, *History and the State in Nineteenth-Century Japan* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998).

Kingship (*ōsei fukko*) ideological phase, the government mandated the production of an official narrative that would pick up the story in 1392. The purpose was to extend the official annals of the imperial institution begun by the ancient Japanese state (the Six National Histories, or *rikkokushi*, compiled between 720 and 901 and covering the period from the age of the gods to 887) and continued in the Tokugawa period by loyalist scholars of Mito domain (*Dai nihon shi*, which brought the story up to 1392). Using the same Chinese language (*kanbun*) and historiographical methods as had been common before the Restoration proved impossible. German scholar Ludwig Reiss, who had studied under Leopold von Ranke, helped to introduce Western empirical methods of historical science into the Imperial University. This experiment resulted in the 1892 Kume Kunitake incident, discussed in chapter two. The Historiographical Institute was established in 1895 as a means of more tightly controlling the production of official historical narrative. It was so effective that academic historians became uncritical compilers of documents rather than interpreters of them. Hara graduated from Tokyo Imperial the very next year, and undertook the task of helping to produce a complete historical narrative of Japanese national history using Western scientific methods while careful not to violate the orthodoxy of the Meiji Enlightenment.

Hara thus began the work of writing Japan's medieval history amidst several threads of medievalist discourse. First, the ideological discourse of the Historiographical Institute, the Imperial University, and the modernized national history project called for the continuation of the old histories of Japan, in which the imperial institution was the subject. This history was to be in the modern Western style, which included the ancient-medieval-modern periodization. It also was also intended to be an official narrative, and was subject to state control. Second, the Nitobe-instigated discourse of *bushidō*, described above, introduced a reading of the centuries of *bakufu* rule that differed from the official Meiji Enlightenment narrative. Nitobe's samurai culture was "the soul of Japan," characterized by manly virtue and martial spirit. This too had antecedents, most notably the *Nihon gaishi* of Rai San'yō. But in the context of the Meiji Enlightenment, it had a different significance. National Learning scholars had already defined the courtly culture of the Heian period as the classical flowering of Japan. Nitobe's assertion that the creative genius of Japan came later, and was developed by male warriors instead of female aristocrats, hinted at another Japan, a more masculine and warlike Japan that would make Heian culture appear effeminate and weak by contrast. Third, and most important for our discussion, was the medievalism of Murakami, Sakaino, and the other historicists discussed in chapter three. In a sense, they had already written a medieval history. But theirs was a history of Buddhism in medieval Japan, not a history of medieval Japan. The historicist interpretation of Buddhism as the grand cultural matrix of medieval Japan, however, would become a permanent part of the national narrative.

Hara did not have an overt ideological position that informed his writing. Intellectually, he was trained as a French historian, and was a lover of Macaulay and Carlyle. It is worth noting that he was of samurai stock, the eldest son of a samurai family that supported the Northern Alliance against the Sat-Chō restoration army. Hara came of age after the Freedom and People's Rights Movement had already been crushed. He was therefore deprived of an outlet for political opposition, and was absorbed directly into imperial university academia. Hara's background in a family that supported the Tokugawa order, however, may provide an insight into his historical writing. For his

medieval Japan was the key creative period of the Japanese spirit. Combining national narrative, Western methods, Japanese Medievalism, and *bushidō*, Hara's history rewrote Buddhism into the historical narrative. Intentionally or not, he helped re-bridge the chasm of the Separation of the Buddhas from the Kami, the crisis that defined antimodernist Buddhism.

Hara laid out the foundations of his cultural historical approach in an article that was printed twice under different titles: "The Kamakura Age in Literary History" (*Bungeishi jō no Kamakura jidai*, 1902) and "The Kamakura Age in Cultural History" (*Bunkashi jō no Kamakura jidai*, 1903).²⁶⁹ The places of publication are instructive. The 1902 "Literary History" version appeared in *Flower of the Nation (Kokka)*, a journal of Eastern art founded in 1889 by Okakura Kakuzō (1862-1913). Okakura was the inventor of Asian art as a field of study in modern Japan, and his work contributed to the discovery of Asian identity of which Japanese Medievalism was a part. The 1903 "Cultural History" version appeared in the *Journal of Historical Studies, (Shigaku zasshi)*, the official intellectual organ of the academic historians affiliated with the Imperial University. The appearance of Hara's article both these publications hints at the new character of Hara's history, in that it is at once of a new discovery of history as culture, and also bringing this discovery into the official knowledge of the Meiji Enlightenment.

In the article, Hara vindicated Japan's medieval period by declaring that, from the standpoint of the development of a distinctive national culture, the first century of the Kamakura period stands out as Japan's take-off point. Religion and politics, according to Hara, were the two indispensable elements of culture. The Kamakura period marked the moment in Japanese history when religion and politics found a wide social base, and therefore created a self-conscious people (*kokumin*). Here, Hara draws a vital connection between the New Buddhism of the medieval period with the rise of warrior politics. These two, together, marked for Hara the inception of a healthy, virile Japan.

Hara explored this thesis over the following decade before World War One in his book, *History of Medieval Japan (Nihon chūsei shi*, 1906), and a series of companion articles.²⁷⁰ His argument, gleaned from these works, has two main points. First, the country warriors of eastern Japan were the bearers of Japanese culture, not the urban aristocrats of Kyoto. Until the Kamakura period, Japanese culture was dominated by Chinese culture. This importation took place at a critical time in the seventh century, when the ancient Japanese state was expanding in power. This coincided with greater interaction with the new Tang civilization on the continent. The court aristocrats not only monopolized the imported culture of China, they also mimicked it, hurriedly and uncritically. The monopolization of culture by the court produced an "unhealthy" (*fukenzen*) level of knowledge and a fragile (*senjaku*), cowardly (*jūda*) spirit among the Japanese people (*kokumin*). The decline of the court did not mark the dawn of a dark age,

²⁶⁹ Hara Katsurō, "Bungeishi jō ni okeru Kamakura jidai," in *Nihon chūseishi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Dōbunkan, 1929), 203-212; "Bunkashi jō ni okeru Kamakura jidai," *Shigaku zasshi* Vol. 14 No. 1 (1903): 19-30.

²⁷⁰ Hara Katsurō, *Nihon chūseishi* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1969).

but rather it inaugurated the diffusion of culture throughout Japan.²⁷¹ The agents of this diffusion were country warriors who traveled to the capital, and priests, merchants, and bureaucrats who left Kyoto for the countryside. The warrior culture of eastern Japan – manly, direct, unpretentious, sincere – was uncorrupted by the weak culture of the capital. Hara goes so far as to call the warriors a middle class (*chūtō shakai*), for their decentralization of authority enabled the destruction of the despotism of the ancient court. It decentralized authority, catalyzing the circulation of culture and commerce among the people of the eastern countryside, who were as yet uncorrupted by Chinese culture. The diversity and commerce of the medieval city, on the periphery of the Empire of Japan, was the seat of the spirit of the people. The *bushi* were, for Hara, a revolutionary subject of history.

The second important point is his characterization of medieval Japanese religion. In his article, “Religious Reformations of the East and West” (*Tōzai no shūkyō kaikaku*, 1911), Hara argues that the religious thought of Shinran signified a Japanese Reformation.²⁷² This interpretation is essentially a restatement of the New Buddhist thesis of Japanese Medievalism. Buddhism was imported from China and monopolized by the court. By the later Heian and Kamakura periods, however, priests had left the city, renounced the monastic life, and disseminated the faith among the people of Japan. This anti-aristocratic faith was people-centered. It stressed sincerity, directness, and unpretentiousness – the so-called manly virtues – as the keys to faith. It was, for Hara, the spiritual and psychological energy of warrior culture. The paragon of this medieval faith was Shinran, whom Hara saw as a Japanese analog of Martin Luther. The emphasis on the practice of *nenbutsu* instead of complex theory; the primacy of feeling over knowledge; and the renunciation of the secular/religious dichotomy made Kamakura Buddhism a Japanese religious reformation, a herald of modernity, and the spiritual complement of the revolutionary warrior middle class.

ii. Religion of Love: Kurata Hyakuzō

The vitalist strain of antimodernist Buddhism entered secular thought through the works of Kurata Hyakuzō.²⁷³ Kurata was born in Shiobara, in Hiroshima. He grew up spoiled, the youngest child and only son of a prominent merchant family that had six daughters. He was raised in the True Pure Land faith, but also showed an early interest in Christianity, which had a conspicuous presence in Hiroshima. Kurata entered the First

²⁷¹ On this topic, see Hara Katsurō, “*Kamakura jidai ni okeru bunjin no chihōteki denpa*” (The Local diffusion of Literary Artists in the Kamakura Age) in Hara, *Nihon chūseishi no kenkyū*, 213-225; “*Kamakura jidai no fukyō to tōji no kōtsū*” (Missions and their Contemporary Communications in the Kamakura Age) in Hara, *Nihon chūseishi no kenkyū*, 226-250; “*Tohi no bungei*” (Literature of Capital and Countryside) in *Nihon chūseishi no kenkyū*, 304-320.

²⁷² Hara Katsurō, “*Tōzai no shūkyō kaikaku*,” in Hara, *Nihon chūseishi no kenkyū*, 226-250.

²⁷³ Biographical data for Kurata Hyakuzō compiled from Suzuki Norihisa, *Kurata Hyakuzō: Kindai nihonjin to shūkyō* (Tokyo: Tameidō, 1970).

Higher School in 1910, but was chronically ill throughout his brief time there, and finally withdrew in 1913 after contracting tuberculosis. He returned to Hiroshima to recuperate, but his condition worsened and he had to be hospitalized in 1914. Like Inoue Enryō, Kiyozawa Manshi, and Nishida Kitarō, Kurata experienced an existential crisis that provided the starting point for his thought. His personal confrontation with mortality precipitated a deep introspection. Kurata, however, experienced another kind of existential crisis as well. As a middle school student, the young Kurata had fallen deeply in love and proposed marriage to a woman named Koide Tōyō, but was rejected by her family in 1910 just before leaving for Tokyo. Indeed, his health deteriorated rapidly after learning that Koide had got married in 1913.

Kurata drew on the twin existential crises of love and death. The significance of disappointed romantic love is a defining feature of Kurata's thought, and one that was emblematic of the Wertheresque yearning of *kyōyōshugi* confessional literature. Drawing on the drama of his own life, Kurata wrote literature of self-cultivation that became almost as iconic as Abe Jirō's *Santarō no nikki*, and he became a fellow-traveler of the White Birch Society despite the fact that he did not attend the Peers' School. His main contribution, for our purposes, was his incorporation of Japanese Medievalism into his *kyōyōshugi*. Through the popularity of his works, Kurata made famous the image of Shinran found in *The Spirit World*, using him as a symbol for his own spiritual yearning. Moreover, he raised the reputation of Nishida Kitarō, whose *An Inquiry into the Good* moved him deeply. Kurata praised Nishida in his work, and even called on Nishida in 1912, though he received a chilly reception.²⁷⁴

Kurata's first work was *Setting Out from Love and Understanding (Ai to ninshiki no shuppatsu)*, a collection of essays written during his years of illness and romantic frustration at First Higher School from 1910 to 1913. Its publication in 1914 made the twenty-six year-old Kurata famous among the elite educated youth of Taishō Japan. *Setting Out* is comprised of five confessional essays, some epistolary in form. Along with Abe Jirō's *Diary of Santarō (Santarō no nikki, 1914)*, *Setting Out* was emblematic of the Taishō fascination for the exploration of the inner world of feeling. The facility with which Kurata discussed the German Idealists, the Neo-Kantians, Henri Bergson, William James, and Nishida Kitarō's *Inquiry into the Good* places *Setting Out* in this trend, and partly accounts for the wide appeal of the essays.

The original 1914 edition of *Setting Out* consisted of five essays that told the familiar *kyōyōshugi* narrative of individual isolation and the intense yearning to overcome it.²⁷⁵ In the first essay, a series of letters titled "Yearning" (*Shōkei, 1912*), Kurata begins with William James' bleak observation that the philosopher is a "lonely bug." Though he longs to be a lover of life, the philosopher is merely an on-looker. Locked in his world of interiority, the philosopher is tormented by the anxiety of "magic lantern" illusions, and paralyzed by his isolation. This isolated condition is the source of yearning, a burning desire pour forth one's inner world and connect with life. Kurata's epistolary pieces and essays convey this philosophy in form as well as content. They are not the cool theories of technical philosophy. Kurata's writes in a personal voice, and the

²⁷⁴ Yusa, *Zen & Philosophy*, 130.

²⁷⁵ Kurata Hyakuzō, *Ai to ninshiki no shuppatsu* (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1969); *A* 1921 edition included more essays written after 1915.

pages emit a cry of anguish. Yet, Kurata also weaves in and out of discussions of Western philosophers with great ease. The combination of philosophical erudition and existential anxiety that characterize *Setting Out* encapsulates the sense of spiritual crisis that so interested the young educated elite of Kurata's time, and accounts for the book's iconic status.²⁷⁶ In the context of this discussion, it is also interesting to note the parallels between this type of literature and Nishida's diary.

The burning and passionate interior life is in search of an external object, a purpose, to connect it to life. The first step toward this goal, writes Kurata, is the achievement of consciousness, or awareness (*ninshiki*). The second essay, "The Conscious Striving of Life" (*Seimei no ninshikiteki doryoku*, 1912), develops this idea. The inner life (*naibu seimei*) consists of intellect, feeling, and will (*chijōi*). Before one can connect to the outer world, one must become a whole being (*zentai seimei*) by uniting the three. Philosophers attempt to sketch the inner life in words; artists attempt to sketch it in objects. The achievement of self-awareness is the highest state of consciousness that unites the three, and makes it possible for one to bring the inner life into the outer life. This is the point that makes Kurata's a vitalist philosophy. Life itself is his medium. He seeks not to merely think differently, but to live differently.

The second step, after achieving awareness, is love (*ai*). Love for Kurata is the way in which one connects to the world beyond oneself. He introduces this idea in the third essay, "The Desire to Discover Oneself in the Opposite Sex" (*Isei no uchi ni jiko wo miidasan to kokoro*, 1913). Again, it is the burning desire to overcome the yearning of solitude that drives Kurata's love, and which leads him to the discovery of Tokyo's red light district. The quest for an ideal object of love is, for Kurata, nothing less than a spiritual quest to find a higher meaning and purpose in life. "Live as a Creature of the Wild" (*Shizenji to shite ikiyo*, 1913), the fourth essay, develops this idea. Kurata declares here that he wants to make life itself his religious faith (*shinkō*). The path of yearning leads Kurata toward higher and higher objects of love, and is becoming more religious in orientation. In the final essay, "The Path of One who has Lost Love" (*Ai wo ushinauta mono no ayumu michi*, 1913), the path of yearning discovers its religious goal of the spiritual life (*seishin seikatsu*).

Kurata's existential journey has narrative parallels to those of Kiyozawa Manshi or Nishida Kitarō. Kurata saw many affinities with Nishida's thought in particular. But the distinguishing feature of Kurata is his turn to the carnal as a passage on his quest. Desire is what charges Kurata's world with power.

Kurata's thought grew more overtly religious as his physical health and romantic life simultaneously deteriorated. Returning to Hiroshima to rest after his diagnosis of tuberculosis, Kurata joined a Bible study group. He also became involved with the One Light (*ittō*), a religious agrarian community founded by Nishida Tenkō (1872-1968). But his masterpiece, a play titled *The Priest and his Disciples* (*Shukke to sono deshī*), was a dramatization of the life of True Pure Land founder Shinran. *The Priest* was serialized in 1916 in the White Birch Society's satellite journal *River of Life* (*Seimei no kawa*), and published as a book the following year. It was wildly successful in performance. It was

²⁷⁶ J. Thomas Rimer, "Kurata Hyakuzō and *The Origins of Love and Understanding*," in Rimer, ed., *Culture and Identity*, 22-36; Maya Mortimer, *Meeting the Sensei: The Role of the Master in Shirakaba Writers* (Lieden and Boston: Brill, 2000).

staged at the Imperial Theater and Yūrakuzū Theater in Tokyo, at the Ittōen in Kyoto, the Naniwaza in Osaka, went on tour in the provinces, and was translated into English and French. It made Kurata famous. More significantly, it made Shinran famous. The success of *The Priest* sparked a surge of writing about Shinran, spreading Japanese Medievalism as a method of self-cultivation through the imagination of Shinran's personality.²⁷⁷

The Priest and his Disciples is a six-act play about the relationship between Shinran and Yuien, the disciple who recorded Shinran's teachings in the Tannishō. The action of the play covers some thirty years in thirteenth-century Japan, beginning with the first encounter of Shinran with the eleven-year-old Yuien, and ending with the death of Shinran. The episodes of the play demonstrate the essentials of Shinran's views of life and existence. Many of them are taken from the Tannishō itself, and the play is in this way a dramatization of the genesis of the Tannishō.

The six acts are prefaced by a starkly minimalist act called "That Which Dies: A Vision I Saw One Day" (*Shinuru mono: aru hi no maboroshi*). The act contains no references to setting or events. It simply presents an encounter between a Human (That which Dies) and One with Hidden Face, which identifies itself as "the servant of that which never dies." "That which Dies" is a distillation of Kurata's vitalist philosophy. The Human, exulting in the powerful feeling of life, is made to understand by the One with Hidden Face that he is mortal. The One with Hidden Face refuses to let the Human see him, and instead shows him visions: a procession of living creatures, each one oppressing the next and all oppressed by the human; lovers who lost their passion and tumble to their deaths because they did not look upon the One with Hidden Face. The Human challenges the One with Hidden Face, trying to find something that does not die, but cannot. Defeated, the Human understands that he too must die, for he is a sinner. He kills to eat, and lusts to reproduce. To sin is the condition of existence, and death is its price. Finally, confessing his sinfulness in anguish, he discovers the eternal, undying power that controls everything. It is Other Power, discovered only after relinquishing everything else. "That which Dies" presents Kurata's religious vitalism not in the form of philosophical principles, but in experience – the aesthetic experience of the play, which is one of increasing existential anxiety resolved in religious epiphany.

The following six acts explore the basic premise – that the sinner is saved through the self-awareness of his own sinfulness and the relinquishing of all control to Other Power – through a series of vignettes featuring Shinran and Yuien. Kurata weaves the teachings recorded in the Tannishō into the play. But he also weaves in the narrative of his own philosophy, the achievement of life first through self-awareness, then through love.

In act one, Shinran and two disciples Ryōkan and Jien (also historical personages) seek shelter from a snowstorm at the home of Saemon, a masterless samurai and father of Matsukawa, the boy who would later become Tannishō author Yuien. In this first act, Saemon declares that he had resolved to make himself evil. For since losing his master, he has had to harden himself against the selfish world in order to provide a living for his family. Saemon is enlightened by Shinran, who helps him see that the evil man can be saved through Other Power. Fifteen years later, in act two, Yuien is suffering from the

²⁷⁷ Kurata Hyakuzō, *The Priest and his Disciples: A Play* trans. Glenn W. Shaw (New York: G.H. Doran Company, 1927).

loneliness of celibacy. He and other priests discuss Zenran, the estranged son of Shinran who rejects the faith and lives in dissipation at a brothel. Yuien defends Zenran against the criticisms of the other priests, who are preparing for a sermon on religious ecstasy. Shinran later advises Yuien that ecstasy is not a sign of salvation, and that he himself is easily distracted by anxieties of death (the ninth entry of the *Tannishō*). He advises Yuien that the path to salvation is to live life to the fullest, and that his yearning is evidence of life. Yuien visits Zenran at the brothel in act three. Here, we see the drunk Zenran as a man driven by his human yearning, which Yuien recognizes. Yuien begs Shinran to reconcile with Zenran. But Shinran explains that Zenran's suffering is karmic. Only accepting the faith will save Zenran, not Shinran's forgiveness. Meanwhile, Yuien's own yearning found its object in Kaede, a prostitute he met at the brothel with Zenran. In act four, Yuien meets his lover in secret, having lied about his whereabouts to the priests. Shinran, in act five, tells Yuien that their love will survive only if they entrust in other power. In act six, in which Yuien and Kaede are married with a child, Shinran grants forgiveness to his son, and acknowledges that he will be saved even though he does not believe.

In sum, *The Priest* presents Kurata's vitalism as a religious mode of existence, personified by Shinran. Kurata's vitalism draws on that of Kiyozawa Manshi and his Spiritism, in that both the thought and personality of Shinran provide the vehicle for exploring and understanding existential interiority, overcoming longing, and living differently. Kurata's thought is an extension of Kiyozawa's. But there are also important differences. Kiyozawa Manshi sought to dissolve, to disappear, to vanish into the world that he saw as holy, an extension of the Buddha. He preached and practiced asceticism to achieve this, to live without a self in the space between good and evil, life and death. His own body was a site of religious practice, the place where he exercised his spiritual discipline. Kurata, by contrast, did not wish to vanish. He wished to project his self into the world. Where Kiyozawa perceived the discontinuity between existential interiority and the exterior world of the Meiji Enlightenment, Kurata sought to reconnect the inner to the outer world. Kurata's existential crisis, as we have seen, was precipitated not just by his confrontation with death, but also by his confrontation with romantic disappointment.

The projection of desire onto the external world and the perception of the external world, for Kurata, are closely related. We may cynically dismiss his vitalism as a justification of his vice, claiming self-awareness of his sinfulness as salvation. More generously, and interestingly, we may locate in Kurata's vitalism a genuine attempt by a secular individual to find spiritual meaning in the external world. This attempt was worldly and human. It was clearly male-gendered, and its vision of masculine power conditioned the perception of the world in Kurata's texts. Kurata sacralizes that sensuous external world, transforming his own projected desire into an enchanted world. In this sense, we may argue that Kurata's thought is a sublimation of his interiority into the perceived structures of external reality that results in a kind of mysticism. The vitalist strain of Japanese Medievalism originated in the philosophy of the sick. In Kurata, it was transformed into a philosophy of power. Kurata's vitalism and Hara's historicism together signify the new interpretation of Japanese Medievalism in the Taishō era: one in which the experience of interiority is not only a locus of meaning, but also a form of subjectivity that is masculine, elite, and historically Japanese. In the context of the Meiji

Enlightenment, it represents an aggressive turn to reconnect to official ideology, as the quest for spiritual regeneration expressed itself in physical vitality.

4. Buddhism Resurrected: Watsuji Tetsurō

The thought of Watsuji Tetsurō (1889-1960) was the culmination of the antimodernist lineage of Buddhist thought. To review the argument so far: antimodernism evolved through an ongoing antagonism between Buddhism and the ideology of the Meiji state. Meiji ideology was born in the separation of Buddhism from the theology of the *kami* at the dawn of the Meiji period. Inoue Enryō, the originator of the antimodernist position, attempted to reverse this separation in the age of Japanese state-construction. He argued that the state must be the mediator between the existential world of the individual and the Buddhist vision of an undifferentiated reality. Instead, the 1889 Constitution established the state as the mediator between the existential world of the individual and the higher reality of Shintō theology. Meiji ideology subsequently took the form of a national moral code, intended to bring the everyday lives of individuals in line with the Shintō theology that defined state ideology. Buddhist antimodernists at this time began to circumvent national morality, imagining a Buddhism in which the individual bypassed the state to connect directly to the higher reality disclosed by Buddhism. Murakami Senshō and Sakaino Kōyō developed a historicist interpretation of Buddhism, arguing that Japan's Buddhist values were present in the everyday world of culture, an inheritance from the medieval period. Kiyozawa Manshi, on the other hand, developed a vitalist interpretation, focusing on the inward experience of existing in accordance with Buddhist reality. Historicism and vitalism, together, constituted an antimodernist discourse that I called Japanese Medievalism. It provided a solution to the spiritual crisis that afflicted Buddhism in the Meiji period. Non-Buddhist intellectuals such as Nishida Kitarō, Suzuki Daisetsu, Kurata Hyakuzō, and Hara Katsurō, brought Japanese Medievalism into the world of mainstream Japanese thought and culture, providing an antimodernist solution to a spiritual crisis that gripped Taishō-era intellectuals.

Watsuji synthesized the vitalist and historicist strains of Japanese Medievalism into a grand theory of Japanese culture. More importantly, he used this cultural theory to bring Japanese Medievalism into direct confrontation with the ideology of the Meiji Enlightenment. Renouncing the Meiji state's ideology of national morality, Watsuji transformed Japanese Medievalism into a new ethical system and sought to connect it to the imperial institution, thus attempting to undo the separation of Buddhism from the imperial institution that defined the Meiji Enlightenment. The Buddhism that he sought to connect to the imperial institution, we must note, was a new construct – it was the Japanese Medievalism of the late Meiji and early Taishō periods.

Watsuji was born in 1889 in a village outside of Himeji, Hyōgo prefecture.²⁷⁸ His father was a physician who practiced medicine with a high sense of moral purpose, believing that “medicine is the art of benevolence” (*i wa jinjutsu nari*). Like the other

²⁷⁸ Biographical data for Watsuji Tetsurō is compiled from Yuasa Yasuo, *Watsuji Tetsurō: Kindai nihon tetsugaku no unmei* (Tokyo: Mineruva Shobō, 1981); Komaki Osamu, *Watsuji Tetsurō: Hito to shisō* (Tokyo: Kiyomuzi shoin, 1986).

figures treated in this chapter, Watsuji's intellectual concerns were classically Taishō. He entered the First Higher School in 1906. He majored in English literature, and became deeply immersed in the culture of spiritual yearning and self-cultivation of *kyōyōshugi*. He loved the romantic poets, and aspired to become a poet like Byron. He wrote two novels and a play while at the First Higher School, as well as essays for the school paper. He was also deeply influenced by the novelist Natsume Sōseki (1867-1916), who was then lecturing at the First Higher School. Watsuji did not actually meet Sōseki until he joined his study group in 1913, but the impact of Sōseki's work upon young Watsuji has been noted by many scholars.

Moving on to the philosophy department at Tokyo Imperial University in 1909, Watsuji fell even deeper under the spell of literary romanticism. His passion for gothic, Wertheresque spiritual yearning was so consuming that his biographers refer to his University years as his "*Sturm und Drang*" period. He launched a literary journal with fellow students Tanizaki Jun'ichirō (1886-1965) and Osanai Kaoru (1881-1928), and wrote two plays as well as essays on dramatic criticism. In addition to these literary activities, Watsuji also tried to live his art, cultivating the decadent lifestyle of the modern aesthete. This experiment with *kyōyōshugi* dandyism failed, however, as Watsuji concluded that it did not suit him. He renounced his literary friends and devoted himself instead to his philosophical pursuits. His aestheticism translated into an interest in existentialist poet-philosophers like Nietzsche and Kierkegaard, thinkers who dealt philosophically with the problem of spiritual yearning in the modern world. In an episode that foreshadowed Watsuji's future significance, his graduation thesis on Nietzsche was denied by Inoue Tetsujirō, the ideological spokesperson for the moral ideology of the Meiji Enlightenment. Watsuji quickly composed a substitute thesis on Schopenhauer and was able to graduate in 1912, but retained an animosity toward Inoue Tetsujirō.

Watsuji's quintessentially Taishō perspectives found their earliest philosophical expression in two studies of Western existentialists – Nietzsche and Kierkegaard. His rejected graduation thesis on Nietzsche was published in 1913 as *Studies in Nietzsche* (*Niiche kenkyū*). Though formally an expository study of Nietzsche's oeuvre, *Studies in Nietzsche* is the first expression of Watsuji's own thought. He writes in the preface,

The Nietzsche who appears in this study is strictly my Nietzsche. I have tried to express myself through Nietzsche. I intended to grasp the real Nietzsche, but I may have grasped only the surface.²⁷⁹

The *Lebensphilosophie* of Nietzsche provided a philosophical method suited to the problem that faced young Taishō intellectuals like Watsuji – how to overcome the petty materialism and state morality of post-1905 Japan and connect one's inner world to genuine reality. Nietzsche's philosophical anthropology provided the insight that values were historical, the work of a creative aristocracy who express the will to power, or the vital force of the earth. Nietzsche's narrative of an original creative period in ancient Greece that was undermined by the morality of St. Paul, and then revived starting in the Renaissance, was a powerful critique that Watsuji could use against the morality of his

²⁷⁹ Watsuji Tetsurō, *Niiche kenkyū*, in *Watsuji Tetsurō Zenshū* (WTZ) 24 Vols. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1961-1992), Vol. 1, p. 8.

own times. For Watsuji, like Nietzsche, the inner life of self-cultivation was itself reality, the will to power capable of destroying old values and establishing new ones, not through principles and ideas, but through culture and art.

Similarly, Watsuji expressed his early intellectual concerns through Kierkegaard in his second book, *Søren Kierkegaard (Zēren Kyerukegōru)*, published in 1915. This study of the Danish existentialist was in many ways closer to the confessional writing style of Taishō-era *kyōyōshugi*, and even included a special acknowledgement of intellectual debt to Abe Jirō in the introduction.

Kierkegaard's personal lifestyle of sincerity, his passion for pure life, his pragmatic theory of consciousness, his voluntaristic view of life, his markedly religious tendency, his identification of the true individualism only in the religious heart – in such things as these he discerned values . . . starting last June I had the experience of feeling that I had entered the inner part of Kierkegaard. Since then I have read him almost exclusively. I have felt a deep kinship between his problems and mine. Eventually, I saw only my own problems in him. That problem generally relates to “How one should live.” The impatience I feel between my own nature and external demands; the various conflicts to keep myself truly alive; the faith, passion, and anxiety about my values and destiny; the agony of belief in the superiority of my individuality while having to abandon worldly desires for compromise with social forces . . . My arduous task is to completely struggle with these conflicts resolutely and construct a life for the self (*jiko no seikatsu*). My mind does not rest day or night. I recognize in myself many ugly, weak, and bad things. I must completely burn these up through self-discipline.²⁸⁰

This is a virtual manifesto of Taishō personalism and *kyōyōshugi*. Watsuji found in Kierkegaard not just a philosophy of authentic existence, but a life experience that embodied that philosophy. The book itself recounts Kierkegaard's life as a kind of confessional novel, before treating the philosophical aspects of his Christian existentialism. Scholars often view Watsuji's youthful fascination with Nietzsche and Kierkegaard as promising commitments to a healthy individualism that he later forsook for an anti-individualistic culturalism. This characterization is puzzling, because Nietzsche and Kierkegaard were existentialists. Their individualism was not the triumphant bourgeois variety, but a rebellion against it. I argue here that it was the existentialist rebellion against the alienated individual that made Nietzsche and Kierkegaard so appropriate to Watsuji's own intellectual priorities.

Watsuji spoke through the philosophical languages of Nietzsche and Kierkegaard to express his own conceptual approach to the problem of “how to live,” or how to overcome individual alienation and rediscover a meaningful world. His next two works were applications of that conceptual approach. In *Resurrection of the Idols (Gūzō saikō, 1918)* and *Pilgrimage to Ancient Temples (Koji junrei, 1919)*, Watsuji turned to the study of Japan's values and culture. The significant point for our purposes is that the Japanese values and culture that Watsuji turned to were those of Japanese Medievalism – a cultural

²⁸⁰ Watsuji Tetsurō, *Zēren Kyerukegōru*, in *WTZ* Vol. 1, 393-680.

world invested with Buddhist values, and an inward experience of overcoming the self through those cultural values.

Resurrection was an application of Watsuji's Nietzschean critique of culture to Japan. Watsuji discusses the Idols (*gūzō*) in the Nietzschean sense as symbols necessary for the progress and flow of life (*seimei*). Idols are constantly being created and, once they are emptied of meaning, destroyed so that new Idols can replace them.

The God of Christianity is another type of Idol. St. Paul opposed Idols made by "Human Hands." Modern destroyers of Idols oppose God as made by the "Human Mind." But as Paul's Idol goes out of existence, the modern Idol destroyers cannot throw out God. After the boisterous announcement of the "Death of God," the yearning for God quietly lived on in the hearts of the people.²⁸¹

Watsuji goes on to note that the foundational myths of Christianity – such as the creation narrative and transubstantiation – are so long discredited that the "Death of God" announcement should come as a shock to no one. Interestingly, Watsuji discusses the Death of God as a European event, in which the recovery of Greek art during the Renaissance shocked the Pauline God into obsolescence. Still, a resurrection of Idols in Japan is needed. Culture since the Meiji Restoration has been "frivolous."²⁸² The Resurrection of Idols in Japan meant a return to the cultural inheritances of India and China, which, as we shall see in *Pilgrimages*, meant a return to Buddhism. In short, the revival of Buddhism and the rejection of Meiji are equated in *Resurrection*.²⁸³

In *Pilgrimages to Ancient Temples*, Watsuji demonstrates his method for the resurrection of idols. The book is a first-person account of Watsuji's trip to Nara, the eighth-century capital of Japan, in search of its then-forgotten and neglected cultural artifacts. The power of these idols is disclosed through Watsuji's reflections on them, in a kind of phenomenological analysis of the affective experiences elicited by the Buddha images, architecture, and other cultural artifacts of Nara. It is, in one sense, a *kyōyōshugi* style of confessional literature that, as Hiroshi Nara has observed, was inspired in part by Goethe's *Italienische Reise* (*Italian Journey*, 1816-17). In this way, *Pilgrimages* was a work self-cultivation. At the same time, it was a philosophical continuation of *Resurrection*, in that it treated art as Idols, objects imbued with the power to elevate the beholder to a higher religious state of awareness. The Watsuji-protagonist of *Pilgrimages* was in search of Japan's forgotten idols so that, by experiencing them, he could resurrect them. Through aesthetic analysis, he uncovers deeper and deeper levels of Chinese and Indian influence until, finally, he discovers the Greek soul in Japanese Buddhist art. Nara was, for Watsuji, a repository of Silk Road culture, and was therefore connected directly to the life-affirming Greek cult of nature.

The entries on Watsuji's visit to the temple Hōryūji illustrate the method of *Pilgrimages*. Describing his approach, Watsuji writes,

²⁸¹ Watsuji Tetsurō, *Gūzō saikō*, in *WTZ* Vol. 17, 13.

²⁸² Watsuji Tetsurō, *Gūzō saikō*, 270.

²⁸³ William LaFleur attempted this line of argumentation in "A Turning in Taishō: Asia and Europe in the Early Writings of Watsuji Tetsurō," in Rimer, ed. *Culture and Identity*, 234-256.

It was a bright, fine day and we all felt lighthearted. As we walked along the country road leading from the train station to the village, which was no more than a mile and a quarter, my heart began pounding with excitement as we moved ever closer to the five-story tower visible far in the distance. I felt so delighted; it was as if somehow my heart began throbbing in anticipation or as if I was becoming happier by the moment. When we stood at the South Gate, I was already steeped in the mood of the ancient temple. I walked on the white sand into the compound. When the ancient Inner Gate came into view, a particular sense, so specific to Hōryūji, again captured me with a tight grip. I began to experience intoxication and felt as if my body was wafting.²⁸⁴

This passage establishes the Watsuji-protagonist's perspective, and sets the reader in a state of anticipation before the form of Hōryūji appears in detail. Watsuji then reproduces a letter in which he described his impressions of the temple to a friend. He writes that a "transparent, sound-like sensation swept through" him, an "eerie calmness" as if he were in a "forest of souls" or "hallucinating."²⁸⁵ He then attributed these mystical experiences to the aesthetic forms around him: the hypnotic multiplicity of parallel lines created by latticework, and a faded vermilion color. In the next section, Watsuji adds that the building also had a "foreign" feel. Focusing on the aesthetic curves (*entasis*) of the roofs, Watsuji argues that this temple is an example of the Greek spirit in Nara Japan. Buddhism and Greek architecture, he argued, were transmitted to East Asia together, but "the architecture that can provide evidence for this line of thought remains only in Japan."²⁸⁶ It was the infusion of the Greek spirit into Chinese architecture that transformed functional government buildings and pleasure-inspiring aesthetics into sublime vehicles of religious experience.

Moving on to the wall paintings in the temple's Golden Hall, Watsuji describes a painting of Amida, Kannon, and Seishi Boatsu residing in the pure land, telling himself that, "I need to think nothing, standing before this painting. It is complete and lacks nothing. All one needs to do is look at it and be intoxicated."²⁸⁷ The painting is complete because it depicts the gods in human form, but with an expression and beauty that is super-human. "The aim of the painting was not to paint the scenery of the Pure Land but to create meaningful shapes and images that suggest eternal life."²⁸⁸ Commenting on the pedigree of the style, Watsuji argues that "the tendency in India for worshipping idols is a custom transmitted from Greece . . . so it stands to reason that we can conclude that this wall painting is in the tradition of faraway Greek art . . . Who resurrected this Greek spirit? – the people in the West of China, the Chinese, or the Japanese? My guess is that all peoples did it. And I think it was resurrected more as it went farther and farther east.

²⁸⁴ Watsuji, *Pilgrimages to the Ancient Temples in Nara*, trans. Hiroshi Nara (Portland: MerwinAsia, 2012), 161.

²⁸⁵ Watsuji, *Pilgrimages to the Ancient Temples in Nara*.

²⁸⁶ Watsuji, *Pilgrimages to the Ancient Temples in Nara*, 163.

²⁸⁷ Watsuji, *Pilgrimages to the Ancient Temples in Nara*, 167.

²⁸⁸ Watsuji, *Pilgrimages to the Ancient Temples in Nara*, 170.

In that sense, then, this painting represents the Japanese taste, especially Japanese taste that held a special love for the purity of Buddhist images of the Suiko period.”²⁸⁹

Pilgrimages brings together the vitalist and historicist strains of Japanese Medievalism into a new synthesis. The Nara that Watsuji visits is basically the Nara of the historical narrative crafted by Murakami and his associates. For Watsuji, that Nara is a real place which he is literally trying to resurrect. And his method of resurrection draws on the vitalist strain of Japanese Medievalism. It depends on an inward experience of the infinite, in this case, through the experience of Buddhist art and architecture. His work differs from the extant Japanese Medievalism in the idea of resurrection. The very notion that Buddhism was in need of resurrection speaks directly to the destruction of Buddhism by the Meiji Enlightenment. While the originators of Japanese Medievalism strove to live in “two worlds,” experiencing the truth of Buddhism while bypassing the reality of the Meiji Enlightenment, Watsuji seeks to bring Buddhism into the present world of experience. His “resurrection” was, I argue, the transformation of late-Meiji Japanese Medievalism into orthodox thought. This was his intellectual program, the first outlines of which were already visible in these pre-1920 early works.

Watsuji began his professional life as an academic in 1919, taking a position at Tōyō University (formerly Enryō’s Philosophy Hall), then at Hōsei University in 1922. He also became an editor at the new intellectual journal *Shisō*, founded by Iwanami Shigeo, in 1921. Watsuji exerted a great deal of influence over intellectual life through his position at *Shisō*, where he published much of his work over the next decade. His work became less impressionistic, less consciously subjective, as he assumed greater professional stature, but still retained its essentially Taishō mission (“how to live”) and the solution Watsuji outlined above (the transformation of Japanese Medievalism into orthodoxy through “resurrection”).

Watsuji’s work after 1920 explored the cultural history of Japan through the phenomenological and hermeneutical lenses he developed in his early works. Ranging from Nara through the medieval period, Watsuji’s work was essentially a history of Japanese Buddhism and its cultural expression. In *The Ancient Culture of Japan* (*Nihon kodai bunka*, 1920) and *Studies in the History of the Japanese Spirit* (serialized 1920-1922, published in book form 1926), Watsuji tracked the spirit of the creative individual and the worship of nature through the reception and growth of Buddhism in Japanese culture. These works basically rehearse the history of Buddhism narrative of Murakami.

No realities are permanent, but they *desired permanence* . . . From the first this idealism did not take any form of thought . . . In spite of the fact that there was no conception here of a super-earthly world, yet there were aspirations for the infinite, the eternal, the perfect. This strong premonition of sorrow in itself was a great possibility that was open in the heart of a man of nature . . . The men of nature discovered this dependable power in the trees and stones; to be more precise, they discovered it in the rites which they performed for the objects of their worship. . . Instead of trees and stones, *beautiful*, awe-inspiring and significant ‘Buddhas’ *in human form* were introduced . . . all aesthetic charms were transformed into religious power . . . Buddhism thus received was chiefly

²⁸⁹ Watsuji, *Pilgrimages to the Ancient Temples in Nara*, 171.

one of prayers for divine favor in this world. The people did not have any longing to reach the other world *by denying this world*. Although this life was sad to them, it was not evil. Worldly welfare and spiritual welfare were the same thing. . . if the understanding of Buddhism was thus begun in conformity with the inner life of the Japanese themselves, the general spiritual as well as political development of the Japanese people after this period should be viewed in a different light.²⁹⁰

Like the historicism of Murakami, Watsuji's history posits Japanese culture as the manifestation of Buddhist values. Moreover, it was a this-worldly religion compatible with empirical reality. It was, in this sense, classically antimodernist.

Watsuji and Murakami are separated, however, by historical circumstances. Murakami conceived his historicism in the age of national morality, at the height of the Meiji Enlightenment. For Buddhist antimodernists at that time, Buddhism was incompatible with the official values of the state, and had to be seen as something beyond morality. Murakami imagined his Buddhism an enchanted Japan of ages past. For Kiyozawa Manshi, writing at the same time, the inward experience of Buddhism lifted the individual above the ethical. They were, to use Kiyozawa's own words, living in two worlds. Watsuji used Murakami's historical Buddhism as a basis for his own narrative of Japan, and also reproduced Murakami's contention that Japanese culture was an expression of Japanese Buddhism. And he used the vitalist self-cultivation of Kiyozawa to imagine an individual subject who experienced the undifferentiated reality of Buddhism directly. The key difference for Watsuji, writing after the high tide of the Meiji Enlightenment, was his approach to values. He rejected the "two worlds" of earlier antimodernists and sought, in Nietzschean fashion, to destroy conventional morality and revive the higher values of Buddhism. In other words, he wanted to bring the enchanted world of Japanese Medievalism into the present.

His thinking on values is apparent in his study of the medieval Japanese Zen master Dōgen (1200-1253). In the essay "Master Dōgen" (*Shamon Dōgen*, written 1920-22), Watsuji writes,

At the heart of Dōgen's teachings is the manifestation of eternal values. Therefore, the destruction of all worldly values must be the starting point of his project. Dōgen expressed this destruction of worldly values through the traditional Buddhist expression "You should contemplate impermanence . . . The impermanence of this world is not a problem to think about, but rather a fact before our eyes." The difference between "this shore" and "the other shore" is not the same as the difference between this world and the afterlife. Regardless of after-lives and before-births, living within the truth is life on the other shore, and living in the snares of delusion is life on this shore. Therefore, it is meaningless to say our ideal life consists in crossing over from this world to the other world. The ideal life exists as that which must be actualized here and now. The destruction of the values of this world is nothing but a reversal of values in order to attain this

²⁹⁰ Watsuji Tetsurō, "Suiko jidai ni okeru bukkyō juyō no shikata ni tsuite," in *Nihon seishinshi kenkyū*; trans. by Hirano Umeyo in *The Eastern Buddhist* Vol V. No. 1 (May 1972): 47-54.

ideal life right away. This reversal of worldly values gave birth to the search for the eternal value of truth. Only through this search can we bear witness to the truth . . . To enter the way you must throw away thoughts of good and evil as you have divided them in your own mind, forget your own conveniences, likes, and dislikes, and follow the words and practices of the patriarchs *regardless of whether they are good or evil*.²⁹¹

In this passage, Watsuji makes the critical shift that separates his thought from that of earlier Buddhist antimodernists. To illustrate this shift, it is useful to consider his contrast of Dōgen with Shinran. As we saw in chapter three, Shinran embodied the personality and self-cultivation of antimodernism in the age of national morality. Though Dōgen and Shinran, as medieval Japanese monks of the Mahāyāna tradition, share many fundamental assumptions, they differ in their relationship to the here-and-now. Watsuji writes,

The goal of Shinran's teaching was compassion, and in order to reach that goal he stressed that one should turn one's eyes away from human love for a while and only think devotedly of the Buddha. The goal of Dōgen's teaching was the truth, and in order to reach that goal he stressed selfless human love. Shinran preached *the Buddha's* compassion, while Dōgen preached *human* compassion. Shinran placed the emphasis on the *power* of compassion, while Dōgen placed his emphasis on the *feeling* of compassion. Shinran's love is the infinitely increasing love of a *compassionate mother*; Dōgen's love is that of a *seeker of the way*, a love attained through disciplined training.²⁹²

The key difference between Shinran and Dōgen for Watsuji was Dōgen's emphasis on the relationship between individuals. Shinran, Watsuji argues, "preached about Amida's compassion *toward* human beings, not about love *between* human beings . . . the core of his principle is that all is forgivable is the condition that evil is both fearful and shameful." Against Shinran's reliance on Amida to life each save each helpless individual from sin, Dōgen argues for the smashing of worldly values altogether. By living as if "on the other shore," one can save others in this life by living in accordance with the truth, that is, by abandoning the self.

Watsuji points out that Shinran's reliance on Amida rather than on interpersonal relations stems in part for his understanding of time. Shinran sees one's inability to renounce evil as the result of karmic dependency, sins committed in a past life, but,

Where are "was done before" and "happened before?" More generally speaking, where is the past? If we do away with spatial metaphors when we think about time, every instant signifies an eternity containing both past and future. This makes all pasts immanent in this life. But this also makes karmic origins immanent in this life. As long as we exist as living creatures, we cannot escape

²⁹¹ Watsuji, "Shamon Dōgen," in *Purifying Zen: Watsuji Tetsurō's Shamon Dōgen*, trans. Steve Bein (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2011, 52-54.

²⁹² Watsuji, "Shamon Dōgen," 67.

the impulses and instincts of living creatures . . . as long as we live in this world, we cannot elude karmic dependency.²⁹³

In short, Watsuji's critique of Shinran illuminates his understanding of Dōgen. Shinran understood humans in time, but not in space; and he relied on relations between the human and the super-human, not on relations between humans. These criticisms anticipated Watsuji's mature work, as shall be seen below.

Watsuji's career took a turn in 1924, when Nishida Kitarō began prevailing upon Watsuji to take the chair in ethics at the philosophy department at Kyoto Imperial University. Watsuji accepted in 1925, and began adapting his work to the problem of ethics. His *Practical Philosophy of Primitive Buddhism (Genshi bukkyō no jissen tetsugaku)*, written in 1926 as his doctoral dissertation, established Emptiness, or *kū*, as the foundation of Buddhist ethics. This was essentially a restatement of his position in "Shamon Dōgen," in which he argued that the ability to relinquish the self is a human act of benevolence toward others, in that one recognizes the other in oneself.²⁹⁴

Watsuji's transition to the study of ethics as a professor at Kyoto Imperial happened at a critical moment in the history of the Meiji Enlightenment. Since 1905, the Japanese government was straining to revive the waning power of the moral ideology of the Meiji Enlightenment. As discussed in section one, the realization of the Meiji Enlightenment's goals, the paucity of jobs for educated youth, and the political activation of the masses were evidence that the Meiji Enlightenment's power to mobilize the population was weakening. Government reaction reached a high point when the passage of the 1925 General Election Law (*futsū senkyō hō*) extended suffrage to all males over the age of twenty-five. The law only passed, however, after the passage of the 1925 Peace Preservation Law (*chian iji hō*), a counter-revolutionary ideological safeguard in anticipation of the increased democratization of electoral politics. The 1908 Boshin Rescript, described above, declared that private self-interest and unwillingness to sacrifice for the state were moral crimes. The 1925 Peace Preservation Law made these moral crimes punishable by stating that "Anyone who has formed a society with the objective of altering the national polity (*kokutai*) or the form of government or denying the system of private property, and anyone who has joined such a society with full knowledge of its object, shall be liable to imprisonment with or without hard labor for a term not exceeding ten years."²⁹⁵ With this law, the original Meiji Enlightenment language of *kokutai* is explicitly linked to the capitalist production system.

The Shōwa era (1926-1989) thus began with an aggressive self-reassertion of the Meiji Enlightenment. Accordingly, it also marked a new phase in the antagonism between the Meiji Enlightenment and Buddhism. To summarize the argument so far: the 1889 Constitution enshrined the metaphysical structures of the Meiji Enlightenment as the official reality of the Japanese polity. After this, antimodernist Buddhism took a turn away from eternal metaphysical structures toward cultural history, laying the groundwork for Japanese Medievalism. After 1905, Japanese Medievalism began attracting interest

²⁹³ Watsuji, "Shamon Dōgen," 63-64.

²⁹⁴ Watsuji Tetsurō, *Genshi bukkyō no jissen tetsugaku*, in *WTZ* Vol. 5

²⁹⁵ See Richard H. Mitchell, "Japan's Peace Preservation Law of 1925: Its Origins and Significance," *Monumenta Nipponica* Vol. 28 No. 3 (Autumn 1973): 317-345.

among non-Buddhist intellectuals for whom the Meiji Enlightenment was ringing hollow. By the 1920s, it was thoroughly absorbed into cultural discourse as Japanese cultural history and thought. For educated Japanese who had been in search of a higher calling and purpose since 1905, Japanese Medievalism offered a world of spiritual wholeness that countered what they saw as the erosion of the social order that had obtained at the height of the Meiji Enlightenment.

The General Election Law of 1925 marked the high tide of Taishō Democracy, which intellectuals like Watsuji viewed as evidence of the erosion of the social order. The Peace and Preservation Law strengthened Watsuji's position by repressing Marxism, the materialist competitor to Japanese Medievalism's spiritual critique of the Meiji Enlightenment. This Shōwa ideological framework gave Japanese Medievalism an advantage in the calls for the restructuring of society that the economic, political, and social calamities of the 1930s called for (some, like Kita Ikki, called for a "Shōwa Restoration"). In short, post-1925 intellectuals sought to fuse Japanese Medievalism with state power, thus consummating the antimodernist quest of the Buddhists treated in this study. It was thoroughly antimodernist - a rejection of the original ideals of the Meiji Enlightenment which, many argued, had jettisoned Japan's authentic culture. But it was, at the same time, an affirmation of the Meiji Enlightenment, infusing the Imperial institution with Japanese Medievalism. We can observe this trend in the early Shōwa development of Watsuji's Ethics.

Following the submission of *Primitive Buddhism*, Watsuji was sent to Germany to study with Martin Heidegger. Although his trip was cut short in 1928 by his father's death, Watsuji's encounter with Heidegger's just-published *Being and Time* was an important one. In 1929, Watsuji began drafting *Climate: Human Scientific Reflections* (*Fūdo: ningengakuteki kōsatsu*), an impressionistic, observational study of his travels reminiscent of *Pilgrimages to Ancient Temples*. But unlike the Nietzschean *Pilgrimages*, *Climate* adopted Heidegger's categories of existential ontology.²⁹⁶ Many scholars have interpreted Watsuji's mature work as an "Eastern" response to *Being and Time*. However, Watsuji had already developed the core ideas that he used to critique *Being and Time*. *Climate* was a restatement of Watsuji's thought in Heideggerean terms. Watsuji argued that Heidegger's concept of *Dasein* was incomplete, in that he neglected the spatial dimensions of human existence. Focusing solely on the temporal dimensions of *Dasein* limited Heidegger to a study of isolated individuals, because it oriented existence toward the ultimate individuating experience of death. Watsuji argued that the spatial component of existence would transcend the limits of individuality by accounting for the space shared between individuals. These were the same criticisms Watsuji had used to distinguish the thought of Dōgen from that of Shinran. Applying them to Heidegger's *Being and Time*, Watsuji developed what became his own key terminology.

The concept of climate that is at the core of Watsuji's thesis is the idea that an individual does not experience the climate as an outside phenomenon pressing upon the individual. Rather, if one feels coldness, to use Watsuji's example, one's being is appearing out in the world as the experience of coldness. This outside space Watsuji calls

²⁹⁶ Watsuji Tetsurō, *Fūdo: Ningengakuteki kōsatsu* in *WTZ* Vol. 8; *A Climate: A Philosophical Study*, trans. Geoffrey Bownas (Tokyo: Printing Bureau, Japanese Government, 1961).

aidagara (“in-betweenness”), for it is in this space that individuals can exist together in the experience of climate. Watsuji uses a philological analysis of the Japanese term for human, *ningen*, to argue that this in-betweenness is the essence of being human, as *ningen* is written with the characters for “person” and “between.” This space is culturally bounded, as different world areas have different climatic features: desert (Africa, Central Asia, the Middle East), meadow (Europe), and monsoon (East Asia, India, the South Seas). The supra-individual space of climate takes its cultural form aesthetically, in the structures of everyday life (clothing, housing, food) and in art. With this, Watsuji transposed his cultural theory of Japanese values into the technical language of existential phenomenology that he called *ningengaku*, or Human Science, with Human (*ningen*) understood as the climatic space between individuals.

The crowning achievement of Watsuji’s work was the theory of Japanese Ethics that he crafted from his thought. As argued above, Watsuji’s early work was concerned with the resurrection of Japan’s Buddhist values, a project that amounted to a “discovery” of the Buddhist cultural history and self-cultivation of Japanese Medievalism, a late Meiji invention. In Watsuji’s hands, Japanese Medievalism became a weapon for combating the morality of the Meiji Enlightenment, which renewed its vigor at the dawn of the Shōwa era. Watsuji produced his first formal work on ethics with his 1931 lecture on the subject at Kyoto Imperial, which was also published that year in an Iwanami compilation of philosophy lectures.²⁹⁷ Drawing on the language of *Climate*, Watsuji argued that ethics (*rinrigaku*) was Human Science (*ningengaku*). Watsuji’s *Ethics*, which was to occupy his work for decades, was the crystallization into a philosophical theory of Japanese Medievalism.

Watsuji’s *Ethics* marked a critical turning point in the antagonism between Japanese Medievalism and the Meiji Enlightenment. The main premises of his thought were not new. The ideas that Buddhism was the essence of Japanese culture, and that Buddhism was an inward experience of the individual, were both key concepts in Watsuji’s work that had their origin in Meiji Buddhist thought, and were accepted as cultural orthodoxy by the Taishō period. Watsuji’s original contribution to Japanese Medievalism was his assertion that Buddhism was not above the ethical, but was in fact the essence of Japan’s distinctive ethical system. In this sense, Watsuji marked the beginning of an attempt to reconcile the antagonism of Buddhism and the Meiji Enlightenment. On one hand, it was a major innovation in a long-standing religious revolt against the modernization of Japan. But on the other hand, it also marked the intellectual synthesis of existential religion with state power, a position that would come to support an increasingly repressive politics as the Shōwa period progressed.

²⁹⁷ Watsuji Tetsurō, “*Rinrigaku: Ningengaku to shite rinrigaku no igi oyobi hōhō*,” in *Iwanami kōza: tetsugaku* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1931).

Conclusion: Medievalism vs. Marxism

In 1935, Watsuji left Kyoto Imperial University to assume the chair of Ethics at Tokyo Imperial University, thus cementing his position as one of the architects of cultural orthodoxy in Japan. That same year, Tosaka Jun published his *Japanese Ideology*, in which he identified Watsuji's Ethics, along with the philosophy of Nishida Kitarō, as the fascist ideology of Japan. Tosaka, himself a former student of Nishida, had been developing this critique for a few years. In 1932, he published an article in which he identified the work of Nishida and his disciples Miki Kiyoshi (1897-1945) and Tanabe Hajime (1885-1962) as bourgeois philosophy. Referring to them as the Kyoto School (the earliest known use of the term), Tosaka argued that their quasi-religious philosophy of Japanese culture strengthened the foundations of capitalist society by diverting attention away from practical social problems and redirecting it to problems of 'existence.'

Tosaka's Marxist critique of Watsuji and Nishida as "bourgeois" thinkers is illuminating, for it points out similarities with other bodies of thought that Marxists elsewhere have identified as "bourgeois." In Europe, Marxists of the Frankfurt School made a virtually identical critique of Existentialism.²⁹⁸ Most famously, Theodor Adorno argued in *The Jargon of Authenticity* (1964) that Existentialists employed a language that invoked a bogus realm of "authentic being." This language diverted attention from the real causes of human oppression in capitalist societies. It turned instead to the historical roots of the language of authenticity, which supposedly pointed to a lost cultural world of spiritual wholeness. Tosaka's critique of what I have called Japanese Medievalism, written some three decades before Adorno's critique of Existentialism, was truly ahead of its time.

As noted at the very outset of this study, Tosaka's critique continues to shape our understanding of Japanese Medievalism. It correctly illuminates our understanding of Japanese Medievalism in terms of its ideological function in industrial society. However, I also argued that Tosaka's dismissal of Japanese Medievalism as empty of real meaning limits our greater understanding of religious life in modern societies. Again, the parallel with Existentialism is instructive. In his monumental history of Marxism, Leszek Kołakowski identified this shortcoming of the Marxist critique of bourgeois ideology vis-à-vis Existentialism. He pointed out that Existentialism was not bourgeois ideology so much as it was Marxism's chief rival in the critique of bourgeois ideology. Although the intention of the Marxist critique of Existentialism was to prove that Marxism was the superior idiom, Kołakowski argues that the two were fellow travelers whose common enemy was the depersonalization of life under capitalist society.

²⁹⁸ The classic critique is Theodor Adorno, *The Jargon of Authenticity* (London: Routledge, 2003); the critiques by Lukács are less well regarded, and are described by Kołakowski as Stalinist screeds that attack any non-Marxist position as irrational and reactionary. See György Lukács, *The Destruction of Reason* trans. Peter Palmer (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1989); *Existentialism*, trans. Henry F. Mins in *Marxism and Human Liberation: Essays on History, Culture, and Revolution*, ed. E. San Juan, Jr. (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1973).

In the same way as the attacks on Hegel by Marx, Kierkegaard, and Stirner contained a common element, namely their critique of the primacy of impersonal ‘generality’ over real subjectivity, so the Marxists and existentialists were on common ground in criticizing the social system which confined human beings to socially determined roles and made them dependent on quasi-natural forces. The Marxists, following Lukács, called this state of things ‘reification’ and ascribed it, as did Marx, to the all-powerful effect of money as a leveler in capitalist conditions. Existentialism did not concern itself with explanations such as class struggle or property relationships, but it too was fundamentally a protest against the culture of industrially developed societies, reducing the individual to the sum of his human functions. The category of ‘authenticity’ or ‘authentic being’ (*Eigentlichkeit*), which plays an essential part in Heidegger’s early writings, was an attempt to vindicate the irreducible identity of the individual subject as against the anonymous social forces summed up in the term ‘the impersonal’ (*das Man*).²⁹⁹

This dissertation has made an analogous argument about Japanese Medievalism. It has adopted much of the Marxist critique laid out by Tosaka – namely, that Japanese Medievalism’s twin pillars of existential philosophy and cultural history developed as part and parcel of Japan’s incorporation into the global capitalist system. But like Kołakowski, I have argued that the Marxist “bourgeois ideology” critique aims mainly to discredit its target and, as a result, dismisses it as meaningless. By using the term “antimodernism,” rather than fascist or bourgeois, I have attempted to demonstrate that Japanese Medievalism, like Existentialism, “was fundamentally a protest against the culture of industrially developed societies,” a spiritual alternative to Marxism’s materialist critique of bourgeois ideology.³⁰⁰

Rethinking Japanese Medievalism as a spiritual critique of ideology in Japan has necessitated a rethinking of that ideology itself. Starting with the coup of the Meiji oligarchs, I tracked the successive layers of ideological justification that covered over the original core of naked power to conclude that the ruling ideology of Japan was an Enlightenment. Not an Enlightenment in the traditional sense of rationalization (which, in Japanese history has usually meant ‘Westernization’), but an Enlightenment in the critical sense developed by the Frankfurt School. It was an ideology of reality, used to define what was real and what was fanciful, so that the Meiji oligarchs could reorganize society accordingly. The Meiji Enlightenment’s ideology of the real was a synthesis of theology and science: a narrative of Japan’s divine history that legitimized the rule of the Meiji oligarchs, and a theory of scientific evolution that justified the oligarchs’s modernization project. This synthesis was not, as is traditionally argued, a breakdown of a normal Enlightenment. Rather, it is a local permutation of Enlightenments as they happen everywhere in the global process of modernization. The imperial institution and

²⁹⁹ Leszek Kołakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism: The Founders, The Golden Age, the Breakdown* trans. P.S. Falla (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2005), p. 1082.

³⁰⁰ On the relationship of Marxism to Existentialism, see also Lucien Goldmann, *Lukács and Heidegger: Towards a New Philosophy*, trans. William Q. Boelhower (London: Routledge, 2009).

evolutionary progress together constituted a mode of modern thought, analogous to the concept of universal humanity and progress in the European Enlightenment.

Japanese Medievalism, I have argued, evolved as a critical counter-enlightenment to the Meiji Enlightenment. The construction of the Shintō theology that legitimized Meiji authority necessitated the negation of Buddhism – i.e., the exclusion of Buddhism from the Meiji Enlightenment's official reality. The spiritual critique that eventually became Japanese Medievalism originated in this crisis. Seeking spiritual meaning in the world of modernizing Japan, the intellectual originators of Japanese Medievalism pioneered a religiosity for modern industrial society. It was based on individual experience and cultural history. Again, the analogy between Japanese Medievalism and Existentialism is useful. For both evolved as spiritual critiques of Enlightenment in their respective historical contexts.

In closing, this study of the origins and significance of Japanese Medievalism has reconsidered some of the foundational structures of the historiography of modern Japan. It has considered Enlightenment as a local event, one that both legitimized the particular power structure of the Meiji oligarchs and legitimized the construction of an industrial capitalist society. Modernity, or the cultural experience of capitalism, was a local event. Japanese Medievalism was an antimodernist response to this experience in Japan, and not solely a response to the West and its Enlightenment.

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>IES</i>	<i>Inoue Enryō Senshū</i>
<i>KMZ</i>	<i>Kiyozawa Manshi Zenshū</i>
<i>MTK</i>	<i>Meiji Tennō ki</i>
<i>NKZ</i>	<i>Nishida Kitarō Zenshū</i>
<i>SBR</i>	<i>Shin bukkyō ronsetsu shū</i>
<i>SDZ</i>	<i>Suzuki Daisetsu Zenshū</i>
<i>TDH</i>	<i>Tokyo Daigaku Hyakunenshi</i>
<i>WTZ</i>	<i>Watsuji Tetsurō Zenshū</i>

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