Everyday Fascism in Contemporary Japan

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Abstract

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This dissertation uses the concept of fascism in order to examine the socio-culture of contemporary Japan. Defined in terms of its commodity structure, fascism turns out to be a relevant concept to Japan not only prior to and during the Asia-Pacific War (1931-1945) but also from the postwar days to date. Against various forms of culturalism that claim that the country is essentially totalitarian and its culture is innately violent, I will argue that the country has shared fascist conditions with those other countries and regions that operate in the mode of mechanical reproduction. While the overall mode of mass-reproduction has been further articulated by different moments, such as late capitalism or post-modernism, the cultural and political condition of reducing singular lives and events into standardized forms has continued in these countries and regions roughly since the 1920s. My view will expand the horizon of studies of fascism, which has hitherto been limited to Europe between the two World Wars. At the same time, the view of fascism’s generality should not be blind to local inflections and historical specificities. In this dissertation, I will examine such trans-war Japanese institutions as the ideologies of emperorship, formation of the petty bourgeois class, and corporatist organizations of gender and locality. My dissertation will ethnographically investigate the way in which these institutions have interacted with the country’s modern capitalist everyday to result in fascist violence. The specific sites in which my ethnographies take place are the contemporary Tokyo and Yokohama suburbs (Chapters 1 and 3) and the Yasukuni Shinto Shrine in Tokyo (Chapters 2 and 4), among others. These ethnographies will elucidate how the categories of class, gender, and generation
crisscross everyday pleasures and anxieties of commodification. Lastly and not least importantly, another historically specific element of postwar Japanese fascism is memories and traces of its prewar violence exercised on other Asians and Pacific Islanders. The problem of ill mourning seems to critically ground the postwar Japanese formation of fascist potentialities. The last chapter will discuss contemporary Japanese efforts for mourning and the accompanying issue of ethics.
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Suggestively perhaps, the date and location are vague. It was some time during my early graduate years, somewhere in the so-called “graduate ghetto,” that is, roughly between Whitney Avenue and State Street in downtown New Haven. Over potluck dishes and international beers, a small number of us were wound down in the couch, remotely hearing silly laughter from the kitchen. “Doug” was as loaded as any one of us, which made him oddly quiet and melancholic. I am not sure how we ended up in talking about it, but when I noticed, he was describing some details of a set of action figures comprised of American and German soldiers from the Second World War.

“And here were commanders pointing their fingers at their lieutenants; and there were soldiers with rifles, bazookas, and machineguns. Some were the snipers on their stomach; others were about to throw their grenades,” he spread out the imaginary map.

According to him, the Germans had been painted black and the Americans had been green—fifty pieces each. The little Doug would line them up neatly so that they would look realistic in their positions, under artificial trees and on paper grass. He would look at them tirelessly, everyday. He had never even played with them, according to him—“the point was their order, I guess.” The line and order, starting from the commanders and ending in infantries, however, had not lasted forever, as he might have wished. One day, one of his classmates had come to play with the figures. The order had been scrambled; one of the German commanders had even gone missing—as it would turn out, forever. “John Doe!” the grown-up Doug in the New Haven party quietly shouted the name of the classmate from long ago and shook his head.
The talk was becoming pointless and everyone started to go to the kitchen to get the freshly baked cookies.

It is obvious that Doug’s story is one of those insignificant, party talks that people might make late at night to sound intimate, to repel sleepiness. As for me, I am not sure why I even remember the story. Even now, I occasionally think of the otherwise complete set of Doug’s soldiers, ninety-nine in all, whose lost perfection apparently still haunts him. I imagine the miniature soldiers’ plastic bodies, their eternal poses in Doug’s parents’ dark basement, somewhere in the middle of the Midwestern surrealism, in its tornado-pregnant tranquility. Perhaps now it is me who is haunted, if not by the soldiers, then by the perceived bizarreness of a child who is obsessed with the organization of, rather than the interaction with, action figures. But who can actually tell that I am not obsessed with the soldiers, the pleasure and fear of their meticulous organization per se?

This dissertation, entitled “Everyday Fascism in Contemporary Japan,” was written in the shadow of these eternal soldiers, as my mind kept going back to their images, seeking clues and inspirations.
Introduction: Fascism as a Mass Phenomenon

This dissertation recasts contemporary Japan using the theoretical concept of fascism and the analytical category of class. Conventionally, studies of fascism have marginalized Japan as their subject, calling the pre-World War Two Japanese polity “authoritarianism,” for instance.¹ Conventional studies have also been cautious about considering as their subjects any movements or discourses that are observed after the 1920-40s.² In this dissertation, I adopt the position that fascism is a general phenomenon beyond the European continent and the period of the two World Wars.

The argument as to the generality of fascism has grown out of the insight that fascism is a phenomenon of modernity and capitalism.³ Commodity logic, on which modern capitalism is based, abstracts, “equalizes,” and totalizes singular things and humans as values, while marking each value as different from others.⁴ The argument is that fascism radically accentuates these

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² One of the most articulate denials of the generality of fascism comes from the historian Gilbert Allardyce in his “What Fascism Is Not: Thoughts on the Deflation of a Concept,” *American Historical Review*, 84 (1979): 367-388. Payne (Ibid.) similarly limits the phenomenon of fascism to the geography of Western Europe and the time period of the 1920-40s, when he considers South African Ossewabrandwag, for instance. According to him, it is merely “protofascism.” Latin American fascism such as the Chilean National Socialist Movement is likewise fascism that is “copied” and “quickly failed.” Walter Laqueur, in his *Fascism: Past, Present, Future* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), uses a broader net than these two do, with which he tries to grasp such diversified regimes and movements as Soviet communism, Islamic fundamentalism, or European neofascism in terms of fascism, yet confusingly, without a theoretically rigorous definition of fascism.


workings of commodification by violently erasing the singularity of each individual and systematically integrating the thusly-rendered individuals as mutually identical yet differently functional units of society. The fascist totality of the radically commoditized humans potentially looks attractive and forceful to these individuals, to the extent that they are always already the modern capitalist subjects. In order to produce commoditized goods and services, these individuals have to be forgetful about their own creative agency, while fascinated with their products’ commoditized appearances. When a neatly packaged commodity aligned with others in the identical shapes and a range of colors is so strangely alluring that the commodity appears even to command a certain emotional and psychological dominance over one’s monotonous, reified life, one is already prepared to find an aesthetic satisfaction and irresistible force in fascism. Lined-up soldiers, “mass” events, the “equal” and equalized subjects—the picture that fascism provides is at once that of the commodity’s overwhelming beauty and that of humans’ reified self-expression. Objectively and subjectively, fascism is thus deeply rooted in modern capitalism.

This dissertation is a survey of this connection in the case of pre- and post-WWII Japan. My purpose is not to particularize Japan as specifically fascist, but to generalize fascism out of the specific history of Japan.

The theory of general fascism necessitates a new theory of modern capitalism. If the violence of fascism’s rendition and integration so closely maps onto the power of capitalism’s abstraction and formalization, is it not because the capitalist abstraction and formalization are potentially totalitarian and/or otherwise violent? Does not modern capitalism necessarily invite the problem of fascism due to capitalism’s own potentialities for violence? How can and should one

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re-consider the capitalist logic and mechanism in the face of their fascist appropriation? Max Horkheimer and Theodore Adorno address these questions, using the concepts of “mythology” and the Enlightenment, the Enlightenment that they see as logically and socially related to commodity logic. Their conclusion is that “[j]ust as the myths already realize enlightenment, so enlightenment with every step becomes more deeply engulfed in mythology.” The wrath of the gods as vengeance on the villains, repetitious ordeals that the heroes and heroines have to go through, and these heroic figures’ eventual returns to their homelands—these mythemes, according to Horkheimer and Adorno, already show the modern principles of retribution, repetition, and identity. But in addition to these modern principles that are inherent in mythic violence, the scholars are here talking about the mythic violence of modernity, which contradictorily persists at the center of the otherwise rational logic of the Enlightenment. To these scholars, Enlightenment logic is initially that of the quantification of the world. As is exemplified by mathematics, Enlightenment reason then tries to use the unity of the thusly-abstracted world, i.e. the unity as consisting of numbers only, in order to build a system, a scheme. Horkheimer and Adorno suggest that nature fundamentally resides in or eventually returns to this system of rationality in three ways. First, nature can be found as the uncontrollability of the system’s totality. The system does not completely subjugate itself to human knowledge, to the degree that the system comes to acquire its own life, automaticity (the return of “animism”). Second, also in the process of quantification, the violence of nature manifests itself as reason’s inability to consider each individual being ethically in its preciousness and uniqueness. The system’s inhumane automaticity has something to do with this fundamental unethically of reason. Third, related to all of these points,
there is a certain requisite inertia in the rational mind, in the sense that modern individuals join
the Enlightenment projects driven by what Horkheimer and Adorno call impulse. Initially, they
say, the impulse is that to survive in the middle of natural environments and later, the impulse is
that to maintain the totality that has started to automatically subjugate humans. The violence of
impulse is a requisite for the system to sustain itself, since without it, enlightened humans would
rationally understand that the systematic quantification oppresses both humans and nature and
would eventually try to escape the loop of subjugation. Horkheimer and Adorno suggest that fas-
cism should be considered the *fleurs du mal* of the Enlightenment, which absorb the Enlighten-
ment’s fundamental violence and express its full potential. Absurd formality without meaning, its
subjects’ blind conformity to the meaningless forms, and the formalist totalization of the blindly
self-subjectivized beings—these characteristics of fascism are merely the logical extensions of
the Enlightenment’s instrumentality, according to these scholars.8

Note here that to argue that there is something violent about modernity is obviously not
to argue that every regime in modern times deserves the name of fascism. What this dissertation
argues is the inverse—fascism is modern and capitalist. This argument does not require one to
re-categorize other types of modern capitalist regimes and movements as fascist; one is rather
required to reexamine modernity and capitalism in terms of their potentialities to grow such po-
isonous flowers as fascism. Any violence of other regimes and movements in modern times could
and should be studied as sharing the same potentialities of modern capitalist violence with fas-

8 It is known that these insights were collectively developed in the intellectual interactions between
Horkheimer and Adorno, Walter Benjamin, Siegfried Kracauer, and other Frankfurt School thinkers. Horkheimer
and Adorno’s thesis of the dialectic between the Enlightenment and myth, then, is found already in the following
the analyses of the actual process through which these thinkers interacted, see Susan Buck-Morss, *The Origin of
Negative Dialectics: Theodore W. Adorno, Walter Benjamin, and the Frankfurt Institute* (New York: Free Press,
cism; but again, this does not mean that these regimes and movements are fascist. The questions that this dissertation asks are, “What nurtures these violent potentialities of modernity and capitalism, which are common among modern capitalist societies, to realize these potentialities into the actual violence of fascism in particular societies? What catalysts cause fascism in one modern capitalist society at a certain historical juncture and not in another? How historically specifically do certain actors succeed in sublimating the fascist desires for and anxieties about commoditized equivalence into the democratic ideas and institutions of humanitarian equality?” In order to answer these questions, this dissertation explores the concrete agents of a fascist manifestation in the case of trans-war Japan.

Their conditions’ generality notwithstanding, fascist movements are classed. One of the biggest contradictions of modern capitalism, class tends to cause peculiar patterns in fascist movements’ constituencies. Even though the whole society generally understands the logic and charm of fascism more or less intuitively, certain class groups in the same society usually support the fascist movements more vehemently than others. The key here is the radicalized law of equivalence, as fascists practice it, which appeals particularly to those class groups that are underprivileged in the modern capitalist system. In this dissertation, I will examine the way in

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9 Many studies of fascism’s constituency in interwar Europe have pointed out the similarly classed structure of fascism. Stanley Payne, for instance, finds that voters for Nazis were either the petty bourgeoisie in small towns or farmers, while the non-organized proletariat (the young lumpen proletariat, farm laborers, etc.) followed suit in later years (esp. as members of the SA). He reports that the members of Italian Fascismo, prior to Mussolini’s compromise in October 1922 with elites, were similarly farmers and the petty bourgeoisie (Mussolini is known to have demobilized the petty bourgeoisie upon his alliance with elites). See his Fascism: Comparison and Definition (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1980), pp.58-61. For similar studies, see Renzo de Felice, Interpretations of Fascism, trans. Brenda Huff Everett (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1977), p.316; Reinhard Kühnl, “Pre-Conditions for the Rise and Victory of Fascism in Germany,” in Stein Ugelvik Larsen, Bernt Hagtvet, and Jan Petter Myklebust eds. Who Were the Fascists” Social Roots of European Fascism (Bergen, Oslo, Tromso: Universitetsforlaget, 1980), pp.118-130; and Nico Pascich, “The Electoral Geography of the Nazi landslide,” in Larsen, Hagtvet, and Myklebust eds., Ibid., pp.283-300. About Hungarian fascists’ appeal to petty bourgeoisie plus lumpen proletariat, see Miklós Lackó, “The Social Roots of Hungarian Fascism: The Arrow Cross”; and György Ránki, “The Fascist Vote in Budapest in 1939,” both in Larsen, Hagtvet, and Myklebust eds., Ibid., pp.395-400 and 401-416 respectively. In Norway and Spain, fascism started as middle- to upper-class movements and then extended to include petty bourgeoisie—see Stein Ugelvik Larsen, “The Social Foundations of Norwegian Fascism
which everyday fascism in contemporary Japan is generated by the distressed bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie, who carry embodied wishes for equality. Like many other places in the globe, Japan today is not hesitant about pushing its economy to the neo-liberal extreme, polarizing the population that was once called “all middle-class” (ichi-oku sōchūryū). Although every group in the neoliberal class spectrum is equally supplied by the desires for and fears of the ultimate equivalence that fascism promises through its violence, the “proletarianized” bourgeoisie and the further deprived petty bourgeoisie are so conditioned that they are more inclined to the fascist promise of equalization than “dot-com millionaires” and other nouveau riche might be. This dissertation will locate the moments of fascist generation in everyday Japan, as the country is going through a tectonic shift in its class dynamic. Fetishistically fascinated and melancholically forgetful, the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie in Japan today are the unconscious agents of the prolonged moments of fascism there.

A troubling expression of the society’s class-structure, fascism in everyday Japan has a history. About a century ago when the country experienced a similar level of socio-economic turmoil to the current one due to a series of the post-First World War recessions, dispossessed farmers, in addition to small retailers, clerks, carpenters, plumbers, teachers, monks, small landlords, and others of a petty bourgeois background started numerous movements for grass-roots

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10 According to Yasusuke Murakami, the term circulated as “common sense” (jōshiki) among the Japanese during the 1950-80s period, after the Prime Minister’s Office’s annual Survey of National Life in this period had found out that about 90% (initially about 70%) of those surveyed responded that they thought they would belong to the middle-class. See his Shin Chūkan Taishū no Jidai (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron-sha, 1984); p.167. For criticism of the ideology, see Marilyn Ivy, “Formations of Mass Culture in Postwar Japan,” in Andrew Gordon ed., Postwar Japan as History (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp.239-258 and William W. Kelly, “Finding a Place in Metropolitan Japan: Ideologies, Institutions, and Everyday Life,” in Gordon, Ibid., pp.189-216. Many empirical studies also prove the myth to be erroneous—for example, see Joe Moore ed., Other Japan: Conflict, Compromise, and Resistance Since 1945 (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1997) and John Lie, Multiethnic Japan (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2001).
economic cooperation, local modernization, and neighborly supports of a moral nature. It was the historical epoch in which the economy was being monopolized worldwide, the state’s and industries’ response to the globalized recessions that culminated in the Great Depression of 1929-1939. Independent businesses, artisanship, and agriculture were declining everywhere. It is perhaps the “delayed” nature of their modes of production behind the world trend of mechanical reproduction that made the petty bourgeoisie and farmers particularly susceptible to the anachronistic surface of fascist ideologies—the ideology of “communities,” for example. The alleged “alternative” to the class-divided society that impoverished these actors, the supposedly moral communities were said to guarantee the members’ mutual equality. But at the same time, the point of this ideological morality, which was supposed to assure the extra-capitalist equality in these communities, rather confirmed the totality of capitalism. As Kant says, morality in modern times cannot be but the principle of subjectivization; and in that sense morality is intimately connected to commodification. The farmers and petty bourgeoisie were surely delayed materially yet not completely outside capitalism.

Most prominently, the moral equality that the farming and petty bourgeois Japanese dreamt about then culminated in the ideology of the “emperor’s infants” (tennō no sekishi),

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12 Horkheimer and Adorno (Ibid.) record the petty bourgeois decline in Germany. See especially the chapter, “Juliette or Enlightenment and Morality,” pp.81-119.


14 As Horkheimer and Adorno (Ibid.) say, “[e]very spiritual resistance it [the Enlightenment] encounters serves merely to increase its strength... Whatever myths the resistance may appeal to, by virtue of the very fact that they become arguments in the process of opposition, they acknowledge the principle of dissolvent rationality for which they reproach the Enlightenment. Enlightenment is totalitarian” (p.6). See Ernst Bloch (Ibid.) for his detailed analysis of the non-contemporaneous contemporaneity of German farmers in Weimar to Nazi days. A. James Gregor, citing Giovanni Ansaldo, similarly argues that Italian fascism “resonated with the interests of the ‘Italian petty bourgeoisie obsessed with modernity.’” See his “Fascism and Modernization: Some Addenda,” *World Politics*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (April 1974), 370-384; 376-7; the emphasis is Gregor’s.
whereby all the Japanese were alleged to be morally and aesthetically equal before the then polit-ico-cultural sovereign, the “emperor” (tennō). Despite its reference to archaic myths and “tradi-
tions,” the ideology’s technique of abstracting variously classed individuals into the same form of the subject (infants or sekishi) and imagination of total exchangeability among the thus-abstracted subjects would be possible only after the advent of modern capitalism and its logic of the commodity. The technologies of mechanical reproduction, which had been used in the Japanese economy since the 1920s, further facilitated these techniques and imaginations adopted by the emperor’s infant ideology. With the help of these technologies, such as the cinema, the photograph, and the phonograph, the farmers and petty bourgeoisie enjoyed the images in which they appeared to be identical with each other as the emperor’s infants. These images were metaphorically referring to and literally created by the infinitely repeatable forms of the mechanically reprinted photos, films, records, and so on. The farmers’ and petty bourgeois fascism in Japan thus presented the picture of completely commodified equivalence among its subjects. While co-opting these actors’ ideology of equality, the state also promoted corporatism, which was a proposal of differentiation.

Corporatism throughout the world was conceived about the turn of the last century as an elite solution to modern capitalist anomie, especially commodification of humans (reification)

15 Thinkers like Walter Benjamin (Ibid.) underscore the age-specificity of fascism within the overall regime of modern capitalism. Especially the mode of mechanical reproduction, where modernity and capitalism have attained their most advanced state, is the mode in which fascism was born and thrives, according to Benjamin. Fascism intends to promote the logic and technologies of mass-reproduction in its project to aesthetically and physically eliminate singularities and differences, particularly the class disparities that are the inevitable consequences of modern capitalism. One of the most prominent examples that show the relation between fascism and the mode of mechanical reproduction will be Leni Riefenstahl’s 1935 film Triumph of the Will (Bloomington, IL: Synapse Films, 2001), in which the powerful impression of cadence and organization that was cinematographically produced pushes itself through to the end of the film, literally triumphing over any possible chaos and fluidity of more than 700,000 classed and otherwise diversified people, who gathered for the Nazi Party’s Nuremberg Convention (see Sontag, Ibid., for useful comments). About whether Japan in the 1920s was ruled by the mode of mechanical reproduction, Harry Harootunian (Ibid., 1995) affirmatively describes contemporary Japanese scholars’ anxiety about this mode and about the resultant disappearance of aura from the society.
and the resultant formation of the “masses.” The concept of corporatism can be compared to the ideology of equality, which aimed at mobilizing people as masses, that is, as reified producers and consumers of mechanically reproduced products. Although the emperor’s infant ideology, for example, did aspire to check the inherently uncontrollable dispersal of the masses, it aspired to do so by merely magnetizing them to the center (e.g. the emperor). Corporatism was different in its attempt to block the infinite exchangeability and dissemination of the masses by compartmentalizing them into a multiple number of supposedly organic groups other than class. Corporatists sought organic solidarity not only within each of these groups but among the groups so that each of them was a function of their collectivity, which was then regarded as an organism in itself. Mussolini’s Italy was conceived as an organic, national whole, which was consisted of a bundle (fascis or fasces) of vocational groups. In Japan, the organic whole was imagined to be the fantastic body of the emperor, which was ideologized as coinciding with the territory and polity of the Japanese nation-state (kokutai). In 1940, the body of the nation-state was institutionalized as the Imperial Rule Assistance Association (Taisei Yokusan Kai), coordinating and controlling its subordinate corporate groups, each of which was assembled according to the

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16 The masses’ affinity with political totalitarianism is of course derived from their aesthetically totalitarian nature. Where there is not even a hint of diversity in their members’ significance, identities, and other contents, the form that they adopt (“styles,” “trends,” etc.) comes to totalize them, readying them for fascist and other politically totalitarian manipulations. See Horkheimer and Adorno, Ibid.; esp. the chapter “The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception,” pp.120-167).

17 According to Stanley Payne, the most concise definition of corporatism can be found in Philippe Schmitter, who states “Corporatism can be defined as a system of interest representation in which constituent units are organized into a limited number of singular, compulsory, noncompetitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognized or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls....” (in Payne, Ibid., 1980, pp.24-5; parenthesis original).

18 Thus Mussolini invented the appellation, Fascismo, for his movement. According to Alan Cassels, “Although the Duce was highly successful between the wars in cornering the market in corporative philosophy, this aspect of Fascist Italian activity is often overlooked,” perhaps “due in part to the belated formulation of corporative doctrine, several years after Mussolini took office,” that is, after he compromised with the elites. See his “Janus: The Two Faces of Fascism” in The Canadian Historical Association ed., Historical Papers, Vol.4, No.1, 1969, 166-184; p.171.

19 In other words, the emperor had the two bodies that Ernst Hartwig Kantorowicz discusses in his King’s Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1957).
members’ gender, age, status, ethnicity, etc. Similar to the emperor’s infant ideology, the structural functional view of the organic nation-state was predicated on commodity logic, as its over-emphasized spatiality (body, function, categories, etc., versus their histories) might attest to. Differentiation, after all, is an important working of commodity logic, for exchanges never occur among self-same products. Yet, as different commodities are the same in their being the congealment of people’s “labor-power” (and in that sense taking the same value-form), different corporate groups were the same as parts of the whole. In order to be the parts, the groups and the members of the groups had to forsake other, more idiosyncratic aspects of themselves that did not fit the whole.

Materially, therefore, the ideologies of the emperor’s body (corporatism) and the emperor’s infants (fascism proper) shared the same commodity logic, whereas in their appearances, they were the opposite forces of differentiation and equalization. The ideological opposition was socially played out between the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie. While the petty bourgeoisie...

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20 About Japanese corporatism that was enforced more vigorously in borderlands than in other spaces, see Prasenjit Duara, Sovereignty and Authenticity: Manchukuo and the East Asian Modern (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003) and Hyun Ok Park, Two Dreams in One Bed: Empire, Social Life, and the Origins of the North Korean Revolution in Manchuria (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005).

21 See Marx, Ibid., p.132.

22 According to one of the most influential ideologues of corporatism in Japan then, Tetsurō Watsuji, each unit of the nation-state should be a moral individual sans “selfishness” (wagamama). The corporatist individual is then comparable to the structuralist, in addition to capitalist, value, in its lack of real singularity and in its acquisition of the new, abstracted difference that takes on significance only in its comparison with others, as Naoki Sakai’s post-structuralist reading of Watsuji suggests. See Sakai, “Return to the West/Return to the East: Watsuji Testsurō’s Anthropology and Discussions of Authenticity,” in his Translation and Subjectivity: On Japan and Cultural Nationalism (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), pp.72-116. The concept of value is of course the theoretical strength and weakness of structuralism, as the concept necessarily starts with the conceptualization of totality—see critique of Saussure by David Graeber, Toward an Anthropological Theory of Value: The False Coin of Our Own Dreams (New York: Palgrave, 2001); especially pp.49-89. Similarly, value in the Saussurean or even Foucaultian version of structuralism cannot consider those temporal factors that the parts of the whole have to contain—transformations, decays, growth, or amnesia could and do easily de-constitute things and individuals as the structural values. See Rosalind Morris, In the Place of Origins: Modernity and Its Mediums in Northern Thailand (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2000); pp.46-7. Sakai’s criticism of Watsuji also takes into account temporality.

23 My class-analysis of 1920-40s Japan builds on those preceding social scientific studies in Japan, which identify the petty bourgeoisie as the agents of the Japanese violence then. For instance, Shōji Yamada pursues massacres of Korean residents in the wake of the Great Kantō Earthquake in 1923 as one of the manifestations of the
sie’s and farmers’ desperate situations made them exercise what Deleuze and Guattari call “war-machine” force to radically commoditize (“equalize”) the classed everyday, the bourgeoisie was inclined toward differentiation and categorization, to the degree that they would like to maintain their difference, albeit in other disguises than class. In the end, the ideological strife between the class groups was solved as the petty bourgeois war-machine took over the state and drove it into the “all-out” war. Two million Japanese and twenty million other Asians were killed according to the ideology of the emperor’s infants, thus eternalizing their equivalence in their deaths.

Japanese petty bourgeois violence. Among his numerous works, see e.g. Kantō Dai-Shinsai Chōsen-jin Gyakusatsu Mondai Kanketsu Shiryō (Tokyo: Ryokuin Shobō, 2004). At the same time, I depart from these studies for their more or less prominently suggested nationalism, originally introduced by their muse and master, Masao Maruyama. According to him, the petty bourgeois belligerence exhibited in neighborhoods and battlefields during the war was merely a new instance of the ethno-culturally specific, prelinguistic violence of Japan. See his “Nihon no Shishō,” in Nihon no Shishō (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1961), pp.1-66.

Another point of my criticism of those preceding studies is their negligence to analyze the bourgeoisie involvement in fascism. It is due to such negligence that corporatism in Japan has been studied in terms of the state enforcement and people's subjection. Corporatism, in these studies, looks to be the almost natural corollary of the teleologically conceived advancement of the modern bureaucratic state. See, for instance, Peter Duus and Daniel Okimoto, “Fascism and the History of Prewar Japan: the Failure of a Concept,” in The Journal of Asian Studies, Vol.39, No.1 (November 1979): 65-76 and Yasushi Yamanouchi, “Hōhō-teki Joron: Sōryoku-sen to System Tōgō,” in Yamanouchi, Victor Koschmann, and Ryūichi Narita eds., Ibid., pp.9-53. By introducing the corporatist agents of bourgeois and elite ideologues and mass media into my study, I intend to provide a new, historical approach that juxtaposes the two ideologies of the emperor’s infants and emperor’s body (corporatism) in the same historical plane of their mutual competition.

In their A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia, translation and foreword by Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari similarly observe that “fascism is inseparable from a proliferation of molecular focuses in interaction, which skip from point to point, before beginning to resonate together in the National Socialist State” (p.214; emphasis original). These molecular foci are replete with suicidal, “war-machine” force, according to their imagination, which struggles to “tak[e] over the State” to build its own fascist regime (or the regime taken over by a war machine is called fascist) (p.230). “Total wars” that fascist countries tended to embark on in the 1940s could be reconsidered from this perspective—“so-called total war seems less a State undertaking than an undertaking of a war machine that appropriates the State and channels into it a flow of absolute war whose only possible outcome is the suicide of the State itself” (231). To Deleuze and Guattari, the war machine represents what they call the “nomadic,” a kind of trans-historical figure, with which to imagine the fascist that transgresses particular, historical regimes.

Naoki Sakai (Ibid.) similarly says about Tetsurō Watsuji’s philosophy, “And if the putative systematicity of totality as the human being is always threatened by sociality, the return to the authentic self would require a much more violent decisiveness toward an ecstatic leap into communality,” the result of which being “unnatural, violent death” (p.98). In Watsuji’s corporatism, the basic unit of the totality, a moral individual, has to be always already systematically related to others. Realization of this inherent system and its totality is idealized to be a “return.” Insofar as the authenticity of the return is guaranteed by one's determination to purge sociality and other historical factors of life, Watsuji’s “human being” (ningen) or moral individual must be dead. Watsuji thus shows the community of death could be the corollary of corporatism as well. However, with the minimal condition of such a community being one's reduction (“return” in Watsuji’s terminology) to the unit of totality (structuralists’ “value”), the hierarchical tendencies of Watsuji, which are integral in his philosophy (as in his concepts of aidagara and kaiwa), are merely frills, though important ones in analyzing fascism in terms of class.
Thus my dissertation sees the prominently oppressive ideologies, movements, and regimes of 1920-40s Japan as fascist and examines the way in which the ideological, institutional, and psychological legacies of this previous instance are inherited and advanced in the country today. In contrast to this position, there are other camps of scholars who diagnose that pre-WWII Japan was not fascist. Three major theoretical trends are responsible for this diagnosis: modernism, certain Marxism, and culturalism, roughly corresponding to similar schools in European studies of fascism. Modernists and Stalinists view fascism as the problem of the advanced society after fully-fledged modernization and/or monopoly economy. According to their respectively developmentalist ideas of history, Japan after the First World War was still agrarian with the “feudalistic” remnant of the “emperor system” (tennō-sei). It is true that there was some bourgeois formation observable, they say, yet it was formed “from above” (ue kara), that is, by the state, and not by the spontaneous force of a matured history. Therefore, the representative of modernism, Masao Maruyama, concluded that the political and military violence that Japan then exercised was that of “ultra-statism” (chō kokka-shugi) and not people’s fascism; while historical materialists in Japan, Kōza-ha maintain that the violent agent should be attributed to what they call “imperial absolutism” (tennō-sei zattai-shugi) and not the people. These ideas seem to

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27 Another group of Japanese Marxists, Rōnō-ha (“Labor and Agriculture Faction”), though, have insisted that the 1920-40s regimes and movements in Japan deserved the name of fascism, for, according to them, bourgeois domination had already been established in the country then. At the same time, similar to Kōza-ha, Rōnō-ha emphasizes the existence of the emperor and admits this existence as the specifically Japanese factor in Japanese fascism. In the 1950s, these two groups of Marxists eventually reconciled with each other and jointly presented the thesis of “fascism of the emperor system” (tennō-sei fascism). See Gavan McCormack, “Nineteen-Thirties Japan: Fascism?,” in Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars, 14. no.2 (April-June 1982): 20-32 and Sebastian Conrad, The Quest for the Lost Nation: Writing History in Germany and Japan in the American Century, trans. by Alan Nothnagle (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2010(1999)), p.99.
be caused partly by their respective views of the emperor and nation as prior to the advent of modern capitalism and not as its effects. Despite modern capitalism, according to these theories, the emperor and people as his national-cultural subjects remained outside the economic sphere of the society, which made the post-1920s Japanese polity and politico-military oppression culturally unique.28

The Kōza-ha Marxists’ and modernists’ anti-materialist position is repeated in the third trend of the “Japan as non-fascist” theorem, which is developed by Japanese and American anthropologists and culturalists. Ruth Benedict, the de facto founder of this line of argument, would

28 Modernists and historical materialists elsewhere repeat similarly culturalist analysis of fascism, causing Felice (Ibid.) to call them “classics” of fascism studies. For instance, according to a modernization theorist, A. K. F. Organski, fascism is the phenomenon that is observable in a modernizing country as a reactionary fortification of traditional sectors and leaders. Similar to Maruyama, Organski merely assumes that the “non-modern” remains in and “resists” modernization. See his “Fascism and Modernization,” in S. J. Woolf ed. The Nature of Fascism (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1968); the quotes are from p.33. A notorious perversion of the classical culturalist theories can be seen in Friedrich Meinecke, who renounces fascism as an exception in the otherwise steady, moral-cultural progress of German national history—the exception that should be attributed to the importation of the French Revolutionary influences, according to him. Meinecke, The German Catastrophe: Reflections and Recollections (Boston: Beacon Press, 1963(1946)).

The theory of fascism as an exception is similarly advocated from non-culturalist positions. Benedetto Croce, for instance, famously said that fascism should be placed between historical “parentheses” (see Felice Ibid.; p.14). Juan Linz similarly argues that fascism as a political “latecomer” had to fill the ideological and constituent “niche” in the late 20th century political scenes in Europe—see his “Political Space and Fascism as a Latecomer,” in Stein Uselvik Larsen ed, Ibid., pp.153-189. To Dominick LaCapra, fascism is a return of religiosity (i.e. the modern sacred, sublime, or “elation”), which he thinks as being repressed and/or otherwise superseded in the process of modernization. See LaCapra, Representing the Holocaust, History, Theory, Trauma (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994) and History and Memory after Auschwitz (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998). In Saul Friedlander’s similar idea, fascism represents another instance of modern repression, i.e. that of death—see his Reflections of Nazism: An Essay on Kitsch and Death, trans. by Thomas Weyr (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993(1983)). Giorgio Agamben also tries to think about fascist concentration camps in light of the concepts of zoé (bare life), homo sacer, state of exception, etc., in his Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life, trans. by Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1998(1995)). Slightly differently, Erich Fromm and Wilhelm Reich associate fascism with “deviant” personality types, such as sado-masochism and authoritarianism, which could and should be corrected for the subject’s full maturity. See Fromm, Escape from Freedom (New York: H. Holt, 1941(1941)) and Reich, The Mass Psychology of Fascism, 3rd ed., rev. and enl., ed. by Mary Higgins and Chester M. Raphael (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1930).

The classic theories and theories of repression are similar, with their similarity being seen from my perspective that tries to locate fascism in what is not bracketed and/or repressed, viz. in the overt space and time of our modern capitalist everyday. From this perspective, the nature of fascism is banality, represented by and presenting itself in such everyday realms as mass-culture, consumption, and the language of mass-media (vs. unspeakable experiences of violence or equally unspeakable realm of folk and culture). For banality of fascism, see Hannah Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil (New York: Penguin Books, 1977(1964)) and Claude Lanzmann, Shoah (Hollywood, CA: New Yorker Video, 2003).
say that Japanese belligerence exhibited in the Pacific War could not be understood otherwise than in terms of their “unconditional and unrestricted loyalty to the Emperor of Japan.”

Their loyalty should be placed in the context of on (moral obligations), chū (loyalty), and other time-resistant, moral cultural concepts, Benedict says. Similarly, culturalists have blamed Japan’s “vertically” rigid social structure, popular dependence on (maternal) authorities, and “situational” morality for having caused Japanese aggression in the war. As with Benedict, they abstain from using the term, “fascism.”

Alongside the mysterious effects of commodification that the emperor went through prior to the end of the war, the postwar East Asian geopolitics under the Cold War should be considered here in order to explain the prominence of the culturalized idea of the emperor in the three versions of “Japan-as-non-fascist” theories. Culturalization of the emperor as the “symbol” of the postwar “state and of the unity of the people” was required to construct the new sovereign of

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Japan, the capitalist democratic nation. According to Cold War logic, this nation had to be neither communist nor otherwise radical, but mildly distracted by mass-culturalized nationalism centered around the “tradition” of the emperor. Japan-as-non-fascist theories have (perhaps unintentionally) contributed to the Cold War efforts to invest the utmost amount of national resources in the capitalist reconstruction of Japan, while these resources could have been used to recompense other Asian and Pacific losses caused by Japan.

This dissertation studies contemporary Japanese history in the theoretical framework of fascism. This framework is employed not due to any cultural attributes of the country, but due to the historical efforts of people, who under the continuous mode of mechanical reproduction have variously tried to imagine and realize the problematic idea of equivalence. Although since about the 1980s the country has been discussed under the rubric of “postmodernism” or “late capitalism,” the new trend can be thought of as an intensification (and not replacement) of the core feature of the mechanical reproductive mode of production, i.e. the massification of people and goods as the pastiche of the “origin.” I will examine the ways in which the continuous, and

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33 The quote is from Article 1, the 1947 Constitution of Japan.
34 The Cold War association of the culturalized nation with capitalism will be clearer in the backdrop of what is excluded from the nation; those resident Koreans who were regarded as communists.
35 After almost sixty years, Norma Field investigated the repercussions of this capitalist decision not to ethically and politically resolve these losses. See her “War and Apology: Japan, Asia, the Fiftieth, and After,” in Positions 5:1 (Spring 1997): 1-49.
36 The dissertation fieldwork was conducted between 2007 and 2008, in addition to numerous months-long pre-dissertation works.
37 Due to the digital technology that has featured the post-1980s everyday throughout the globe, “the very memory of use-value is effaced,” according to the observation by Frederic Jameson in his “Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism,” New Left Review, no.146 (September/October 1984), 53-92; p.66. However, the three characteristics of postmodernism that he lists (“a new depthlessness,” “a...weakening of historicity,” and “a...new...emotional ground tone” (p.58)) have been initiated about one hundred years ago already by the camera. Although I agree that the digital broadened the possibility of new aesthetics (“crispness”) and innovative usage (the “multimedia” enjoyment of a certain software), it seems to me to merely mark one period within the overall mode of mechanical reproduction—perhaps a period of maturity and saturation. Peter Lunenfeld is helpful in understanding the digital—see his “Introduction: Screen Grabs: The Digital Dialectic and New Media Theory” in his ed. Digital Dialectic: New Essays on New Media (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000), pp.xiv-xxi. About postmodernism, see also Jean Baudrillard, Simulacra and Simulation, trans. by Sheila Faria Glaser (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994). Masao Miyoshi and H. D. Harootunian eds., Postmodernism and Japan (Durham: Duke University Press, 1989) explores the question whether postmodernism has replaced modernism in the Japanese case, in which
recently deepened, mode of mass-reproduction has generated the dreams of radically commodified equality among people and how these dreams have been carried along class-lines.

In my first and second chapters, I will ethnographically show such class-based inheritance of fascism among contemporary Japan’s forgotten class group, the petty bourgeoisie. In the history of the majority of the Japanese, the first decades after the end of the Asia-Pacific War in 1945 were the time when they struggled to fulfill the anti-communist requirements of Cold War politics and fully concentrated on capitalist production and consumption. In the almost frenzied spell of the so-called “high growth period” (kōdo seichō kī) (1955-1973), they attained an average annual GDP growth rate of about 9%, in which the above-mentioned myth that the one million Japanese were all middle class was created. The similar level of economization of the society characterized West Germany over the roughly same period, allowing observers to suspect that the whole population there might suffer from the melancholia of lost fascism. Melancholia is ill mourning, in which a loss cannot be recognized as a loss and persistent love and hate of the lost object are perpetually acted out as bipolarity between mellowness and aggressiveness toward the self and others. The petty bourgeois subjects that I analyze in these chap-

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38 Although the Second World War in Asia started with the 1931 Manchurian “Incident” and developed as Japan was further invading and resisted by other Asian countries, it has been conventionally recognized to be the war between Japan and the Allied Forces, especially the United States, as is shown in its popular and academic nomenclature, the Pacific War. Against this grain, this dissertation joins the critical trend that emphasizes the war’s Asian origin and agency to call it either the Asia-Pacific War or the Fifteen-Year War. In the conventional view the war lasted for four years starting with Japan’s attack of Pearl Harbor in 1941. For more discussions, see Junichiro Kisaka, “Ajia Taiheiyo Sensō no Koshō to Seikaku,” in Ryūkoku Hōgaku 25. no.4 (1993): 386-434.

39 According to Freud, those who are narcissistically attached to a libidinal object could develop melancholia, for narcissism does not recognize the object as other than the self but incorporates it into the self. Incorporation of the object is the key to understanding those manic behaviors that the patient could take, occasionally leading to suicide—mania and suicide could be the subject's revenge on the object's taking over his/her psyche. See Sigmund Freud, “Mourning and Melancholia,” in Philip Rieff ed. General Psychological Theory: Papers on Metapsychology (New York: Touchstone, 1997(1963)), pp.164-179. About applicability of the theory to West Germany, see Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlich, The Inability to Mourn: Principles of Collective Behavior, trans. by Beverley R. Placzek (New York: Grove Press, 1975) and Eric L. Santner, Stranded Objects: Mourning, Memory, and Film in Postwar Germany (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990). Marlene A. Briggs similarly examines the
ters have refused to fully substitute economized mania for their libidinal attachment to the lost ideal, i.e. the emperor-centered equality, as fascism promised. It is their increasingly minority class-status that has made them ideologically adamant, while their adamancy has lowered their class-status in the environment in which co-opted amnesia means economic success.

By tracing the interactions between the grotesque remainder of fascist ideologies among the petty bourgeoisie and their class condition over the span of sixty six years since 1945, these chapters will also introduce the reader to a certain postwar Japanese history. This history will be written around the figure of what I call the “death spaces,” the fascist enclaves of petty bourgeoisie that have formed the larger, capitalist democratic society as other than these enclaves. The death spaces are metaphorical yet concrete, historical places such as suburbs, where some petty bourgeois members reside (Chapter 1), or the Yasukuni Shinto Shrine in Tokyo, which was officially constructed in 1869 to “soothe the souls” (irei-suru) of fallen national soldiers (Chapter 2). My ethnographic portrayal of those petty bourgeois actors who inhabit these death-spaces will elucidate the emperor’s infant-type of ideology and aesthetics, as they have been resuscitated and developed in and around these spaces. The first chapter, entitled “The Emperor’s Infants Now,” will focus on the postwar inflections of the ideology and the second, “Theories of Delay: The Petty Bourgeois Formation of Postwar Fascism,” will thematize the issue of class.

British case after WWI, where she says “the equivalence between peace and wealth” was the state-advocated formula to avoid mourning. See her “D. H. Lawrence, Collective Mourning, and Cultural Reconstruction after World War I,” in Patricia Rae ed., Modernism and Mourning (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2007), pp.198-212; the quote is from p.205.

According to Jacques Derrida, the western metaphysical concept of logos could possibly develop only with the supplementary theoretical space for writing. This space for writing exists within the concept of logos, even though writing is supposed to externally demarcate and define logos as its “opposite,” i.e. as the living voice. See his Of Grammatology, trans. by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997(1967)); see esp. pp.65-73. The term “space of death” is also Michael Taussig’s, where he similarly analyzes the way in which the terrorized spaces of exception (under the state of emergency, in the (post)colonial contexts, etc.) are a necessary irrationality enabling domination by the modern bureaucratic state. See “Culture of Terror, Space of Death” in Taussig, Shamanism, Colonialism and the Wild Man (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), pp.3-36.
Chapter Three, entitled “Incorporating the Everyday; Or, the Corporatist Representation of War Machines,” will shift our attention to the bourgeoisie. This chapter will focus on the neighborhood association (chōnai-kai or chō-kai), the formerly war-machine expression of the farmers’ and petty bourgeois desires for moral equality, which was then co-opted by the 1920s state as the foundation of its corporatism. Even since the end of the war, this association has kept working as the switchboard between the social exclusion and inclusion of fascist desires. After 1945, through the neighborhood associations, those everyday fascist moments that are expressed in people’s anxieties, frustrations, and desires to be mechanical copies with each other, are transformed into a more moderate, democratically acceptable discourse of neighborly self-sacrifice, team play, and the moral sameness of local towns throughout the nation. Neighborhood associations in turn have been politically represented by the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (since the 1990s also by the Democratic Party), creating and created by the LDP’s (and DP’s) policies to corporatistically organize the Japanese locality. I will examine this layer of political representation (the individual desires, the neighborhood association, and the LDP/DP) as one of the main culprits that have prolonged the institutionalized life of corporatism in postwar Japan. A neighborhood association in a Yokohama suburb will set the stage for my ethnographic examination in this chapter. Large landlords and a banker’s family will be depicted to have fought each other over ideological definitions of the town, role of the association, and the terms of the different levels of political representation. In the backdrop of neoliberal disruption of the neighborhood, these bourgeois members’ legal strife will turn out to be a joint project to corporatistically organize the new demands for fascist equivalence.

My fourth chapter, “Internet Fascism and Resurgence of the Grassroots,” will focus on the media of fascism. When fascism, both corporatist and war-machine types, is based on the
logic and structure of the commodity, the question of mediation is inevitable. Commodity logic guarantees exchangeability between different goods and humans, but not their moral connectivity. How could the “atomized” and then massified subjects of fascism be related with each other? Is the idea of the fascist community actually an oxymoron? To imagine generality is one way to solve these problems; in the supposedly general figure of the emperor, *il duce*, or *führer*, masses could imagine themselves represented and totalized into a community. Another way is to introduce organic language of the body, life, or blood-tie, with which to narrate the boundary and organization of the community. These imaginations and rhetoric have been facilitating and facilitated by the historical development of mass-media. The prewar Japanese imagination of the death-community was intimately connected with the development of newspapers and cinema; postwar corporatism in the country, up until the 1980s, has been maintained by the boundary- and hierarchy-creating technologies of radio and TV.

Chapter 4 will explore how the TV imagination of corporatist Japan is being challenged by the renewed idea of the “grassroots” (*sōmō*). Enabled by the dialectic between the new technologies of the Internet and cell phones, the new grassroots aspires after equality among ordinary people with their common sense and sentiments. The Internet technologies of “participation” (*sanka*) and “simultaneity” (*dōji-sei*) are ideologically adopted by the participants, who have been variously distressed by the prolonging recession that started with the burst of the so-called bubble economy in 1990. The imagination of orders and hierarchies has declined alongside the demise of TV, radio, and other old media, of which the neighborhood associations had taken advantage. The result is a renewed possibility of fascism, the possibility that the emperor’s infant

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41 See Benjamin, “The Work of...” Ibid.
42 Departing from the conventional *kusa no ne* (literally meaning grass-roots), the conservative mood of recessionary Japan has selected *sōmō*, more Chinese (*kanbun*), and thus “traditional”-sounding term. *Sōmō*’s violently populist usage is traced back to a late Edo revolutionary nativist, Shōin Yoshida.
ideology is socio-culturally underscored with a new appearance of urgency. Located back in the
Yasukuni Shrine, this chapter will ethnographically examine how the shrine lends its prewar fasci-
cist legacies to those Internet fascists and neonationalist youths, who gather together there to
stage their mass-events and connect with the rest of the country, real-time. The shrine as a new
fascist stage attests to the degree to which today’s wave of fascism is not only materially deter-
mined by neoliberalism, but also historically determined by melancholia, viz. postwar Japanese’s
amnesia of their past violence, which the shrine embodies as a synecdoche.

The last chapter, “Disruptions: Other Voices and Mournful Responses,” will cut the mel-
ancholic loop of repetition by introducing the glimmer of other futures, which refuse to point to
the “future” as fascism has projected. The participants in this chapter, those Japanese veterans,
who form the “Liaison among Repatriates from China” (Chūgoku Kikan-sha Renraku Kai), were
the typical subjects of fascism during the Fifteen-Year War. Born as peasants and farmers, the
Liaison veterans provide us with the view of the field where the commodity’s ideologizing pow-
er was concentrated on this class-group as well as the class of the petty bourgeoisie. With that
power, the veterans excessively exercised the violence of literal “equalization” throughout their
long military careers during the war, so that they were detained in the People’s Republic of Chi-
na as war criminals until 1956. By focusing on the language that they use in their public witnes-
ing of their horrible war-crimes, this chapter will explore the possible way out of the contemp-
orary Japanese melancholic replication of fascism. Psychoanalytically, mourning is a strictly se-
miotic process in which the patient gradually has to renounce his/her embodied attachment to the
lost object by cognitively and intellectually recognizing the object as other than the self.⁴³ This is
an ethical process, when ethics can be minimally conceptualized to be the act of acknowledging

⁴³ Freud, Ibid.
and sustaining the distance between the self and the object. Based on my participant-observation research of the repatriates’ testimonies, this chapter will attempt to listen with the repatriates to the inaudible voices of other Asian victims. Their fleeting existence, which the living can merely sense through the testimonies, will ethically re-frame other chapters in terms of the discussions of ordinary Japanese accountability for the war and fascism.

Chapter 5 also considers the question, “how can the postwar Japanese moralize the ethical possibilities exhibited by these veterans?” Morality, as this dissertation uses as the concept, is “law” in the Kantian sense. The second part of this chapter is meant to examine the way in which progressive Japanese have endeavored to make their ethical thoughts habitual and their civil activism enduring. Concretely, this part of the chapter will analyze my ethnographic data and interviews of the Kanagawa Prefectural Association of Peace Families (Kanagawa Ken Heiwa Izoku Kai). The several core members of the association are those bereaved families who declare that their fallen families were “invaders” (shinryaku-sha) of other Asian and Pacific countries. These families have struggled to carry out their fundamentally ethical declaration as civil movements for other victims; they have also endeavored to expand these movements further into anti-war activism in general. I will investigate these families’ moral exchanges with other victims and activists by introducing the category of generation. I will show how the families’ civil networks have been generationally woven along a slender yet durable warp, i.e. relayed gestures of mourning from the actual perpetrators to their immediate families, from these families to following generations. The generational tapestry woven by the remorseful veterans and peace families constitutes another death space in the melancholically economy-oriented society—the death

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45 See Kant, Ibid.
space in which the politics of remembrance has been practiced against the social grain, the re-
membrance of another past for another future, beyond national history for fascist utopia.

Crisscrossed by class lines and holding on to the prewar heritage, contemporary fascism in Japan is therefore the structure and symptom that have profoundly conditioned the country’s everyday. Everyday lives in their turn have been generative of new desires for and fears of fascism, which constantly and dynamically interact with the discourses and institutions of the unresolved past. It is how fascism relentlessly returns in old and new disguises to trouble classed everyday lives that this ethnographic dissertation intends to describe and analyze.

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Writing is a process that unfolds in time in such a way that the subject matter of contempor-
ary research is always open-ended, constantly adding related information derived from those new events, which might or might not dynamically overturn the nature of the researcher’s thoughts on the subject matter. The Tōhoku (Fukushima) Earthquake in March 11th, 2011, is potentially such a thought-overturning, historical event, while further confirming the way in which I think about the structure and dynamic of Japanese society. On that historic day, the earthquake of magnitude 9 and subsequent tsunamis of 133 feet at the highest hit the Pacific coasts of the Tōhoku region, northeastern Japan. According to an official report published in March 2013, the calamity killed 15,882 in total, leaving 6,142 injured and 2,668 missing. What is more, a tsunami-stricken nuclear power plant in the shore of Ōkuma, Fukushima Prefecture,

has ever since kept emitting serious levels of radioactive materials that are comparable with those which were observed in the aftermath of the Chernobyl nuclear explosion in 1986. For several months after the earthquake, many “hot spots” of radioactive materials persisted in Tokyo and its vicinities, which are approximately 180 miles away from Fukushima. Unusual levels of caesium, a highly toxic fission product of uranium and plutonium, were found even in Seoul, South Korea as well as off the Kamchatka Peninsula, Russia. Due to these nuclear problems and also due to delayed reconstruction, over 315,000 are still unable to return to their homes. Even as of June 2013, many Japanese throughout the Archipelago still wear masks to go out. On the Yahoo Japan homepage, the column, “Great Eastern Japan Earthquake: Help Reconstructions,” lingers, collecting volunteer applications, advertising for stigmatized products of the agricultural Tōhoku, and distributing the daily forecast of nuclear levels throughout the country. “The whole of Japan was contaminated—even the air that I breathe right at my home must be polluted with caesium,” a middle-aged female friend of mine in Tokyo laments in her e-mail, in deep disappointment and frustration with the state’s mismanaging the crisis and misinforming citizens, in addition to the dull regret that the country has declined in many ways since its “bubbly” euphoria in the 80s.

A Nobel-laureate novelist and peace activist, Kenzaburō Ōe, describes the crisis as another “Hiroshima.” After Hiroshima City experienced an atomic bomb in August 1945, the Japanese citizens were convinced to forever renounce the country’s right to war, Ōe says. Similarly, according to him, the current crisis is summoning a new law that should express the Japanese determination to be eternally free of nuclear generators and the accompanying possibility for nuclear armament. While the shocks of the crisis are thus being sublimated into Ōe-types of activ-

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49 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HuYEHS12kzk
ism for peace, the state and business have tried to take advantage of the shocks to fortify the status quo more than ever. Immediately after the disaster, they declared that nuclear generators throughout the archipelago were safe and should be operated as usual, while continuing their talk with Turkey to export a nuclear generator.\textsuperscript{50} Even though many anti-tsunami bulwarks along Japan's coastline failed in the earthquake, the same types of bulwarks were budgeted as if nothing had happened. The majority of ordinary Japanese unwittingly cooperate with the state/industries by trying to forget and repress the shocks. They seem wishfully to hold onto the false yet comforting information that is dispensed from the government-controlled media and enjoy the evermore fantastic-looking details of mass-culturalized everyday lives. Critical thinking about the events and their aftermath are refrained from, while too much thoughtless enjoyment of lives is equally avoided, all under the term of \textit{fukinshin}, or “indiscretion.”\textsuperscript{51} People thus seem to prefer to opt out the political chance to take a radically peaceful turn for the sake of fantastic reorganization of the society into a dissident-free community united with pressures of a gloss of mourning.

The fantasies of a united community that are currently circulating in the society are the same kind as those which this dissertation argues have been presented again and again since the 1920s, every time class disparities and other crises of social disintegration seem to be imminent.\textsuperscript{52} Yet at the same time, with the scale of the disaster, the Japanese mournfulness this time might look to be containing the solemnness and truthfulness that could potentially penetrate and uncover even the aesthetic appearance of the fantastically united society. Coincidentally, the

\textsuperscript{50} “Energy Kyōryoku Bei Futsu to Itchi: Turkey, Genpatsu Yushutsu ni ‘Mae Muki’: Edano Kei San Shō,” \textit{Asahi Sinbun} (10/19/2011)

\textsuperscript{51} A documentary filmmaker, Tatsuya Mori, states in a film screening event of his “311” in 10/21/2011 at Yale University that indiscretion is the term that independent journalism since the earthquake faces as silent pressures and inhibition from society.

\textsuperscript{52} One of the most recent instances of the fantasies of unity was presented around the death of Emperor Shōwa in 1989—see Naoki Sakai (Ibid.); \textit{Asahi Journal} ed., Ibid.; Norma Field, \textit{In the Realm of a Dying Emperor} (New York: Pantheon Books, 1991); Akira Kurihara, Mitsunobu Sugiyama, and Shun’ya Yoshimi eds., \textit{Kiroku: Tennō no Shi} (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1992).
world-wide trend for people’s movements that started with the so-called “Arab Spring” in 2011 seems to have unprecedentedly energized Japanese civil causes and activism, including anti-nuclear actions. The events are still unfolding as I write this passage, ever urging me to reconsider my ideas of contemporary Japan, the society that I am going to describe as saturated with fascist desires and anxieties. If reality proves that the reconsideration is of absolute necessity, then the dissertation will serve as a guide to the social structure and cultural organization of pre-3/11 Japan, from which the Japanese might or might not be making their departing steps.
26

Chapter 1: The Emperor’s Infants Now

The number of the war-dead [the fallen imperial Japanese soldiers] is 2.4
million. Imagine their corpses lined up, forty inches apart from each other. This
column would span 1,500 miles, running through the Japanese Archipelago
from the northernmost tip of Sōya Cape on Hokkaidō Island to Naha City in
Okinawa. Envision a row of these bodies stretched over mountains, valleys,
cities, towns, villages, rivers, and oceans. This many young lives were taken by
the warring state of Japan.1

The statement above elucidates the way in which the prewar (-1945) fascist ideology,
tennō no sekishi or the emperor’s infants, remains and evolves in Japan today. The ideology
referred to equivalence among subjectified Japanese under the emperor. Ordinary Japanese then
fantasized that death, the great leveler, would eternalize their subjectified equivalence with each
other. Regardless of their class statuses, they thought, they would be mutually equalized
members of the death community for the emperor.2 The death community was not just a

1

According to Jean-Luc Nancy, one of the main endeavors of fascism—erasure of singularities—could be
figuratively considered as the building bloc of the community of death. In his word,
2

Death is not only the example of this [a fascist community], it is its truth. In death, at
least if one considers in it what brings about immanence (decomposition leading back to
nature—‘everything returns to the ground and becomes part of the cycle’—or else the
paradisal versions of the same ‘cycle’) and if one forgets what makes it always irreducibly singular, there is no longer any community or communication: there is only the continuous identity of atoms.
This is why political or collective enterprises dominated by a will to absolute
immanence have as their truth the truth of death. Immanence, communal fusion, contains
no other logic than that of the suicide of the community that is governed by it.

In his Inoperative Community, ed. by Peter Connor, trans. by Peter Connor, Lisa Garbus, Michael Holland, and
Simona Sawhney, forward by Christopher Fynsk (Minneapolis and Oxford; University of Minnesota Press, 1991),
p.12; parentheses and emphasis original.
3
The National Liaison for Correct Memorialization of the War-Dead, “Senshi-sha, Mikan Itai no Atsukai,
Nichi Bei no Chigai” (unpublished handbill, 2005), p.5.
4
5
In the following, those quotes from Akiyama that are not accompanied by references are taken from my
phone and personal interviews of him conducted in 2008.
6
Akiyama. Ibid., p.2.
7
Akiyama, “DNA...,” Ibid. and “Chidorigafuchi Boen: Ikotsu no Atsukai Ihō de Zankoku” in Asahi Shinbun,
8
I owe my understanding of the phenomenon of mass to Walter Benjamin, “On Some Motifs in Baudelaire,”
ed. and with an intro. by Hannah Arendt, trans. by Harry Zohn, Illuminations: Essays and Reflections (New York:
Aura and Media in the Work of Walter Benjamin” in Alan Cholodenski ed., Mass Mediauras: Form, Technics, Me-


metaphor; it was literalized by the half-willing, half-enforced bodies of the farmers and petty bourgeoisie, which comprised the majority of the Japanese population at that time. In fact, it was only after these actors’ practices that the ideas of the death community and the emperor became sacred. Left behind by these practices are the physical traces and psychological complications of suicides and murders. As a result, a version of postwar fascism in Japan takes the form of the imaginative and literal organization of these traces into a belt-conveyor “row” (rui rui to tsuranatta) of stylized imperial soldiers. In this mass-reproduced form of the commodity, as is imagined in the epigraph above, these soldiers’ equivalence is underscored, thus theoretically inheriting and morally advancing the ideology of the emperor’s infants, the practitioners would say.

Their fascism is unconscious, reflecting its complicity with such postwar concepts as the nation and democracy. On the surface level, the postwar inheritors of the emperor’s infant ideology say they are pursuing the principle of national or democratic equality among the dead. This chapter is an ethnographic survey of the seeming contradiction within the postwar fascist practitioners’ ideology. Moving back and forth between the spoken and unspoken levels of the ideology, between national democratic and fascist points of discourse, my ethnography will try to find the key to understanding these practitioners’ ideologies in their petty bourgeois lives—in their resentment of postwar inequality, riotous wishes for radical democracy, and repressed memories of and as the emperor’s infants, as these seem to be born through their everyday experiences. In the dark corners of the otherwise forgetfully affluent Japanese society, fascist practitioners are conditioned to remember and inherit the emperor’s infants’ ideology. Kakunosuke Akiyama, the unintentionally fascist writer of the epigraph above, will explain how.

In his *Inoperative Community*, ed. by Peter Connor, trans. by Peter Connor, Lisa Garbus, Michael Holland, and Simona Sawhney, forward by Christopher Fynsk (Minneapolis and Oxford; University of Minnesota Press, 1991), p.12; parentheses and emphasis original.
The Row of the Infants’ Corpses

Akiyama is the vice-president and secretary of the National Liaison for Correct Memorialization of the War-Dead (*Senbotsu-sha Tsuitô o Tadasu Zenkoku Renraku-kai*). We meet in his small apartment in a Tokyo suburb, where I interview him. Handing me a double-sided, four-page handbill, from which his earlier quote is taken, he says the active members of the Liaison are only a few. According to him, the Liaison has lobbied for the “correct” treatment of the remains of Japanese soldiers who were deployed in the Asia-Pacific War (1931-1945). As of September 2003, he says, about 1.16 million bodies still remain unrecovered throughout the former battlefields of Asia and the Pacific. His own brother is one of them, presumably having fallen in Okinawa in May 1945 at the age of 22. Akiyama and the Liaison maintain that it is the Japanese state’s responsibility to recover, repatriate, and humanely (re)inter these bodies.

Akiyama’s declared purpose to correct the mourning state of Japan seems to be based on his belief in the relationship between the state as the moral sovereign and the people as its subjects. As he argues, the state and people should be bound together by means of people’s “sacrifice” (*gisei*) of themselves to the state and the state’s care of them. Given the history in which their sacrifices were made as soldiers’ lives and deaths in the war, he says that now “It is the state’s responsibility to recover the remains of the war-dead.”

The state’s recovery of the sacrificed bodies of these soldiers will be then returned by future generations of Japanese people as their further self-sacrifices for the state, thus potentially forging an enduring relationship between the state and people. Yet in contemporary Japan, “By treating the dead who died for the state in this way [without properly recovering their remains], the state is losing its own future.”

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When no economic principles but the moral emotions of “pride” (hokori) and “shame” (chijoku) sustain this relationship, according to Akiyama, the current state’s “inhumane” (hijindōtekina) treatment of the war-dead only negatively binds the state to its people, insofar as people feel shameful about the state. As he puts it,

Is there any other example of a state this inhumanely treating the vast number of the war-dead who sacrificed their lives for its sake? In the past or present, Orient or Occident, none, I suppose. This [the current Japanese state’s inhumane treatment of them] is a national shame.

Thus he and his fellows established the Liaison as a “national” (kokumin no) agency to correct the quality of this moral exchange with the state.

Akiyama suggests that one of the symptoms of the failed relationship between the current state and its people is what he calls the state’s “mass-treatment” (tasū issho no atsukai) of people. Akiyama’s earlier plea to “imagine” the “row of these [fallen Japanese soldiers’] bodies” (rui rui to tsuranatta shikabane) would be thought of as instantiating what he means by mass-treatment. In that scenario, the mass in mass-treatment might look to express just the massivity of the total number of the soldiers in the imagined row, its endless length, the sheer number of the soldiers in it, its totality as a row. In the graphic analog of this imagination, a figure included in the same handbill (Figure 1), though, this mass turns out to consist of not just a countless number of soldiers but the soldiers who look mutually identical.

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5 In the following, those quotes from Akiyama that are not accompanied by references are taken from my phone and personal interviews of him conducted in 2008.
6 Akiyama. Ibid., p.2.
Akiyama aptly uses computer graphics to express this identicality—or does the technology create the idea of identicality? Here, the soldiers are stylized and in that stylized figure, they make a long row similar to Andy Warhol’s Campbell Soup can repetition. With the same size and shape, maintaining the same interval of distance, “2.4 million” war-dead are here rendered anonymous, and in their anonymity, they form an industrial collectivity of death. In the anonymous collectivity, even Akiyama’s older brother, whom he remembers was to inherit their family farm in Katori County, Chiba Prefecture, loses his individuality. The brother’s body in the collectivity is totally formalized, painted black, spreading his stylistically masculine legs shoulder length apart, just like everybody else.

This is not just an image, Akiyama further explains—the soldiers’ bodies are actually left under the elements like things, then recovered and incinerated en masse “until they are formless” (genkei o todomenaku-naru made) and “without identities” (mimoto fushō). Because the state does not identify the bodies, counterfeit bodies infiltrate the system; he laments the “dogs’ or cats’ bones that the natives [of former battlefields] carry and try to sell [to Japanese recovery

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missions] for exorbitant prices.” To condemn this situation, the Liaison has lobbied for a DNA analysis of each set of remains and individualized burial of the identified bodies. Their ideal, then, is the state’s recognition of each soldier and perhaps appropriate reward for his individuated contributions to the state, which is apparently his burial as an individual.

“Individuation” (kobetsuka) of the soldiers, in the Liaison’s understanding, is the result of what they call “humanity” (jindō) and “sincerity” (makoto) of the state. Put another way, humanity and sincerity would not bear the soldiers’ mass-treatment.

Without denoting it, Akiyama and the Liaison’s critique of the state’s mass-treatment seems to replicate the moralistic discourses about the “mass,” the discourses that were presented mostly at the turn of the last century as a reaction to the then-emerging economic mode of mechanical reproduction. Totally adapted to the mass-reproductive technologies of camera, cinema, mimeograph, etc., workers and consumers then showed a new level of their reification (“thingification”). Through production and consumption of mechanically reproduced products, people in the same market had become identical with each other, operating in the same everyday rhythm, donning the same apparel, and made of the same internal substance. The result was the “massification” of people, and the accompanying issues of their limitless exchangeability and dissemination across different boundaries, such as gender, status, or nation. The discourses of masses tended to be moralist, reflecting the contemporaries’ dismays at the unintentionally radical nature of the socio-culturally indiscriminate mass power. Social disintegration was deplored; the mass psychology was studied in terms of the “anomie,” i.e. the distance that such a psychology was supposed to have come to take from the previously caring, respectful, sincere, or otherwise authentic minds.8

8 I owe my understanding of the phenomenon of mass to Walter Benjamin, “On Some Motifs in Baudelaire,” ed. and with an intro. by Hannah Arendt, trans. by Harry Zohn, Illuminations: Essays and Reflections (New York:
Akiyama’s critique of the mass-treated soldiers is relevant even to the contemporary moment, insofar as the masses still keep appearing throughout the world, indicating that our lives are situated in the same mode of mechanical reproduction. It is true that in a society like post-1980s Japan, the mass society is supposed to have ended to be replaced by a multitude of differently articulated positions or a totality as a relation of over-determined moments. Yet the supposed different articulations made by popular cultural “tribes” (toraibu) or consumer “tiers” (kaisō) in contemporary Japan cannot and should not be discussed separately from the post-1980s economic mode of “small batch production” (tashu shōryō seisan). The small batch production is enabled by the concentration versus diversification of the access to the production means. Behind the façade of the diversified tempos and lifestyles among different workers and consumers, the diversity of manufacturers has been increasingly denied. The multiplication of consumers’ positions is illusory, since these positions eventually converge with each other to express the monopolizing corporation’s interests in each industry. The dominant corporations have never stopped mass-producing certain goods and services; they have merely reduced the size of each batch of production. It is probably the other way—the monopolist monopolizes the industry so that it can enjoy the mode of mechanical reproduction, the hitherto most efficient (and capital-intensive) mode of production. If small batches of production were shared among


9 See Toshiya Ueno and Yoshitaka Mōri, Jissen Cultural Studies (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 2002) for ethnographical studies of those whom they call “subcultural,” i.e. pop-cultural, tribes from the perspective of the Birmingham School. Kaisō is the term popularized by Atsushi Miura, the former chief editor of Across, a department store chain Parco’s promotional magazine, in his Karyū Shakai: Aratana Kaisō Shūdan no Shutsugen (Tokyo: Köbun Sha, 2005).
multiple manufacturers, big and small, global and local, then the tiered and tribalized subjects of neoliberalism might be truly spared from exhibiting the same sensibility of mechanical reproduction—fascination with empty formalism and obsession with identity. But this is not the case, as is seen with Akiyama—if he was not determined by the mass-reproductive mode, then how come he would look to have an intuitive grasp of the points of the anti-mass critique? In his imagination, the row of the mutually identical soldiers is stretched over the Japanese Archipelago and possibly beyond, just as the *fin de siècle* European critics imagined of the commoditized masses and massified commodities. In Akiyama’s implication, the mode of mechanical reproduction is not just a metaphor; the state has actually mass-treated the dead, so that they lose individualized identities—beneath their appearances of generic bones, they could even be cats or dogs. Perhaps Akiyama’s difference from other thinkers of the mass is his substantiation of the state as the supposed agent of massification.11

The idea of the mass that seems to implicitly reside in Akiyama’s activism, however, may not be the object of his criticism only. That suspicion might arise in the reader as soon as s/he encounters another, similarly illustrated figure of the massified soldiers (Figure 2) and yet

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11 Although admitting their violence, derived from the production line of mechanical reproduction, the “masses” to Benjamin have other possibilities than their co-optation by fascism. The masses’ machine-induced tactility and favoritism of tactile media (e.g. cinema) seem to Benjamin to be presenting a chance to form a new line of “habit.” See his “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, ed. and with an intro by Hannah Arendt, trans. by Harry Zone (New York: Schocken Books, 1968(1936)), pp. 217-251; see esp. p.240. In the meantime, as Hagtvet (Ibid.) summarizes, to many conservative thinkers from Jakob Burckhardt to Friedrich Nietzsche, the masses are excessive due to their overemphasis of equality. If these thinkers are anxious about the masses’ seeming embodiment of the idea of democracy, Elias Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, trans. by Carol Stewart (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1984(1960)), stands out in the genealogy of conservative critiques of the masses with his keen sense of the mechanically reproduced nature of the post-1920s masses. Whether one sees a habit-forming momentum or democratic possibility, modern criticism of the mass starts from the (conscious or unconscious) recognition that the society’s massification is the phenomenon of people’s reification and ultimately of commodity logic.
another (Figure 3), while Akiyama discursively repeats the same imaginative vision of the soldiers’ row again and again in various periodicals, as well as in his interviews.\footnote{Figure 2 is taken from the National Liaison for Correct Memorialization of the War-Dead, “Senshi-sha, …,” Ibid.; p.1. Figure 3 is from Akiyama, “Senbotsu-sha-ra no…,” Ibid.; p.2.}

\textit{Figure 2}

In a mesmerizing uncertainty, the reader/interviewer might be distracted from these images’ declared meaning of immorality to notice the form with which the meaning is supposed to be delivered. The form that might come to the fore in this way is that of mass reproduction, whose cold mechanicity makes a shocking contrast to the existential matters of life and death, of cadavers, of war that Akiyama would like to discuss. The copied redundancy with which he
repeats his imagery might eventually erase any meaning whatsoever, so that in the end, only the singularity of the form might remain. The differences between the human and skeletal shapes, between their sizes, and between the figure of the human body and that of the monies budgeted for the recovery project (Figures 4 and 5), etc. might look to be more important than what they are supposed to signify.¹³

**Figure 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>年間予算</th>
<th>米国</th>
<th>日本</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>検索回収に</td>
<td>48,000円</td>
<td>450円</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>身元確認に</td>
<td>25,000円</td>
<td>88円</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One might sense a certain level of jouissance in designing, drawing, and printing these figures. The mechanical beauty that one might or might not perceive from the figures is of course that which might accompany the Campbell Soup cans, for instance. Distraction of one’s attention from the meaning and its re-focus on the surface of the presentation would perhaps be the last things that a moralist like Akiyama might wish, but the almost excessive emphasis on formality

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¹³ Figures 4 and 5 are from the Liaison, “Senshi-sha, ...,” Ibid.; p.4 and 5.
is his own, whereby his moral anxiety of masses seems to be traversed by an odd fascination with and joy in their mass-form.

Akiyama thus seems to be split between his explicit criticism of the massification of the soldiers and implicit fascination with the form according to which they are metaphorically and actually massified. This split is expressed in his contradictory usage of the mass-form (as in computer graphics), probably unconsciously, in his conscious critique of the same form. This split between the critique and attraction, consciousness and unconsciousness, makes a fine instance of commodity fetishism, Marx would say. In modern capitalism, individuals are never fully autonomous, according to Marx. They are always already split between rational knowledge of the world and the intractable belief that denies such knowledge—the belief in the commodity as the fetish, to be more specific. While these individuals clearly understand that they are the subjects of commodity-production and –exchange, they cannot help but fantasize that it is actually the commodities that are the subjects. The commodities in this fantasy approximate fetishes as in Hegel’s imaginative “African” religions, mingling, relating, and socializing with each other, outside human agency. Ultimately, this fantasy expresses the fact that commodities are truly exchangeable with each other in and of themselves as the same products of abstracted human labor. This expression is theoretically erroneous yet materially enabling. According to Marx, the primitive-looking speculation of the commodity’s agency is necessary for “man” to

“[tear] himself loose from the umbilical cord of his natural species-connection with other men, or

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14 Already in Hegel, the split exists between people’s self-consciousness as the producers of fetishes—thus they could and do “capriciously” create and destroy the fetish—on the one hand, and their belief in the “indeterminate, unknown power” that these fetishes are supposed to command, on the other hand. “The Negroes [sic] have an endless multitude of ”divine images,”” Hegel says, “which they make into their gods or their ‘fetishes’ (a corrupted Portuguese term). The nearest stone or butterfly, a grasshopper, a beetle, and the like—these are their Lares—indeterminate, unknown powers that they have made themselves; and if something does not work out or some unhappiness befalls them, then they throw this fetish away and get themselves another.” In Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion, One-Volume Edition, The Lectures of 1827, ed. by Peter C. Hodgson, trans. by R. F. Brown, P. C. Hodgson and J. M. Stewart with the assistance of H. S. Harris (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); pp.234-5; parentheses and small tildes original.
on direct relations of dominance and servitude” as in corvée.\textsuperscript{15} Without wrongly yet pragmatically speculating that his/her product has the agency to autonomously connect with other products, that is, without being enchanted by the supposed agency of his/her product, the actor in modern capitalism is not motivated to produce such advanced things as commodities. In the sense that it produces the material effects of production, exchange, and consumption, commodity fetishism is real—the modern capitalist actors are really subjected to the commodity and its supposed power as and of the fetish.\textsuperscript{16}

The magical charm of the massified soldiers that might motivate Akiyama to produce his discourse and activism can be assumed to have been enhanced to its utmost level in the mode of mechanical reproduction. Such a mode potentially renders every bit of a thing’s original history and unique usages into a formality that can be standardized, copied, and disseminated in the market. Most valuable when they are “trendy,” the mechanically reproduced products’ use-value closely approximates their exchangeability—being trendy—itself. The mode of mechanical reproduction thus brings the products of human labor to its ultimately social point, i.e. existence as exchangeability.\textsuperscript{17} What actors like Akiyama are showing is the obverse side of this advanced stage of modern capitalism, that the super-commodities of mechanically reproduced products are supported by and supporting people’s hyper-fetishism of such commodities. When these commodities’ mutual exchangeability is readily visible on their surfaces, in their thoroughly standardized texture, it is very easy for the subject to forget that it is actually human agency that produces and exchanges the commodities. Commodities are not automatically exchangeable among themselves; they become mutually exchangeable because humans expend on every one of them


\textsuperscript{17} The definition of the commodity is that it is produced with its exchange in mind—only highly evolved levels of labor division will necessitate such a form of production. See Marx, Ibid.; p.166.
the same abstract labor-power and also because humans bring these products to the market with the desires for other commodities with other use-values than their own products. Yet due to their copied and proliferated appearance of identicality, the mechanically reproduced products more readily look to be immediately and naturally exchangeable without human labor, without human agency, than ever before. “[R]elapse into mythology,” the German critic Siegfried Kracauer calls the hyper fetish-power of the mechanically reproduced products.\textsuperscript{18} The Campbell Soup cans or the “Tiller Girls” that Kracauer observed in the 1920s Broadway and other North American stages surely showed “the rationality of the mass pattern, [yet] such patterns simultaneously [gave] rise to the natural in its impenetrability.”\textsuperscript{19} Impenetrable here is the truth of the human creativity behind these products. On the one hand, this impenetrability makes these products the truthless ornaments that are to adorn, rather than to illuminate, the mass-lives; on the other hand, the same impenetrability makes these products also the uncanny enigma that implies the existence of repressed truth on the other hand. And it is into such an enigmatic ornamentality that the fallen Japanese soldiers have been rendered in Akiyama’s imagination and, according to Akiyama, in the Japanese state practices. Such ornamentality makes him morally resentful, Akiyama suggests; yet to me, he also seems to be inexplicably attracted.

When one introduces the category of unconsciousness—attraction and desires, belief versus knowledge—one is re-examining the idea of the subject. When one recognizes commodity fetishism as indispensable for production, one cannot help but notice the subjected nature of the modern capitalist subject. Similarly in Marx’s definition, freedom in modern capitalism means being “free of,” i.e. having no other way than being the producer in the system. “A free individual,” in his words, means that


\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{19} Kracauer, Ibid.; p.84.}
he can dispose of his labour-power as his own commodity, and that, on the other hand, he has no other commodity for sale, i.e. he is rid of them, he is free of all the objects needed for the realization [Verwirklichung] of his labour-power.²⁰

Being “rid of” everything but his labor power, Marx’s individual is the model for total abstraction, the capitalist value itself, which is completely substitutable and thus potentially infinitely mobile—he is absolutely “free.” This state of being in an interstice between quotation marks, that is, “free” (yet unfree), is the quality of modern individuals, which is none other than the state of subjectification to commodity logic.

Akiyama’s presentation of the individuated individual as individually identified soldiers might now look to be his effort to overcome this (un)freedom of the modern capitalist subject. In his argument, individuation by the sacrifier state is supposed to save the soldiers from their massification. Massness is the ultimate state of subjectivization due to people’s hyper-exchangeability (hyper-freedom) and their heightened fetishism regarding their own hyper-freedom. The mass to Akiyama apparently represents immorality—it goes against human life and death and their individuality. The problem with this position is that individuality and commodity character are not mutually exclusive. Rather, individuals whom Akiyama imagines to be moral and dignified cannot be but commoditized and unfree, no matter how individuated they are. For, their individuation is that of and as soldiers, while those parts of them that are irrelevant to their existence as the soldiers—for instance, the personal history of Akiyama’s brother being the heir of their family farm in Chiba—are simply disregarded. This is a process that is parallel to commoditization, in which an object’s various use-values have to be abstracted into its generic exchange-value.²¹ Akiyama remarks,

²⁰ Marx, “The Sale and Purchase of Labour-Power,” Ibid., pp.270-280; the quote is from pp.272-3; square brackets original.
“I imagine the solders had worldly passions (bonnō); also, they must have been thinking about their kids a lot. But, I think they must have died, saying, ‘We die right here so that following generations wouldn’t have this kind of thing [war] any more.’”

The soldiers died and die anyway, in spite of their heterogeneous passions and kids, for the sake of the “following generations.” According to Akiyama’s above-mentioned sense of moral national history as the people’s enduring relation with the state, the following generations in turn exist only in and as their deaths that they are assumed to dedicate to the state in the future. In Akiyama’s sense, the future generations are imagined to be an always-already assembled collectivity of the state’s soldiers, despite the past generations’ wish that their descendants would not have war any more. Formally analyzed, the soldiers in Akiyama’s sense are necessarily commodified, from the past to the future. A soldier’s individuality in a formal analysis is comparable to the individuality of the commodity, which is not to say an oxymoron. As different commodities differ in their purposes, functions, etc. yet identically conform to the commodity form, each soldier is different in the degree and/or kind of contributions that he can make to the idea of the state. Yet fundamentally, he is the same with his fellow soldiers as a soldier. Despite their differences such as where they are deployed or what useful fighting skills they have, the soldiers are mutually exchangeable at any time, just like commodities. Ultimately, the soldiers are the exchange-value itself in their deaths, as Akiyama intuitively sees in his figures—these figures demonstrate the soldiers’ commodity-character, ironically (to Akiyama) as the state’s quintessentially moral subjects.

Akiyama with his will to morally correct the commodity form of the fallen soldiers, therefore, seems to fail. The failure might be attributable to his idealization of moral subjectification as that which is supposed to transcend subjectifying commodification. In modern
capitalism, the concept of the subject presupposes commodification. From the individual perspective, one has to already have been “freed” under commodity logic in order to be interpellated as the subject of modern ideologies. A designated subject of, say, the state, has to have already had the visceral feel for such radical ideas as the general form of the subject (with different use-value) and/or the subjects’ complete substitutability, which the state requires people to understand. Before the state’s propaganda, most likely people have already practiced these ideas in their lives. Here, I am not saying that the “base” (economy) determines the “superstructure” (ideologies). Far from that, the commodity logic is the ur-ideology, which determines both sub-ideologies, such as the ideas and discourses on the state-, colonial, patriarchal, ethnic, and other dominations on the one hand, and the economic relations on the other. Political, social or cultural discourses on the nation-state, gender, or “race,” could be thought of as confirming, maintaining, and reproducing commodity logic as an ideology. 

Commodification is temporally and spatially prior to the process of subjectification, since commodification is total. According to Thomas Keenan, it is a “radical (‘total’) abstraction that massively and systematically effaces the differentiation of every use value, every thing.” A similar sense of totality of commodification (or rather modernization) is expressed by Heidegger, who says one “enters” the modern world of appearance in its entirety—one is always in it, already prepared and equipped for it, as its subject. 

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24 See Martin Heidegger, “The Age of the World Picture,” *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, trans. and with an intro. by William Lovitt (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1977), pp.115-154. According to him, what he calls the “world picture,” which “does not mean a picture of the world but the world conceived and grasped as picture,” is a “system” of the represented objects set before the subject “in its entirety” (p.129). The systematic totality of the world picture envelopes the subject, contradicting the fact that the subject represents the objects and thus produces the world picture—“Wherever this [representation] happens, man ‘gets into the picture’ in precedence over whatever is. But in that man puts himself into the picture in this way, he puts himself into the scene, i.e., into the open sphere of that which is generally and publicly represented” (p.132). Temporally, the sub-
women, etc. after capitalism are therefore necessarily generated and affected by commodity logic; the opposite is not true.

The state-subjectification is thus understandable only within the overall context of commodification, only as the latter’s special case, to the contrary of what Akiyama seems to hope. Yet he himself seems to half-notice that he is merely hoping. That is probably the reason that he keeps representing soldiers as machines—not just commoditized corpses to be mechanically recovered, but killing machines without the ethical ability to transcend the state orders. This latter representation is disclosed during our discussion of the soldiers’ accountability for their war crimes.

“Who’s accountable for the war and the Japanese atrocities in it? It’s obvious,” says Akiyama in his apartment. “Of course, it’s the military complex (gunbatsu) [implicitly, the complex of the Japanese state, military, and military industry]. Hideki Tōjō [the prime minister, 1941-44, and a major general of the army] was its top and convicted as a class-A war criminal [in the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, 1946-8]. The emperor [Hirohito]? He’s also accountable—the war was fought under his name. The ordinary soldiers? Hmm,” he slows down. “I don’t think they’re accountable. They’re kind of victims themselves, you know. They were drafted. They were told to kill ‘chinks’ (chan-koro). They did it against their will. They were forced to absolutely obey the superior’s orders (zettai fukujū).”

According to his decision, the soldiers did not have their own will; then they are not accountable for what they did. In the overall postwar Japanese context in which ordinary Japanese, soldiers and civilians alike, are regarded as the victims of the war, the soldiers’

ject’s relation to the general and public system of the world picture is that “man will and ought to be the subject that in his modern essence he already is”—“man is essentially already subject” (p.133; emphasis original). Unlike Marx, Heidegger never refers to commodity logic to understand the totality of representation. Heidegger secures the modernity of the world picture by privileging the methodology-oriented sciences of modernity as the cause of the world picture.
subjection to the logic of machine is thus affirmed. Akiyama’s admission of the soldiers’ machine character is despite his moral position that tries to see individuality of the soldiers under the humanitarian state. The contradiction looks necessary, not only due to the moral national requirement that the soldiers be deprived of their own will in order to count as the victims. In addition to this historical reason, the soldiers are necessarily commodified machines and individuated humans simultaneously, also to demonstrate and fortify the general compatibility between commodity logic that mechanizes them and the logic of the state-subject that humanizes them. It was as cold-blooded, mutually identical war-machines that the sacrifier state recognized the soldiers as its subjects. The soldiers as the agential, self-sacrificial contributors to the concept of the Subjective state are always already commodities in their mutually identical yet differently functional state of subjection. Commodification and subjectification are one and the same thing here, although the latter is always the former’s secondary instance.

At this point, I would like to go back to the image of the infants’ row once more. In many ways, it should be now seen as an illustration of Akiyama’s ideals. From the historical perspective, the image seems to indicate Akiyama’s idea of the Japanese soldiers as the totally managed, thus innocent, victims of the military complex. Although they killed countless Chinese civilians, the Japanese soldiers as the state commodities-subjects should not be accountable for their crimes, according to Akiyama; his figures perfectly fit his nationalist argument. From the structural perspective as well, the soldiers’ commodified status in these figures, has turned out to be Akiyama’s ideal of moral subjectification, for subjectification shares its form, process, and logic with commodification. The figures in this structural view are the visualized morality of the

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25 Even though Hannah Arendt similarly points out the “banality of evil” (the evil in this case is Nazi’s Adolf Eichmann), of course this does not mean that she attempts to forgive what the evil did in and for the Holocaust as banal fulfillments of mechanical orders. See her *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Penguin Books, 1977(1964)).
state-subject in their illustrating the literally selfless, that is, standardized will to the nation-state.

The third instance is aesthetic; both the historical and structural instances here seem to show the prominence of forms and formality over meaning and ethics. To Akiyama, the idea of aligning the atomized national soldiers in a row seems to matter more than its historical and ethical implications. Of course, I surmise that he believes in the meaning of the nation or its morality. However, it seems that there is something excessive and automatic about his emphasis on the form, particularly when he does not consider the ethical implication of the soldiers’ killing other Asians and Pacific Islanders. After a while, it might feel as if his figures or the mass-form that is expressed in the figures were his ideals and the actual, dead soldiers were their examples.

These three dimensions (historical, structural, and aesthetic) in Akiyama’s idealization of the soldiers’ commodification seem to confirm the location of commodity logic in the subject’s unconsciousness. Recall Marx says that the producers of the commodity are born into the habituated system of commodification, in which its logic is articulated always belatedly, after the producers’ unconscious production and exchange of commodities as the system’s subjects. The above-discussed totality of commodity logic owes much to the logic’s unconscious working—if one has to go through conscious, enforced processes to be the commodity-producer, then one could possibly escape the capitalist system by consciously denying such processes. But the conscious explanation that heterogeneous commodities are unexchangeable without the subject’s imagination would not halt the unconscious habit to keep imagining. Therefore, in his criticism of the soldiers’ mass-treatment, Akiyama seems to unconsciously know the existence of commodity logic, although he does not name it as such. What he does not know is also that commodity logic insidiously conditions and organizes his criticism and also his proposal of the

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alternative, the soldiers’ moral subjectification. Overall, he does not seem to be conscious that he deploys and underscores commodity logic in the course of his argument. Thus, when it comes to the matter of the war-crimes, he could jump at such a logic very consciously, without knowing that such an act undermines his earlier diatribe against the soldiers’ mass-treatment.

Akiyama’s concept of the subject either of the sacrifier state or of the victimized nation hence seems to be secretly inhabited by the ghostly existence of commodity logic. When everyone else in modern capitalism is similarly haunted by such a ghost, Akiyama might stand out for his almost violent, self-alienating type of over-exaggeration of his state of being subjectified—his repetitious illustration of the formalized corpses, for instance. As I have discussed, in this act, he seems to have lost his meaning, taken over by the attraction of the mechanical form or by the act of repetition itself beyond or despite meaning. Perhaps, here lies one point to define fascism with—séance or the grotesque and in-itself unconscious articulation of the unconscious nature with which a modern capitalist person is subjectified.27

For another defining point of fascism, the next section of the chapter will focus on Akiyama’s anachronism, with which he defines pseudo-metaphysically morality and accordingly hypostatizes the concept of the Subjective state. Fascism is probably characterized not only by obsession with and advancement of capitalist formality (leaving one’s body and mind completely to forms’ automaticity would be the ultimately advanced state of capitalism), but also by

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27 Séance is the image that I will explore once more in this chapter, as I discuss a postwar Japanese writer, Yukio Mishima. The inspiration is also from Jacques Derrida, Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International, trans. by Peggy Kamuf; with an intro by Bernd Magnus and Stephen Cullenberg (New York and London: Routledge, 1994), in which he argues that Marx is concerned with the ghostliness of the exchange-value. Marx’s famous table-commodity that “stands on its head, and evolves out of its wooden brain grotesque ideas, far more wonderful than if it were to begin dancing of its own free will” (Marx, “The Fetishism,” Ibid.; pp.163-4), then seems to Derrida to be a table during a “spiritualist séance” (p.189). According to Derrida, the séance that he argues Marx theoretically holds here represents the act of exorcising the ghost of the exchange-value—only the use-value is “very human” and ontologically real to Marx, Derrida claims (p.188). But séance is not held exclusively for the purpose of exorcising the ghost; it could be held to bring the ghost to human senses for communication, analysis, and understanding. See Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Ghostwriting,” diacritics 25.2: 65-84 for criticism of this particular instance of Derrida on Marx. Unlike Marxian séance for understanding the ghost, fascist séance, as I so metaphorize, appropriates and abuses the mysterious power of the conjured ghost.
anachronistic attachment to fetishized meaning that is supposed to be able to check the automaticity of the forms (e.g. the Subjective state, *il duce*, etc.). Fascism should probably be studied as a movement between these contradictory moments—between futurism and nostalgia, and between formalism and romanticism—a process whereby the fascist libido oscillates back and forth between the two. Keeping these points in mind, I am now considering Akiyama’s idea of the Subjective state in terms of the theoretical concept of reincorporation. *Re*-incorporation, since his Subjective state cannot be thought of outside modern capitalism and its formalist definition of the state, after all.

**The Recovering State, Recovering the State**

“Terusawa,” where Kakunosuke Akiyama lives with his wife, is off the urban, 23 Ward district of central Tokyo. Still in Tokyo Metropolis, but Terusawa belongs to suburban Musashino City. Further toward Tokyo peripheries, districts are called counties and villages. The novelist Osamu Dazai suggested in his immediate postwar works that this western Tokyo city of Musashino during the war was fantasized as a pastoral haven by the residents of Tokyo’s 23 Wards, many of whom actually relocated here in order to avoid the notorious U.S. air-raids on Tokyo. In Shōhei Ōoka’s 1950 novel “The Lady of Musashino,” though, the city that had really survived the air-raids was a battlefield, stripped into a naked, geological structure through the eye of a repatriated foot-soldier (*fukuin hei*), 24-year-old Tsutomu—the sedimentation and erosion of the ancient “geological era” and the “primitive” forests of oak and zelkova, in which Tsutomu could not help but try to find how to survive imaginative attacks from the enemy. Urbane houses of the relocaters (*sokaisha*), a military airport and factories were the material traces of the war; so were repatriated soldiers and the “*pan pan*” (Japanese prostitutes for American occupational soldiers

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28 See his anthology, Ōtō (Tokyo: Jitsugyō no Nihon Sha, 1948), for instance.
and others), who, together with their customers, “swarmed about the railroad stations,” according to Ōoka.29 Another writer, Masao Takahashi witnesses that it was about the 1970s when the last bit of nature in Musashino started to vanish from its landscape, due to the ongoing real estate development, whose origin can be traced to the turn of the last century.30

The city that flies in front of the fascinated outsider’s eyes in a train is still spacious and green, balmy in the hot June sunshine. Today, though, Musashino’s spaciousness is that of comfortableness. While not as pretentious as Den’en Chōfu and other towns in exceptional Setagaya Ward, Musashino seems to embody the middle-class normativity of the “nuclear” family, dogs, and a two-storied house with a couple of camellia trees or azalea bushes in a small garden. The desolately “remote horizon” that one of Dazai’s characters “absentmindedly saw, standing in the engawa balcony, smoking,” is now the temporary limit of the vision of such normative houses, which are seen from a distance as stone-fenced squares, repeating and proliferating themselves.31 Musashino outside the window is now literally flying, as the train speeds up in this flattened land.

As we are further away in this Chūō Line westward from the 23 Wards, the distance between the

29 Ōoka, “Musashino Fujin” in Ōoka Shōhei Zenshū 3 (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1994), pp.145-306; the quotes are from p.146, 179, and 164 respectively. Ōoka describes the former soldier, Tsutomu’s “melancholic” eyes as those of “criminals,” who would “do what they don’t want to do, driven by their dark instincts” (p.268). Tsutomu’s instincts are suggested to have been nurtured in Burma, to which he was dispatched. This novel is never tamed in the novel, although its overall moral is triumph of morality (abandonment of attempted adultery between Tsutomu and Michiko; Michiko in Japanese means the way of morality). The novelist thus reflects on the Freudian theme of how the war’s violence is contained, without being resolved, by postwar orders of marriage, property relation, and pragmatic morality (See Freud, “Thoughts for the Times on War and Death” in his Standard Edition: Complete Psychological Works, Vol. XIV (1914-16) (London: Hogarth Press, 1957), pp.273-302). Here, perhaps Ōoka’s masculinity merely performs; that is, Ōoka might just want to see the supposedly female’s realms of household, consumption, and moral pragmatism to have survived the war intact and will conquer and normalize the belligerent instincts of soldiers. Despite the desired dichotomy between instincts and culture, men and women, Ōoka makes Michiko commit suicide in order to protect the moral ideal of monogamy. This means that in the writer’s unconscious insight, the fascistic (roughly equaled with the expulsion of emotions and individuality for the sake of the ideal) governs and remains in the cultural and feminine as well. Fascism and, ultimately, the issue of the commodity are the non-thematized themes that Ōoka only unconsciously pursues—from this perspective, males and females, battlefields and households, are not so decisively dichotomized as the novel’s overt structure shows.


31 See Dazai’s “O-San” in the above anthology, pp.1-28; the quote is from p.8.
stations becomes greater, so the train is at its full speed—suicides are rampant in this line. Terusawa, Akiyama’s town, is about fifteen minutes by bus from X Station.

The bus that is bound for Terusawa echoes with multilingual chats and youthful giggles, reflecting the presence of a college nearby. The “bubbly” excess of the 1980s liquidity flowed into land, naturally rare in such a small country as Japan, pushing the property prices in the 23 Wards to their highest ever and many college campuses in the Wards out to the surrounding cities. The college in Terusawa was apparently one of them. The colleges’ survival strategies nowadays include that of introducing students from abroad. As Akiyama will later tell me, he would often see Chinese students working in neighborhood convenience stores, probably to fill the still wide currency gap between the yuan and yen (to the yen’s advantage as of June 2008).

This is my first visit to any “project” housing in Japan or elsewhere, which is apparently built near the campus, off other residential, middle-class parts of Musashino City, away in the bused distance. Akiyama’s has an almost Soviet beauty characteristic of pragmatic buildings, 1, 2, 3, 4, …, in neatly lined blocks, A, B, C, D, …. His apartment, “C-4-5f,” has newly painted partitions in the entrance to protect his privacy, just like any other units in the complex.

Smilingly receiving my excuse that I have arrived ten minutes earlier than 4:30, Akiyama is a lean, tall, handsome man, with his thick, gray hair combed all to the back. A light blue, fresh “Ralph Lauren” polo shirt, ironed chino pants, and his workshop where I am supposed to interview him is already chilled with the A/C—everything is ready and perfect. According to him, he uses this sliver of room next to the small entrance hall to manufacture “electronic devices,” which, together with the pension, helps him pay the bills. He says his wife has been a homemaker ever since she quit a secretarial job after their marriage.
“I’m following her suit finally this year; I’m planning to retire,” says the seventy three years old. In the back of the dim room, whose one small window is thickly curtained to prevent the scorching afternoon sun from the west, I see small industrial machines and a broad, tilted table for designing. Every inch of the four walls is filled with files, books, and periodicals, in the interstices of which are cleverly dovetailed a small fax machine and a copier. Later, during the three-hour interview, he would frequently look up the filed documents, which are so systematically stored that he does not have to waste even a single moment in looking for a wanted reference. I have seen similar levels of orderliness among similarly modest Manhattanites—the common issue of limited spaces aside, perhaps the sense of lacking control of one’s life might spark the urge to totally control one’s belongings, either documents, spices, or one’s own body.

“Why do you focus on the remains?” sipping the iced coffee that his wife kindly made for us, I start our conversation. We have already talked over the phone a couple of times, so I know his answer—because, he is bereaved. However, this is not the answer that I seek, since not every bereaved Japanese engages in his types of activism—the majority of them have decided to live with the idea that their beloved’s remains are missing, trying to forget about the lack in their busy everyday lives, over the long time-span of sixty three years. In this afternoon, in our first meeting in person, Akiyama is a little more elaborate than usual about his difference.

“See, I’m 73 now. When I was 61 [in 1995], we had the 50th anniversary of the end of the war. That was the year when I went to Okinawa [where his brother is said to have fallen] for the first time.”

Thus he starts his narrative in his low, a bit nasal voice, which connotes his quiet determination. He could be funny in genuinely warm, sociable ways. But when it comes to his
activism, subdued anger and accumulated frustration seem to simmer beneath his incessant speeches. As it will turn out, it is the anger and frustration concerning the bureaucracy of the Japanese state, which he says lacks any humanitarian consideration of the bereaved at all. Yet, on the surface, he keeps his cool, trying to be as pragmatic and rational as possible, just like the bureaucracy itself.

It is in such a restrained manner that he continues that prior to his trip to Okinawa, his mother passed away. According to him, she was never politically active. Immediately after the war, when her local Chiba prefectural government handed her a wooden box with a pebble inside in the place of her fallen son’s bones, she murmured, “how condescending” (baka ni shite-iru)—that was her first and last political act concerning her son. Pebbles for bones had become customary in the losing war where the Japanese army could no longer recover and repatriate its soldiers’ bodies.32 The pebble that the Akiyamas received was supposed to have been sent from the battlefield where the elder brother Akiyama had fallen; but in retrospect, Akiyama says to me with a sarcastic smile, it might have been picked in Tamagawa River in Tokyo or some other random place (“Tama-gawa atari no ja nai-ka ne”).

In the official note that came with the box, which Akiyama has read so many times that he remembers verbatim, there was no mention of either the battlefield or platoon in or for which

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32 According to Katsuichi Honda and Setsuo Naganuma, Tennō no Guntai (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbun Sha, 1991), earlier in China, the fallen Japanese soldiers were “incinerated, received by their buddies with salutes, and religiously memorialized [in the battlefield]. On the wooden box [in which their bones were actually placed] was written the dead’s rank, which was usually posthumously raised by one or two, depending on if the dead made an honorary action in the battle” (p.122). “Over a few times a year, [those boxes of bones] were repatriated [and sent] to the troops where the dead were drafted... There then, [the dead] received salutes again, before [the boxes were] handed to their families” (p.127). But, as the Japanese were gradually losing the Fifteen-Year War, they no longer had time or means to either recover or repatriate their remains, especially in the Pacific front. Emiko Namihira finds that the soldiers then cut off and incinerated either the left hands or fingers of their fallen buddies, so that they brought them home with them. These synecdoches of the dead are mostly missing, since their carriers themselves tended to fall later. The pebble that the Akiyamas received was then the substitute for the substitute (body parts versus the whole body). See Namihira, “Heishi no ‘Itai’ to Heishi no ‘Irei’,” in Katsuhiro Arai and Toshiya Ichinose eds., Irei to Haka: Kýōdô Kenkyû Kin-gendai no Heishi no Jitsuzô II (Kokuritsu Rekishi Minzoku Hakubutsukan Kenkyû Hôkoku, Vol.102 (March 2003)), pp.493-513; esp. p.502.
his brother fought. In an effort to take back the displaced body of his brother, in 1995, he visited the Social Welfare Bureau of the Health and Welfare Ministry that was in charge of bereaved families.

“Wait—but why did you wait until 1995?” I interrupt.

“Oh, because, I semi-retired from my job then. Before that, I’d been busy providing for my three kids.”

I would imagine that his mother’s death might also have something to do with the timing. At the same time, many like-minded activists have confessed to me similar lapses for more or less the same economic reasons. Throughout the past sixty three years since the end of the war, these and other Japanese must have indeed been very busy catching up with the re-assigned standard of the middle-class, in which some failed and others succeeded. The collective frenzy for economic recovery was of course the substitute for the prewar Japanese libidinal investment in their empire over the rest of Asia and the Pacific.³³ What is more, the postwar society’s economic focus was politically implanted, so that people earn money instead of acting politically.³⁴ The purely economic life that Akiyama suggests he has led is typical among ordinary Japanese, though he, together with other activists, is extraordinary in his keeping his

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³³ A similar process of transference of libido from the political to economic was observed in post-Nazi West Germany, according to Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlich. See their *The Inability to Mourn: Principles of Collective Behavior*, trans. by Beverley R. Placzek (New York: Grove Press, 1975). Eric L. Santner also discusses the phenomenon in his *Stranded Objects: Mourning, Memory, and Film in Postwar Germany* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990).

³⁴ According to a historian, Masanori Nakamura, in an attempt to bring a closure to what Nakamura calls the “political decade” of the 1950s, in which many strikes and other violent political movements were fought, Ikeda Hayato, the then candidate for the presidency of the Liberal Democratic Party (later the prime minister of Japan, 1960-4), said that his goal was “to brighten up people’s minds that had got dark during the Ampo movement [one of the biggest political movements in the 50s] with the ‘double the income plan’” that he had been proposing. See Nakamura, *Sengo-Shi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2005); p.84. Prime Minister Ikeda’s plan to replace the political with the economic apparently worked; many historians point out de-politicization of the Japanese lives after the 1960s. See Andrew Gordon, for instance, who reports the previously emphasized “class war (kaikyū tōsō)”’s shift to the politically opportunistic “civil movements (shimin undō),” in his “55-nen Taisei to Shakai Undō” in Rekishi-gaku Kenkyū-kai Nihon-shi Kenkyū-kai ed., *Nihon-shi Kōza, Vol.10; Sengo Nihon Hen* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppan Kai, 2005), pp.253-289.
political posture toward and personal memories of the war through the otherwise automatically passing postwar days.

When Akiyama thus visited the Social Welfare Bureau in Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda Ward in Tokyo, belatedly in 1995, they first said the brother had fallen in Palau, a Pacific island. Palau?—Akiyama was puzzled but went home. Talking to them once more later, he found out that the Bureau was not that certain about what it had said and willing to refer him to his native Chiba prefectural government. As the prefecture actually knew the platoon and other information (when did it gain the info? Why had not it let the Akiyamas know?), he called the Social Welfare Bureau again to obtain the numbers of his brother’s buddies; he wanted to know exactly how the brother fell. Since the Bureau belongs to the central government, it should and indeed did have all the lists of soldiers from any prefecture of Japan. And so on, the story goes on through the maze of bureaucratic turf and the confusions originating in wartime, to lead him to his first trip to the actual Okinawan bunker where the brother’s fellow veterans say that the brother had been killed.

The brother’s remains were not, and have not been, recovered, then and as of today (2008), for, after the war, the local Okinawans built a graveyard on top of the collapsed bunker. Akiyama was told that the policy of the Japanese state was that it would not recover the soldiers’ remains if their recovery was complicated by the burial site’s property status—the recovery project was not adequately budgeted for necessary compensations. Here again, Akiyama feels his wish to receive his brother’s remains has been hampered by bureaucracy.

“How those oyakusho (government agencies) work... I’m really mad,” says he, with oyakusho being a colloquial expression to sarcastically indicate bureaucracy as a self-sufficient machine for the sake of its own formalism. According to his idea, since the brother was drafted
by and fought for the state, the state has the “moral responsibility” (dōiteki sekinin) to probe under the now-graveyard in Okinawa at any cost (of course with due respect for the dead in the graveyard). There is no “humanity” (jindō) in the current operations of the oyakusho, which should be negatively juxtaposed with the “American” state, according to him.

“Even though Americans say bodies are just containers of souls, their state treats their soldiers’ bodies with so much more respect than the Japanese case,” says he, mentioning the U.S. Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO), which, among similar Japanese activists, is known to have dedicated so much more money and personnel to recovering their soldiers’ remains abroad, as compared to the Japanese case.

“How do you call it—dignity of bodies? They [the state of the U.S.] respect it. And with that respect, they try to repatriate the bodies. Don’t you feel their sympathetic consideration (omoiyari) [of the bodies]?” cries he. Here, he might be showing the so-called “mainstream conservatism” (hoshu honryū)-type of sensibility of postwar Japan, in which the tradition to be conserved is the sixty-three-year old semi-colonialism by the U.S. At the same time, “America” is also part of the “West,” as the Japanese liberals refer to as the supremely modernized paragon, the critical tool that these liberals use against Japan’s conservatism. I could not tell which is the case with Akiyama. Conservatism and radicalism seem to strangely cohabit in him. In his calm yet strong, heated yet whispering voice, he continues:

“So much difference from Japan [is shown by the DPMO project]. Japan, they [the state] say things like they’d respect bodies, based on our culture [in which bones are ritually significant], but this treatment [by the Japanese state of the Japanese soldiers with no respect

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35 Indeed, the activist who first brought the U.S. DPMO’s existence to my attention is the then retired congressman, Yonetsu Hitoshi, who was once viewed as the lieutenant of another powerful congressman and the popularly perceived mouthpiece of the U.S., Ozawa Ichirō. When I met him, Yonetsu was working for the non-profit that I will introduce in the second chapter, Japan Youth Memorial Association (JYMA), in Tokyo.

35 Akiyama, “Ikotsu no Atsukai...,” Ibid.
contradicts what the state says]. They [the Japanese state] are lying (giman desu yo).” His earlier contrast between the real and ideal states of Japan is now traced over that between the real Japanese and U.S. states, as he sees them.

So, responding to my question on his motives, he has mentioned the Japanese funerary custom, in which the deceased bones have to be present as the token of the dead. Similarly, perhaps to him, his status as a bereaved constructs the limit of the language of what he calls humanity, whereby I feel I am expected to naturally and telepathically understand his wish to receive his beloved’s body, perhaps based on my sympathetic faculty as the same human being.36 Other than those two reasonings, his narrative is replete with his indignation against the bureaucracy of the Japanese state. At the end of the long interview, it feels as if his purpose was not to gain the brother back but to fight the bureaucracy, which should actually be providing the means of accomplishing the first objective.

Through the Kafkaesque twist of modernity, he even adopts the bureaucracy’s tactics itself—law and legalism. To take an example, he would accuse the state, particularly its Health and Welfare Ministry, of “destroying and abandoning human bones in violation of the 190th clause of the criminal law” at the Chidorigafuchi Cemetery in Tokyo. At the Cemetery, he argues, more than 330 thousands sets of the already recovered bones of the soldiers are resting, after being “burnt en masse with high-heated gas until they almost completely lose their original forms.” This “treatment” (shobun) is illegal also in the light of a Tokyo metropolitan ordinance (No.125, Clause 15), to which the management of the Cemetery is subject due to its location. The ordinance, according to him, stipulates that an unidentifiable set of human bones be placed

36 Nearly twelve years after the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center in 2001, Monica Gabrielle and Kristen Breitweiser are among others who have been “relentlessly” pushing the authority to try to recover their families’ remains out of the sixty dump trucks’ worth of soil taken from the trade center site and currently sitting untouched in Staten Island. “‘I know people think it’s more whining,’ Ms. Gabrielle said. ‘But really, why should this have been left sitting out there?’” See Jim Dwyer, “9/11 Remains Still Found, And Sought” in The New York Times, 4/5/2013.
in an independent box to be buried as an individual. To begin with, the Chidorigafuchi Cemetery is not a legally registered cemetery (a violation of the Cemetery and Burial Act, Clause 14), a fact that the citizens of both the surrounding Chiyoda Ward of Tokyo and the larger nation of Japan should be informed about. Akiyama concludes his argument by deciding that the state’s practices are “illegal” (fuhōna) in addition to being inhumane.\(^{37}\)

His legal literacy demonstrated in this argument lets us understand the level at which he has already been subjectified by the aspect of the state (bureaucracy) that he struggles to correct. His subjectification is at such a level that his legal criticism looks to be automatic and without meaning; probably there is not so much point in deciding whether such a highly political and national practice as burying anonymous soldiers is legal according to the hosting municipality’s ordinances. He may or may not be self-conscious about his seemingly meaningless mechanicity, yet he resorts to the probably ineffectual legalism in any case. He could possibly escape the loop of legalism, which subjectifies and enables him, by referring to real humanitarianism, that is, by opposing the state practice of war itself, which ultimately caused the Cemetery. This is not as impossible as it sounds—many other bereaved families have been doing that, whether mentioning “western universalism” as the conceptual means of ethical transcendence or some other means. As for Akiyama, he does not particularly have any problem with war or the warring state, as we have seen above.

In contrast to his mechanicity, state bureaucracy, as he addresses here, seems to have lost its transparency as the pure means and become equipped with the ability for recognition.\(^{38}\) In his legal research and meticulous presentations, Akiyama seems to assume that the bureaucratic state

\(^{37}\) Akiyama, “Ikotsu no Atsukai...,” Ibid.

\(^{38}\) For the normative model of the modern state, see Carl Schmitt, Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty, trans. by George Schwab, forwarded by Tracy B. Strong (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).
is the agent that recognizes the level of his training as its subject. Thus, he apparently prefers directly talking to the Health and Welfare Ministry and other relevant agencies over cooperatively opposing, or correcting, to use his expression, these agencies. Many other activists opt to reach other citizens by handing out their publications on the street, holding meetings in city halls, or using the Internet, in an effort to critically improve the kinds of situations that Akiyama problematizes. These other activists would not be so focused, as Akiyama seems to be, on the idea of distributing their articles at the state-approved “press club,” for instance, from which the country’s media is allowed to disseminate the state-issued news. I am sure that Akiyama goes to the club to reach the dramatically bigger number of people that the state-media could officially reach than otherwise. The information distributed through the club-members might enjoy more trust among certain populations than the information distributed through civil groups. Yet, could the club be just a means to Akiyama? When one remembers where he comes from—the public oblivion of an “independent” business owner—the club might be recast as a stage and an object. At and to the club, Akiyama is not only showing his life and purpose, but showing off that he too is the state’s competent subject; his legalism aside, a certain kind of bureaucratic ability is required in order to act effectively in the club. Even though I lead a life of independence, Akiyama at and to the club might be saying, I am no less competent than these club-journalists and bureaucrats. As the addressee of the show-off, the club and the state behind the club seem to start taking on substantiality—some positively assumed existence, the existence that is supposed to be able to recognize and evaluate Akiyama’s bureaucratic abilities and legal competence. I sense that Akiyama assumes the bureaucratic state is the substantiated agent of recognition, even though this agency is separate from the previously discussed sacrifier state’s

agency. The sacrifier state is supposedly in charge of the meaning of the nation, death, and history; the bureaucratic state seems to work on the processes of subjectification and commodification. As the Subject of those processes, this bureaucratic state seems to help moralize the otherwise neutral processes—being “in” the system, competent, and thus well-subjectified becomes “good,” with good being so-judged by a certain, embodied state-figure, as Akiyama seems to assume. It is on the assumptions that commodification is moral and that this morality has the Subject of recognition, which Akiyama seems to acquire his willingness as a subject.

If this is the case, then the bureaucratic state is not so different from his ideal state, the Subject of people’s self-sacrifices. According to Akiyama’s earlier contrast between them, the bureaucratic state was supposed to be immoral in its working of commodification/subjectification. Yet the sacrifier state, which he substantiated as the opposite of the bureaucratic state, turned out to be none other than the agent of commodifying subjectification. Now, when he seems to try to substantiate the bureaucratic state as the moral authority of commodification/subjectification, such a state seems to overlap with the sacrifier state in its imagined substantiality and pseudo-metaphysical morality. The overlap is that between the agential state (the sacrifier) that commodifies and the commodifying state (the bureaucratic state) that is moral. In Akiyama’s discussion, these two kinds of state start with the opposite qualities (moral and immoral, respectively). He misrecognizes that these states have mutually opposite functions, which are individuating and commodifying. But these states end up in exchanging these qualities and functions. Lastly, let me reiterate that these points of convergence and divergence between the two types of state seem to ramify from Akiyama’s
certain desires regarding the concept of the Subject, its agency, and the morality of commodification.

Fascism is intractable precisely for the prevalence of the desires that it carries with it. The case in point here, Akiyama’s wish to set up a moral authority of the process of commodification, is the kind of anachronism that would surely be shared by many in modern capitalism. The wish is anachronistic, since from the materialist perspective, the modern capitalist actors no longer need the existence of moral authority in order to be the subjects. It is true that schools, mass media, churches, and others that Louis Althusser calls “ideological state apparatuses” constantly disseminate those authoritative-sounding voices that individuals obey, misrecognizing that these voices are truly authoritative. But in actuality, these individuals listen to the authoritative voices that are delivered by these apparatuses without knowing, or rather without admitting the necessity of knowing, whose voices they are—thus the allure of the voices, which these individuals enjoy and respect as such, i.e. as an enigma. Akiyama and other activists must know this allure; what might differentiate them is their persistent and insistent imagination of a respectively specific figure (e.g. the agential state, “big brothers,” and so on) that is supposed to be the origin of the voices. The results are the same either way—whether supposedly known or unknown, the voices start and restart the everyday process of over-interpretation and over-reaction, relevant repression and internalization, and self-discipline and peer education. This is the process that Althusser says is more important than the origin of the voices.

According to Michel Foucault’s estimation, this process of self-subjection was launched in the mid-nineteenth century prisons and other correctional facilities in Europe and North America. The process of discipline in these facilities relied on what Foucault calls the “micro-

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41 Althusser, Ibid.; p.144.
This type of power worked on the body, unconsciousness and everyday rhythms of the inmates, rather than working through their minds or consciousness. Who ordered what became obsolete in the inmates’ repetitious fulfillment of the order, which they imposed on themselves as part of their everyday habits. Due to its autonomous and automatic nature, this type of discipline rendered any authoritative figure unnecessary. While Bentham dreamt about the possibility of constructing a “Panopticon,” the central tower from which an invisible official was supposed to incessantly watch each individual inmate, at this point of history it was merely “the diagram of a mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form” and “in fact a figure of political technology that may and must be detached from any specific use.”

In other words, the Panopticon, when it was theoretically conceived, was already just a model without any pragmatic possibility. In spite of what Akiyama might like to think, the modern capitalist subjects are these inmates, whose mode of self-discipline Foucault thinks was later exported to the larger society. Like these inmates, the subjects in the larger society are always already self-subjectivized without the Panoptic eyes or interpellating voices.

This is not to say that the central eye or original voice is completely absent from the modern capitalist society. According to Kant, these voices and eyes remain in the automatic system of modern morality as absence itself. To Kant, there is no doubt that empiricism denied the idea of moral authority, which could unconditionally guarantee our knowledge of freedom, immorality, and God. Empiricism argues that our knowledge is a product of our perception and other kinds of representation. As a consequence, the Truth withers, leaving behind what Kant calls the “vacant place” that the Truth once occupied. This place remains in its vacancy—even though morality in the age of representation is not something that is licensed by any authority or

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43 Foucault, Ibid.; p.205.
guaranteed by any truth, one becomes moral by postulating truths’ existence. This postulation is of course contrary to the knowledge that it is theoretically unsound. In the Kantian sense, the erroneous postulation is practically (morally) enabling and therefore necessary. The Kantian concept of freedom lies right here, in postulating truths beyond the empirical law that denies them. In his words,

I thereby do not indeed learn what the object may be to which this [moral] kind of causality is attributed. I do, however, remove the difficulty, since, on the one hand, in the explanation of natural occurrences, including the actions of rational beings, I leave to the mechanism of natural necessity the right to ascend from conditioned to condition ad infinitum, while, on the other hand, I hold open for speculative reason the place which for it is vacant, i.e., the intelligible, in order to put the unconditioned in it. I could not, however, give content to this supposition, i.e., convert it into knowledge even of the possibility of a being acting in this way. Pure practical reason now fills this vacant place with a definite law of causality in an intelligible world (causality through freedom). This is the moral law.44

In the modern world, it is not any “object” but “the mechanism of natural necessity” that determines whether one acts morally. The idea of necessity for morality automatizes moral processes and slashes off any requirement for moral authority. Yet, one still “speculat[es]” or “suppos[es]” the truth’s existence by keeping the vacant place for the authority of the truth, as a sort of vanishing afterimage of the authority’s metaphysical entity (Kant does not explain why post-metaphysical humans have to keep acting centripetally). This speculation or supposition is a working of the human faculty of “pure practical reason,” according to Kant. He says the mental activities that mobilize pure practical reason “now [fill] this vacant place [that was once metaphysically occupied] with a definitive law of [moral] causality.” The empty place that is vacated by the Subject of morality is now filled with moral law as a substitute, while this does not mean that the moral law in modern time is marked by the Subject’s authorship. Questions

44 Kant, Ibid.; p.29.
regarding the law’s authorship, origin, or attribution simply become irrelevant and inappropriate in the face of one’s pragmatic necessity to act morally. The moral law’s mode of reasoning is tautology—humans are moral since there is the moral law; the moral law exists since humans are necessarily moral.

In the post-Freudian retrospect, the Kantian subject might seem to exercise a certain level of consciousness and conscience in keeping the vacant place in the middle of moral pragmatism, in order to be human, in order to be free. The vacancy might seem to be stoically and courageously kept as such, without any retrogressive fantasy to re-fill the vacancy—Slavoj Žižek, for example, has analyzed such a fantasy by using the category of unconsciousness and referring to the emotional quality of pleasure. Nonetheless, one can say that the fantastic element is already built in the Kantian scheme as the gap between belief and knowledge, as the subject’s “ascent” to the unconditioned, even though this subject does not know the content of the unconditioned. From this point of split and ascent, Akiyama-type of substantiation is not so far away. Fascist fascination with the concrete body of the “leader” figure (e.g. the cinematic body of Hitler) is broadly shared by the larger society, due to this fantastic structure and process of modern subjectification in general.

In many ways, Kant’s discussion of modern morality is parallel to Marx’s theory on the modern productivity. Similarly to the Marxian subjects who produce their commodities without knowing why these commodities are going to be exchangeable, the Kantian subject acts morally without knowing why s/he has to uphold relevant laws. In Marx, individuals have to misrecognize that commodities themselves have the will and power to be mutually exchanged; in Kant, individuals have to similarly believe (versus know) that moral law is absolute. Recall Marx says the anti-empirical supposition of commodity fetishism frees human actors from their natural

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environments to be the modern capitalist subjects—this overlaps with the Kantian notion of freedom to law.

In the case of Marx, the centripetal nature of Akiyama’s substantiation would be best explained in terms of the theory of money fetishism, an epi-theory of commodity fetishism. Money fetishism is the theory that addresses the question of why people misunderstand that the money commodity such as gold has inherent preciousness.\(^{46}\) Money has come to possess universal power as the measure of value and means of exchange just because people during their transactions treat it as such for the sake of convenience, not because money (e.g. gold) is naturally valuable. See the parallelism with Kant here, who argues that the unconditioned’s space is vacated yet kept as such due to people’s pragmatic supposition of the unconditioned and not due to the substantiality of the unconditioned. Yet in Akiyama’s discourses and practices, it is as if the state, both bureaucratic- and sacrifier-types, held unquestioned moral superiority, for which people sacrificed their lives and deaths in order to express their natural deference to it. It is as if the state had natural power to render people into the state’s mutually exchangeable subjects. As I have mentioned, the truth is that the mutual exchangeability of commodities, including human laborers, are guaranteed by the labor-power that all of them congeal to be values. Money in this labor theory of value is a materially redundant yet magically centralizing agent of circulation, one of the pivotal contradictions of modern capitalism.

Due to his fetishistic insertion of the imaginary body of the state as the moral authority or as the “money” of moral exchanges, Akiyama might be able to think that he is spared from seeing the soldiers as automatically moral, that is, as likely “killing” their individuality anyway without any external authority. When these soldiers cannot be but moral subjects in Kantian or Marxian senses, Akiyama might think that he can resuscitate the soldiers’ agency and

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individuality by supposing the agential state. Of course, everyone else in modern capitalism supposes the authoritative center of morality and sacred medium of economy, according to Kant and Marx. Akiyama’s anachronism is meaningful only for its modernism.

In the age of mechanical reproduction, the built-in anachronism of modernity reveals its contradictory nature even more than ever before, in spite of, or rather, because of the technologically-availed possibility of the super-commodity. As I have briefly mentioned, the habit to see commodities as magically agential leads to another habit to treat money as autonomously precious, since both are the results of the same amnesia of human agency, the same psychological state of self-subjection. It is the secondary status of money to the commodity in general (money is a commodity), which makes money fetishism causally and temporally subordinate to commodity fetishism. Hence in the age of mechanical reproduction, the maximally expanded, magical realm of commodity fetishism holds room for, or gives birth to, a similarly heightened belief in another magic, i.e. the beliefs that the money commodity has never been a commodity and that money has an inherent power to centralize human transactions. And again, I am arguing that such a belief in the central figure of economy and morality has never been so firm as in the age of mechanical reproduction, where people’s ultimately standardized labor-power as the mass could produce and have been producing the exchangeable products without any authoritative hands.

Therefore, Akiyama’s reincorporative activity should be contextualized in the larger society’s mode of mechanical reproduction, in which reincorporation of the ideas of “Japan,” the emperor, or God(s) are matters of everyday consumption. Having saturated Japanese lives once in the 1920s, the mechanical reproductive system was mended as soon as the war was over and

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47 Yumiko Iida analyzes the 1990s’ relation between capitalist alienation and the problem of the subject in her *Rethinking Identity in Modern Japan: Nationalism as Aesthetics* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002).
fortified in the 1960s’ “high growth” and in the overall neoliberal trend that started in the 1970s. Within this largely fantastic geography of commercialized Japan, Akiyama with his imagination of the Subjective state should be analyzed in terms of his susceptibility to the society’s reincorporative acts in general. Akiyama the home-bound engineer is perhaps in a position to be more easily interpellated by the fantastic discourses of the Subject than other Japanese might be; this Subject matches the independent nature of his job. Somehow placed outside the country’s economic prosperity, Akiyama supposes the Subject also in order for it to recognize his life. It is only when one considers this redemptive aspect of his activism that one might understand the reason that he started his activist work at the age of sixty-one, as he was probably beginning to look back on his life. Otherwise, he says he does not remember even playing together with his eleven-year older brother.

According to what his wife tells me as she prepares our dinner (“Please don’t. I’m not even hungry and I’m going home” “Yes I will. You are hungry and you’re not going home until you have dinner with us”), soon after his brother was drafted in 1943 at the age of twenty, the nine-year old Akiyama became an egg vendor to support the family. One day, with the money that he thus earned, he bought a kit of radio parts to amuse himself—he was immediately immersed and started to study engineering and electronics by himself. When she met him, he was already a self-made engineer. In the small company that was his second employer, she had been working as an accounting secretary for a while.

“A poor man, why the heck does he have to work for such a meager salary?” she thought in her mind, according to her.
“Hmm..., So, apparently, you didn’t marry him for his money. Then for what? Was he as
good-looking as he is today?” I wink.

“Ha ha. You’d be surprised, but he wasn’t!”

Akiyama is also laughing behind us, getting the table ready. Tonight’s menu is of course
special, as his wife made a trip to the nearby supermarket to cook protein-rich dishes specifically
for me—the couple usually avoids them for health-related reasons. On the kitchen table that is
covered with red and white plastic “cloth,” dish after dish is placed, pushing everyday traces
such as various receipts or pictures of their now grown-up kids further and further away to the
edges. There are sautéed sausages with green peppers; here are stewed beef and potatoes; tuna
sashimi, sautéed bamboo shoots a la “Chinese” (that is, flavored with sesame oil), a bowl of
avocado, lettuce, tomato, and steamed squash salad, boiled spinach, brown rice, miso soup with a
new variety vegetable, “purple vines” (murasaki tsuru-kusa), and slices of cantaloupe for dessert.
The wife keeps talking over the dinner without eating so much, surely for the purpose of
entertaining me, but as I sense, perhaps also for some reasons that are related to some surgeries
that the husband Akiyama said she had had in the prior year.

After the dinner, the wife starts to share her daughter’s wedding photos with me—a
beautiful daughter and her Italian husband, whom she met in London as both studied in an
English-language school. They live in Italy now.

“When was the last time that we saw her? We miss her so much,” cries Akiyama. “But,
apparently, she can’t afford for the air-ticket [to come see the Akiyamas again in Japan]. She
doesn’t even have a job; she’s just started to learn Italian [to be able to find a job in Italy]. Of
course, we’d love to send her the ticket. But, we’re frugal pensioners ourselves. You know,
we’ve just spent a lot of money in the last year for the surgeries.”
Meanwhile, a few neighbors visit the couple, in order to see their rare dracaena flowers that have incidentally bloomed tonight. They have grown the pot of what they call “the tree of happiness” (kōfuku no ki), following how it is marketed in Japan, for eight years; and this is the first time that they have ever been able to see the actual flowers. The much-anticipated flowers are honey-exuding, thick-petaled ping-pong balls, lined up on three or four weeping branches. As soon as they are open, the flowers fill the whole apartment with a strong aroma that reminds me of lilac. Happiness is perhaps an exaggeration. Yet, the exotic atmosphere that the big pot of dracaena on the living-room tatami mattress spreads is powerful anyway, powerful enough to distract other residents in the same complex from the middle of their variously hard-working everyday.

“What a view—great nourishment for my eyes,” sighs a lady with short-cut hair that is dyed reddish brown.

“My pot of Z [I could not hear] will also bloom tonight,” another in a gray, turtle-necked sweat shirt lets everyone know as she leaves.

“Finally!” Excited, Mrs. Akiyama stands up to go with her.

“I’ll join you guys later!” shouts Mr. Akiyama to their backs. A certain kind of reciprocity has apparently been practiced in this complex, which levels out all in the exchanging circle as the same, moral neighbors. Invited for their dinner and also sharing the great nourishment of dracaena, I feel I am temporarily drawn in a similar relation with the Akiyamas. I will aptly express my feeling by sending them a box of assorted sweets (kashi ori) later, according to the gift-exchanging common-sense of the country. Here too, as is the case with Akiyama’s imagination of a moral relation with the state, gift-exchange is never an alternative to commodity-exchange, for its effect is to equalize its players to be the same form of moral
communal members. The players become the same with each other to the extent that they are equally subject to the rules of gift-exchange. According to these rules, everything—exhaustion from surgeries, loneliness for absent kids, and aroma of flowers—is potentially abstracted into the exchangeable form. The exhaustion and sickness will accordingly be exchanged for comfort foods cooked out of neighborly concern, while the empty nest’s loneliness will be exchanged for visits of neighborhood kids, etc., so that food and kids are then returned by more heterogeneous things such as an invitation for a neighbor’s dance class’ exhibition (the examples that Akiyama gives me). Yet even in the midst of this commodity structure of the neighborhood gift-exchange, certain spirit of altruism seems to be irreducibly present. I have no reason to doubt that these neighbors provided tapper-wears of food out of true concerns about Mrs. Akiyama’s post-operative frailty, for example, while I assume that these probably truly self-sacrificing moments must be constantly interrupted by the sober calculations of monetary balance between gives and takes, of the labor time used by each party.48

This insight does not point to the capitalism of gift-exchange only. The same insight perhaps enables one to discuss also the moral origin of capitalism. Just as gift-exchange cannot exist outside commodity logic, the exchange of commodities between the reified subjects might not exist outside moral considerations. Sacrificing of the satisfaction of one’s own needs for the sake of the satisfaction of others’ needs must feature every stage of modern capitalism, from production on. Without this self-sacrifice, which is fundamentally ethical (see Chapter 5), the exchange-value of the commodity could never be displaced from its use-value; and the highly labor-divided society of modern capitalism could never be sustained. In such a society, one

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specializes in the production of one particular kind of thing or service, which is meant to be consumed by others; the producer consumes a variety of goods and services that other specialists similarly produce. I am here talking about the type of morality, or rather ethics, which reflection will allow one to discuss Marx together with Kant once again. In addition to their theories’ concurrence on the structure of fetishism as one of the main features of modern subjection, these two philosophers seem to present similar views of the unexplainable ethicality in human nature. Again, Marx’s commodity fetishism can be reread in terms of the producer’s habituated will to sociality (self-sacrifice to exchange with others) and unconscious trust in others’ similar sociality. Unless using some exceptional concepts such as Kant’s freedom, this will and trust in the middle of the labor-divided anomy of the modern capitalist society cannot be explained by reason alone. Capitalist production is an unconscious gifting to others, the gifting that is enabled by humans’ irreducible freedom to act ethically. At the same time, this freedom is necessarily “freedom” in the sense of subjection, to the degree that the ethical intention happens more or less unconsciously to the actor—the intention is always already incorporated in the habitual system of modern morality and capitalism.

Akiyama and other activists’ acts of reincorporation imaginatively reorganize this habitual system in such a way that the reincorporated entity of the Subjective state, for instance, could precede and centralize people’s practices and, perhaps more importantly to these activists, generate and orient their intentions. Here too, consciousness seems to be the matter of prime concern to these activists; they seem to think that the reincorporation of the center of modern morality can restore consciousness back to people. Note, though, that the act of and will to reincorporation alone would not make the problem of fascism. For, reincorporation is common not only among ordinary (that is, non-fascistic) moralists but also among banal nationalists. I
think the definition of fascism is rather predicated on the way in which fascist fantasies (e.g. the aryrian nation, the agential state, etc.) are combined with what it declares to protect their fantastic entities from—the logic of the commodity, and particularly the form of the mass. That is why it does not remain to be merely reactionary and fantastic, but advanced and mechanical, accommodating both our fear of and fascination with the phenomenon of the mass. It is true that nationalism, for example, is characterized by the similar, techno-archaism, i.e., collective imagination of the national origin that has become possible only after and through the mass-technology of printing. However, while nationalists are drawn to and drown in the meaning and essence of the ur-language, foundational myths, birth places, etc., they seem to understand printing as the means with which to explore and diffuse these themes. As for fascists, there is something suicidal about them, in their excessive fascination with the technology with which their meaning (the agential state, etc.) should be represented. With strange obsession with the totalitarian orderliness and machine repetition that camera, cinema, computer graphics and other mass-reproductive technologies enable, fascists tend to lose meaning, easily subject to the senseless acts of excessive murders, mass-suicides, meritocratic extremes, so on and so forth. When authoritative nationalists pledge their neurotic allegiance to “founding fathers,” fascists would then wander in dark fits of obsessive compulsion, deprived of purposes, exposed to the short-circuit risk of eternity. The difference between nationalism and fascism, I argue, is the different ways in which they respectively represent and react to the overall, material condition of commodity structure, especially in the mode of mechanical reproduction. To the degree that there is no outside of this condition, both nationalism and fascism are the problems that every subject of the mechanical reproductive mode of modern capitalism potentially contains.

Although I propose to formally differentiate fascism from nationalism for its focus on aesthetics, my intention is not to say that fascism has no meaning whatsoever. Far from that, as I have supposed, the concept of the Subjective state, for example, to Akiyama is meant to redeem the otherwise mechanically killed/killing lives of the soldiers’, as well as Akiyama’s. The state here is meaningful; so it becomes Akiyama’s or the soldiers’ everyday that is otherwise the empty repetitions of machines. Meaning must be pursued more earnestly by Akiyama than by those in other class-groups, when the everyday in his class-group might be felt more unredeemable than other cases.

Class is important not only in identifying the redemptive meaning of fascism for the petty bourgeoisie like Akiyama. I believe class is also the key to understand the historical meaning of Akiyama’s choice of the agential state over the emperor as his moral Subject. His is a very curious choice in postwar Japan, in which other fascists and nationalists alike are historically contextualized to morally substantiate and symbolically centralize the emperor. The last section of this chapter will analyze this issue.

**The Emperor’s Infants without the Emperor**

The last dimension that I would like to analyze of Akiyama’s complex thoughts and activism pertains to the emperor—or rather, the lack thereof in his activism. The institution of the Japanese emperor is strictly a reincorporated body that is so created that it symbolically occupies the center, or rather top, of the hierarchically conceptualized system of morality, which is a modern creation itself. As such, it started to appear in the Japanese society only after the country’s modern capitalist system matured.

As Marx says about the process in which gold “accident[ally]” becomes money, the emperor was relatively randomly selected to be the central body, with the part “relatively”
indicating the long history in which the emperor had already acted as a commodity.\textsuperscript{50} Called “jade” (gyoku), the emperor in this prehistory had been a sign for the legitimate sovereign, traded, circulated, hoarded, and counterfeited in the hands of various power mongers. Utilizing this somehow already advanced commodity-status of the emperor, and especially his status as the jade-precious commodity, the new modern state of Japan (1868-) attempted to construct a nation as a sort of circulatory realm of the emperor as the symbolic currency. The actual Japanese coins were minted and money was printed with the royal couple’s images on them. People were the national subjects insofar as they rendered themselves mutually exchangeable with the emperor as the medium. To be the subject of this imperial nation one had to recognize the supposed superiority of the emperor in his status, morality, and modernity, as the state propagated, and had to emulate him in these regards, as his loyal client (shinmin). Prior to this attempt by the state, the emperor had been far from the center of ordinary people’s moral lives—people are known to have been even unaware of the emperor’s existence. The previously legitimizing function of the emperor had been recognized only among the ruling class.\textsuperscript{51}

The state’s nation was apparently centralized; and it was centralized so that the designated emotion of nationalism converged with the expected sort of money fetishism, i.e. the fascination with the emperor as the supposed center among the mutually exchangeable national subjects. The state’s conservatism was historically propelled in the context in which the ideas of true equality and freedom emerged among the citizens almost simultaneously with the state’s project of modernization. During the Meiji period (1868-1912) of modern Japan, the oligarchs who ran the government did not gain the peace of their minds by just constructing the center of

\textsuperscript{51} About the state’s popularization efforts for the emperor, see Takashi Fujitani, \textit{Splendid Monarchy: Power and Pageantry in Modern Japan} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996). Japan’s folklore studies have tried to rehabilitate the initially absent mass-base of the emperor, “discovering” various folk practices that supposedly date back before the advent of modernity in 1868, such as hiyomi, etc.
the nation; they intended to construct this center to be also the apex, from which a hierarchy of people was designed to descend. The designed hierarchy was that of the “family nation” (kazoku kokka), which treated each family (ie) in Japan as differently statused in its supposed blood-relation with the royal family. Every family in the county was newly claimed as a close or remote “branch family” (bunke) of the royal family. Each individual in this ideological scheme was placed in a certain position in a patriarchally re-aligned family relation, depending on his/her gender, age, ethnicity, and others.

The family-nation was not just the state’s tool for the moral integration of people; the modern Japanese also took initiatives in fantasizing and practicing the system. The timing is important to understand the popular initiatives. Many historians, including Masayuki Suzuki, point out the patriotism (kokusuishugi) that was ignited during the Sino-Japanese War (1894-5) as one of the causes for the ideological success of the family-nation in 1900-10s and after. According to these historians, the ordinary Japanese challenged the Chinese saying that the Japanese were unique and superior due to their ideological roots in the family-nation and due to the family-nation’s sacred origin in the emperor. Materially though, this nationalism was symptomatic in the condition of mass-reproduction that was about to saturate everyday Japan at that point. According to Benedict Anderson, “the development of [such a mass-reproduced

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53 According to Harry Harootunian, in the 1920s, ordinary Japanese enjoyed what they called (in Japanized English) “modern life,” which was distinguished by “its materiality and its embeddedness in a culture of objects and their circulation. Its very materiality...constituted the sign of a historicity of the present, its historical moment, the temporality of modernity.” See his Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000); p.97. Then, various newspapers and magazines were mass-printed and –distributed. The movie industry started to focus on reproduction versus production by increasing the number of films per print, while “[v]arious dance styles, golf, Western music, and No drama that [had] inundated aristocratic taste were rapidly generalized, diffused throughout society” (Harootunian; p.174), deprived of the aura of the original. In the Taishō (1912-25) consumer culture, masses as the formless collectivity of the modern boys (mo bo) and girls (mo ga) were created by and thriving along the principle of mechanical reproduction. Giddy multiplication of these boys and girls, who were mutually substitutable as workers and consumers, the mass was the effect of the fast-forwarded process of production, while as consumers, the mass's inclination toward copies and fakes and trinkets was the cause of its own birth and growth as the mass. Nationalism, ultimately the ideology of
commodity as] print-as-commodity is the key to the generation of wholly new ideas of simultaneity,” which is the temporality of the modern nation. The modern national simultaneity, in other words, emerges from the even appearance of the terrain created by the mode of mechanical reproduction. In such a space-time of the nation, “the newspaper reader, [for example,] observing exact replicas of his own paper being consumed by his subway, barbershop, or residential neighbours, is continually reassured that the imagined world [of the nation] is visibly rooted in everyday life.” The everyday nation of Japan was necessarily born at the turn of the last century, perhaps against the concept of the enemy Chinese and perhaps after the auspices of the Japanese state, but more materially precisely, due to people’s becoming the modern capitalist value. As the holders of the same labor-power, people could not help but feel attracted to the identical appearance of the mass-reproduced products. Fascination with these products was the origin of the modern Japanese nation of simultaneous tempo and even appearance, the fascination that had to emerge from people’s forgetfulness of their own agency in producing, circulating, and consuming these products. It is this same forgetfulness that one can say was responsible for molding the Japanese nationalism at that time into the form of the family-nation. Theoretically speaking, if the nation is based on people’s value as the same labor-power, then people should be the same national members without the help of any medium. The allegory that best suits this situation is that of an egalitarian “brotherhood” and not a patriarchal family. The figure of national integration, the emperor, in this materialist insight looks to be strictly redundant: his assigned nature of paternity, nobility, and sacredness is excessively

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ornamental. But the Japanese at the turn of the last century created and desired the emperor and the family-nation in their redundancy and ornamentality, due to people’s own mass-taste. Called “modern girls” (mo ga) and “boys” (mo bo), the masses jumped at one short-lived style of fashion after another; their fascination with the emperor must similarly have grown for his nostalgically inalienable images, mass-reproduced on the movie screens and photographic surfaces. These images must have seemed to these masses to be magically sacred, just because they forgot that the sacredness would have disappeared as soon as they stopped viewing his images as sacred. An observer is here encountering the power of the habit of commodity fetishism, which had already trained the Japanese masses to be the subjects of the family-nation, long before its design by the state, long before the trigger of the Sino-Japanese War. But again, the observer ought to be equally attentive to these people’s deep emotionality toward the meaning of the family-nation—the idea of blood-ties, their inalienability, and the sacredness of the patriarch. Unlike fascism, nationalism selects the object of people’s desires. The late Meiji to Taishō (1912-1925) Japanese’s habituated formality as the capitalist subjects was realigned to be that as the national subjects, therefore, partly by the power of the sign and what it signified. The extent of these kinds of power was such that already during the recessionary crisis of the 1920-30s, it made perfect socio-cultural sense that the left and right revolutionaries of the country used the emperor as the “symbol of national integration” (kokumin tōgō no shōchō). As the Fifteen-Year War (1931-45) was started and dragged into the quagmire, the symbol finally grew into the


57 Term is probably not the practitioners’. See for instance Osamu Kuno and Shunsuke Tsurumi, Gendai Nihon no Shisō: Sono 5-tsu no Uzu (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1956) for the way in which it is academically used to analyze the emperor’s status in the period.
idea of the “living god” (arahito gami), to match the fascist intensification of nationalism. As the fascists emphasized the formalization of people into the national form (their symbolic and real deaths for the nation), the meaning of the emperor had to be evaporated into the absurd abstractness of modern divinity, that is, into the semantic “nothingness” (mu), as fascists liked to say.

In prewar Japanese history, the emperor was thus the reincorporated figure of morality per excellence. This status of the emperor continues even today, due to the immediately postwar geopolitical interests of the United States in keeping the imperial system intact. It is true after 1945, the emperor lost the political sovereignty that he previously enjoyed. However, in return, his morally and culturally central position, which was ideologized in the concept of the family-nation among others, is acknowledged under the democratic Constitution of 1947, in the new and old disguise of the “symbol of the nation” (kokumin no shōchō). In this modern Japanese history, what is curious is that Akiyama does not refer to the emperor in his moral endeavor. As I have discussed, Akiyama’s endeavor seems to be based on the idea of the Subjective state as the embodied center of postwar Japanese morality. Why not the emperor, though? What makes him choose the figure of the state instead?

The productive angle, with which to address these questions, should be class. The emperor was introduced in the modern time as the synecdoche of hierarchical orders. It was argued that the hierarchies represented by the emperor among various statuses, genders,

58 “[T]he personification from which he [god] has resulted must become lasting and necessary,” Hubert and Mauss say about the process in which the sacrificial victim becomes a god. “This indissoluble association between creatures or a species of creatures and a supernatural power is the fruit of the regular recurrence of the sacrifices... The repetition of these ceremonies in which, as a result of a habit or for any other reason, the same victim reappears at regular intervals has created a kind of continuous personality. Since the sacrifice preserves its secondary effects, the creation of the divinity is the work of previous sacrifices...” The idea of god is the result of habitual sacrifices; it is not that people worship the god since he is already sacred. See Henri Hubert and Marcel Mauss, Sacrifice: Its Nature and Function, trans. by W. D. Halls, forward by E. E. Evans-Pritchard (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981(1964)); p.81.
ethnicities, localities, etc., which together constituted the totalitarian system of familial Japan, were said to defend people from class disparities. According to this ideology, the differences between the newly created “aristocrats” (kazoku) and “commoners” (heimin), males and females, Japanese and Koreans, etc. were moral and cultural, so the more differentiated and hierarchized people were according to the emperor’s logic, the less displacement they would experience as differently classed masses in capitalist everyday. While these differences guaranteed by the reincorporated existence of the emperor were of course shallow appearances themselves and would not overcome but confirm commodity logic, their effects were and are real. As the examples of economic impoverishment among resident Koreans and the so-called “untouchables” (burakumin) must show, the moral hierarchies derived from the modern idea of the emperor have differently impacted on the thus-hierarchized people, materially causing (and caused by) their respective class situations. What I am suggesting here is that this correlation between status and class has had the determining power in Akiyama’s omission of the emperor. As a struggling member of the petty bourgeois class, probably he has a reason to oppose the idea of anti-equality that the emperor symbolizes and materializes among different Japanese.

Having said that, I do not disagree with the idea that Akiyama’s substitute for the emperor, i.e. the Subjective state, is not an egalitarian concept, either. As I have analyzed, his state appears to be the Subject of history, engendering and organizing the Japanese people as its subjects. The state here demands people’s lives and deaths in exchange for their moral rights as subjects—the relation is always skewed to the state’s overwhelming advantage and primacy. At the same time, excluding the state, Akiyama’s scheme requires everything be strictly equal. People under the state should be no different from each other, as their equivalence is ultimately symbolized by and exercised as their mass deaths. One might further oppose my surmising
Akiyama as at least minimally anti-hierarchical, pointing out that the hierarchically imagined category of gender remains in Akiyama’s scheme; Akiyama separates males as the only possible kind of moral citizens, i.e. soldiers. My response to this point is to ask, “is the maleness of Akiyama’s soldiers of inherent importance, when he conceptualizes moral citizenship as something that is predicated on people’s biological deaths, which transcend gender differences?” While Akiyama’s focus on these soldiers’ bodies makes him opposed to its ideology, the Yasukuni Shinto Shrine in Tokyo, which consecrates the soldiers’ “spirits” (rei), for instance, does not discriminate against females’ self-sacrifices for the nation-state. In the shrine, females are supposed to be no different from males as the identical spirits of the nation-state. I will introduce my ethnography of the shrine in subsequent chapters. Suffice it to mention here that Akiyama disagrees with the Japanese prime ministers’ repeated visits of the shrine—“What are they trying to do by visiting, when they treat the bodies [of the soldiers] so wickedly?” he says. The body or spirit, it seems to me, though, these two groups of activists (Akiyama and Yasukuni) uphold the same ideal of subjectified equivalence among people beyond their gender differences. Still, Yasukuni is Akiyama’s anathema, not only because of its “slighting” of the soldiers’ bodies, but also because of its self-appellation as the emperor’s shrine. We will see below that when Akiyama argues that the emperor is accountable for the war, he seems to be arguing that the emperor is accountable specifically for the ordinary soldiers’ deaths. Akiyama’s focus on the concrete bodies of the soldiers can then be thought of as his remembrance of the actual fate of the soldiers, no matter how collectively he tends to treat them. As follows, this remembrance seems to be based on his sense of camaraderie with the soldiers and not with the emperor and the otherwise statused. It is true that Akiyama seems to hope to differentiate himself from others for his supposedly better knowledge and bureaucratic skills. But given the level and kind of
sympathy that he seems to have toward the fallen soldiers, as will be discussed below, it is unlikely that he does not consider himself as a state-subject among others.

From this perspective of class, Akiyama’s concept of people’s complete equivalence as the deathly subjects of the state is comparable to the ideology of the family-nation, which aimed specifically at hierarchizing groups of people as the emperor’s subjects. Materially, people in the family-nation were also subject to commodity logic, as Akiyama’s soldiers are, but ideologically, their equally subjectified condition had to be graded and tinted by their differently assigned spaces and qualities. Again, the Meiji to early Shōwa (1925-1989) state and its elite ideologues might have started to entertain this corporatist concept of the family-nation, as their will to hierarchies directed them. In the midst of the massifying force of the age of mechanical reproduction, and the accompanying political philosophy of democracy, the elites were desperate for kinds of ideology that justified their high-class statuses. Class differences contradictorily persisted in and even widened with the massification of the society, while the matching principle of democracy was not a solution but a point of contradiction in itself. That is, democratic ideas did not mystically explain and cover up the contradictory existence of class in the mass society, but accentuated the contradiction by supplying the ideal of equality. The elites’ urgent project was then to manufacture moral-cultural hierarchies that overwrote both democratic ideals and class-divided reality. One of the first attempts for such a project was the Meiji Constitution of 1889, in which the emperor’s political and cultural sovereignty was established. The draftees were an authoritarian group of oligarchs, including Hirobumi Itō, whose purpose was to make the Constitution “the counter-force against the Freedom and People’s Rights Movement” that had been vehemently advocated by the farming and petty bourgeois Japanese.60

60 Suzuki, Ibid.; p.44.
When nationalism in prewar Japan appeared as an ornamental hierarchy, people’s fascination with the idea of the nation could not help but be crisscrossed by the democratic practices and consciousness. What is curious to explore then would be the relation between the democratic concept of equality and the fascist concept of equivalence. While at least a limited sense of egalitarianism and anti-elitism seem to feature Akiyama’s thoughts and practices, how should one consider them in comparison with democracy? Is fascism in Japan somehow connected to the historically earlier moments of the Freedom and People’s Right Movement? Could these two movements’ common mass basis provide any rigorous ideas about their mutual connectivity, if any, historically or formally? On the one hand, historians of the Freedom and People’s Right Movement tend to portray the Movement as part of Meiji elites’ partisan conflicts with each other. What are usually emphasized are the affluent farmers’ tutelage of the peasants and the bourgeois intellectuals’ lectures for laborers. The conventional historians’ position is that democracy (*minshushugi*) was an imported concept that the Japanese masses never completely understood in their hearts, the consequence being they were easily taken by fascism in the 1930s as something inherently Japan-specific (that is, as the “imperial absolutism” and others—see the Introduction). On the other hand, the same historians cannot ignore the historical fact of the masses’ enthusiasm about democracy. Political lectures and gatherings on the topic were widely attended; newspapers and other periodicals were read to the extent that the oligarchs had to regulate these meetings and newspapers as early as 1876. It seems to be too one-dimensional to explain the Movement in terms of the ideas of intellectuals’ pedagogical power, patrons’ political influence, and other enforcing agents outside the masses themselves. These historians themselves state the Movement as “the first political movement in Japan that had a nation-wide appeal.”61

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One can refer to the long history of peasants’ riots in Japan and elsewhere to point out the universal-looking human desires of freedom and equality. A more historically specific view would thematize the massness of these participants in the Movement. Let us remember Marx’s definition of freedom in terms of the individual’s subjection to commodity logic. Although in the previous quotation Marx did not specify democracy, this idea of free individuals and what it implies, the individuals’ equality in their same, free status, could be and usually are regarded to be the basic unit of modern democracy. Historically as well, democracy is a concept that has been generated and developed side-by-side with the emergence of modern capitalism, especially with the advent of the age of mechanical reproduction. The idea of universal suffrage, for instance, could even occur in people’s minds at the turn of the century only as society was being massified. The Freedom and People’s Rights Movement in Japan has to be regarded literally as a mass-movement, a movement that was inspired and promoted by people’s material condition of mass equivalence.

It is from this materialist perspective that I pursue a historical and theoretical continuity between the democratic and fascist concepts and movements, as they were pursued in Japan. Perhaps progressive workers, such as Fumiko Kaneko, should be excluded from this picture. Kaneko customarily married an intellectual Korean laborer, Yeol Pak, and together published an anarchist magazine, *Futoi Senjin* (Audacious Koreans). Later, she committed suicide in prison where she was confined on the charge of treason. As is expressed in their magazine, Kaneko, Pak, and other progressive workers pursued status-, ethnic, and gender-equality under the name of

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62 One of the first manifestations of the idea of universal suffrage in Japan was the popular Universal Suffrage League (*Futsū Senkyo Kisei Dōmei Kai*), which was established in 1897. The General Election Law (*Futsū Senkyo Hō*) passed the Diet in 1925, under which suffrage was extended to all males aged 25 and over. Women's suffrage was not won, despite vehement movements, until 1946.
internationalism and communism. In contrast, the non-unionized proletariat, petty bourgeoisie, farmers, and peasants who constituted the majority of the masses turned to the fascist ideal of equivalence instead in the late 1920s, as it was presented by the ideology of the emperor’s infants. I surmise these were the same masses as those who had eagerly participated in the democratic movement earlier. What should be problematized is perhaps not their “backwardness” or “under-education,” as many historians say, but their ability to underscore a certain radical, fundamentalist notion of equality in the fascist ideology. I am not suggesting here that the types of equality that were respectively advocated by the movements of democracy and fascism were the same. While the Freedom and People’s Rights Movement argued for the positive sense of equality based on the idea of the irreducible human rights of each individual citizen, fascism argued for the negative concept of equivalence based on the picture of the minimally reduced humanity of each individual subject. At the same time, the concept of human rights also has the aspect that is attained only through the process of rendition. While democracy’s respect for life should be contrasted to fascism’s obsession with death, there is something biologically minimalistic about the democratic idea of human rights. This idea in its foundation represents the universalism of certain human physiology, common limits for physical pains, the same species-needs, and the same emotional and intellectual faculties as humans, even though their expressions are different among different individuals. Democracy in this regard is the movement that focuses on the unfairly abused lives that are made to fall short of even this rendered sense of equivalence. Mere equivalence among biological humans becomes positive.

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64 As I will discuss in the third chapter, this is the kind of equality that bases anti-racist anthropology of Bronislaw Malinowski, for instance.
equality perhaps, when democratic actors try to uplift underprivileged lives up to the commonsensical levels of welfare. In comparison, fascism as a movement for equivalence does not seem to have the moment of transcendence to this positive sense of equality—fascists rather stay in the realm where variously enjoyed lives are degraded into the bare stoicism of self-sacrifice. Despite this critical shortcoming of fascism, i.e. its inability to provide the true concept of equality, fascism’s attraction is its appearance of utopianism, even beyond democracy. It appears beyond democracy, since fascists claim that one does not need the tedious discussions and legal procedures of democracy in order to achieve their illusory equality. The false equality of fascism started to appear as super-equality in ordinary Japanese eyes in the 1930s and later, because of the deepened condition of the mass-reproductive everyday. The masses’ minds increasingly sought fascism instead of democracy, since the emperor’s infants’ ideology looked to be a better, non-elite response to the hierarchical idea of family-nation. The formerly democratically-minded masses were still half-fascinated with the idea of the emperor’s nation, which thus coincided in their minds with the newly espoused ideology of the emperor’s infants.

Perhaps one can say that each individual mind of these masses was the nexus of different ideologies. At the same time, what kind of ideology one emphasized over others must have depended on one’s class, since certain ideologies conceptually benefited a particular class group, while others did not. Whereas the emperor’s infant ideology did not legitimize elites’ existence, the family-nation ideology did. Like the idea of democracy, the emperor’s infant ideology insisted on the concept of equality, even though their concept was based on death. Perhaps it was because the concept was so radically determined to pursue equality or at least equivalence that the increasingly impoverished masses of the 1930s and later gravitated there, as opposed to democracy or the family-nation ideology. The family-nation ideology might similarly
justify economically underprivileged lives (‘we are poor, because we are only remotely related to the emperor’), but it could not provide them with the sense of the complete equality that their redemption-seeking minds might have thought was promised in the emperor’s infant ideology (‘we are poor, but we are the same with the rich as the emperor’s infants’). The key here was truly equality in this radical sense. If we suppose that the Akiyama-type of postwar activisms as the bastard descendants of the emperor’s infants’ ideology (bastard, since Akiyama and other activists do not believe in the emperor), the bastardization is perhaps self-selected as a consequence of Akiyama and others’ loyal pursuit of the principle of radical equality.

Before going back to the discussion of Akiyama and his fellow activists though, let me reiterate the three points of difference that I see between fascism, nationalism, and democracy. I have distinguished fascism from nationalism for its will to formality rather than meaning. Fascism, as I see it, is similarly different from democracy in the very form of equality that it seeks—rather equivalence in its focus on the process of rendition. In the case of prewar Japan, the nationalist aspiration for hierarchical meaning seems to have set nationalism apart from people’s desires for democratic, and then fascistic, equality, although this does not mean that people were disinterested in nationalism. I have taken the position to see these three movements not only from the formalist viewpoint but also from the viewpoint that focuses on these movements’ respective constituency. I have also taken the historicist view, that sees the trajectory through which people’s political consciousness developed (or perhaps devolved) from the initial moments of democracy. Regarding this last view, many historians similarly argue that in the official Japanese ideologies, there was a watershed in about 1931, when the Fifteen-Year War started with the so-called “Manchurian Incident.” Prasenjit Duara and Takashi Fujitani, for instance, frame the post-1931 (to Duara, post-WWI) state-ideology in terms of the state’s “all-
out” war and other requirements for assimilationist and multiculturalist policies. While these historians are focused on the Japanese state’s new, indiscriminate biopolitics toward people’s ethnicity, I think this biopolitics would be better understood in the overall material condition that surrounded fascism instead, which had intensified the massification of people not only in terms of their ethnicities, but also in terms of their genders, ages, localities, statuses, and so on. Related to this point, another suggestion of mine is that the official ideological change is understandable as the state’s appropriation of the farmers’ and petty bourgeois discourses on radical equivalence, which they must have already practiced in their mass-cultural everyday since the 1920s.

During my ethnographical research, the term democracy is actually used by Akiyama’s fellow activist, Kōji Aoyagi. It is through Akiyama’s introduction that I meet this bereaved family, who lost his beloved uncle in New Guinea in 1945, when the uncle was 31 years old. According to Akiyama, as a matter of fact it is Aoyagi, who first noticed the soldiers’ mass-treatment in the Chidorigafuchi Cemetery. When Aoyagi visited the approximately 165 cubic feet, hexagonal vault of the Cemetery for the first time “some time in the 90s,” he would later tell me, he immediately realized that “the 300,000 bodies [of the recovered Japanese soldiers] wouldn’t fit in that narrow space.” Later, he would find that the state calls the remains kept in the Cemetery “symbolic bones” (shōcho ikotsu), which are supposed to signify the six major fronts of the war—China, Manchuria, the Japanese Islands, the Philippines, the Southeast Asia, and the Pacific and Russia. “Threatening a young, female, Tokyo Metropolitan bureaucrat with a degree from the [elite] Law Department of Tokyo University, telling her, ‘if you told me a lie, I’ll sue you according to State Liability Law,’” Aoyagi learned from the “scared” bureaucrat that the state incinerated the recovered bones in seven crematoria in Tokyo. “The leftover ashes” created

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here were then buried in the Yabashira Cemetery in Chiba Prefecture and the “shabby” containers behind the vault of Chidorigafuchi, after the actual vault had become full. “Terrible,” he says he thought. He leaked the state’s secret and secretive activity to the Asahi Shinbun Newspaper. Akiyama read the article and called Aoyagi, blindly calling every Aoyagi that was in the Tokyo Chiyoda Ward phone book (luckily, he was the third from the top in the list). Although these two bereaved families happen to be from the same Katori County, Chiba Prefecture, their seemingly close friendship was thus forged recently, through like-minded activism.

A stocky man with broad and strong-looking shoulders enveloped in a generic black suit, even though it is as hot and sticky as Tokyo’s infamous summer can be, Akiyama’s good friend Aoyagi could be a retired police officer or high-school gymnastic teacher. Talkative yet dull, Aoyagi is also humble, politely waving his hand in front of his face, as he says “I leave the theoretical part [of their activism] to Akiyama-san.” “Instead,” he says, he has participated in several recovery missions and other memorial trips to New Guinea, Siberia, Indonesia, and so on, which Akiyama has not yet done. Selecting Z University’s memorial hall in Tokyo as our meeting place (one does not have to graduate from it to use it), Aoyagi, who is now seventy-three years old (as of 2008), makes an excuse that the house where he lives with his wife is “too dirty to invite you [the researcher] in.” According to him, they are still working “from the morning till eight or so in the night,” which leaves them little time to tidy up their place. Acting and speaking as squarely as any serviceman, Aoyagi would insist on paying at the end of our conversation over coffee-cakes and tea—perhaps due to his old-fashioned ideas about gender roles.
His dormant masculinity notwithstanding, he states that his activism for his uncle is based on his conviction of what he calls “democracy among the dead” (shisha no aida no minshushugi). According to him, every dead person should be treated “equally” (byōdō ni) with others, with their “individual dignity” (kojin no songen) being respected.

“During the war,” says he, “the soldiers were told to give up the hope that their remains would be recovered. They were destined to be abandoned [after their deaths]—they were put into that kind of place. ‘Die for the emperor’; ‘be part of the natural cycle of wherever you fall.’

“But now, we have a different constitution,” he continues. “I think the new Constitution [of 1947] should be applied to the war-dead as well. Their human dignity should be respected [as is stipulated in the Constitution of 1947]. That’s why I say their remains shouldn’t be left to rot [as the result of the state’s abandonment of them in the former battlefields].”

He is now becoming excited—“It’s the Japanese custom that we care about the bones of the deceased. That custom is legally sanctioned as well. Then, why would you discriminate against the war-dead [by not recovering and/or massively incinerating their bones]? It’s not fair.”

A young waitress in an ironed, white apron with a disciplined smile comes every once in a while to see if we need more tea. Every time she comes, I momentarily stop moving my hand that has been busily taking notes with a blue “zebra” pen. The spirit of the motto, “the customer is king (or god, as the Japanese say it),” which has been heightened by people’s recessionary anxiety (“thank you so much to allow us to serve you”), the waitress is the reminder of how far activists like Aoyagi are from everyday Japan. Without memory or knowledge or interest concerning their fallen (great-) grandfathers’ remains, the current generations can hold on to reality, perhaps due to that emptiness. I suspend our conversation on cadavers, rot, and the natural cycle in the face of her android innocence, perhaps stunned myself by the topic’s
grotesqueness, or uncanniness (see Chapter 2), the quality that I might not notice without her everydayness.

But Aoyagi is insistent. He now mentions the relatives of the emperor (kōzoku) and otherwise statused soldiers, whose bodies were of course repatriated as soon as they fell and interred immediately. He complains, “ordinary soldiers’ remains are no less worthy of respect than theirs.” The bottom line is that “every dead person should be treated equally.” And again, the ground of this conviction is democracy, as is declared in the 1947 Constitution.

His claim of democracy seems to be two-fold; equality among the dead (no special treatment of the statused) and that between the war-dead in the past and ordinary dead in the present (no discrimination against the former). Like Akiyama, Aoyagi seems to suggest that the soldiers and people be in a mutually equal relation in the past and in the present—and potentially in the future. Unlike Akiyama, Aoyagi does not seem to think that this ideally enduring relationship of equality should revolve around the state. Aoyagi would certainly agree with Akiyama that the soldiers during the war were the state-subjects. According to Aoyagi, the soldiers were “placed,” tacitly by the State, in the kind of situation in which their bodies were not to be recovered. He similarly sees that the soldiers were so subjected to the various state-orders that their condition of subjection seems to have been their “destiny” (unmei). The kind of State that places and orders people at will, as if its will was the destiny of people, exceeds the bounds of the modern state. Akiyama would say it is the agential state’s auspices, under which the soldiers should ideally have been equivalent to each other as the state’s subjects. To him, this is the kind of equivalence that should be still observable even today. His historical sense does not regard the change in the Japanese regime in 1945. But, Aoyagi does and underscores it. Even though he implies he agrees that the prewar soldiers were subjectified by the state, to him, it was
bad; and it was bad, retrospectively seen from the current, democratic value system. The soldiers ought to have been respected as individuals and not as forced subjects; they should have been equal to each other and to the rest of the people. Democratic equality among the dead and between the dead and living should naturally be pursued nowadays under the democratic Constitution in Japan. If Akiyama seeks trans-historical equivalence among the state-subjects, Aoyagi seems to want to see trans-historical equality among democratic people.

In close analysis, these two activists thus seem to be different, which Aoyagi admits. That is probably the reason that Aoyagi does not participate in Akiyama’s Liaison. By forming another non-profit organization, the Southern Cross (Minami Jūjisei Kai) comprised of those bereaved whose families fell in the “South” (Nanpō), that is, those areas where the star is visible, Aoyagi states that what connects him and Akiyama is his girī or moral obligation to Akiyama. According to Aoyagi, he owes Akiyama the “theoretical stuff”—that is, Akiyama speaks for him when it comes to the ideological articulation of their activism. Aoyagi perceives this ideological articulation to be a favor that Akiyama gives to the (self-allegedly) ineloquent Aoyagi; Aoyagi feels he should return this favor to Akiyama. Thus, the immediate reason that Aoyagi accepted my interview is that Akiyama introduced me to him. Then, I was confused. In Aoyagi’s moral narrative, Akiyama sounds as if he is the ideological mouthpiece for Aoyagi. At the same time, Aoyagi denies that his ideologies are like Akiyama’s. In my initial analysis, Aoyagi’s latter claim of ideological dissimilarity would probably be accurate. So, what does Aoyagi mean by the “obligation of theories”? Is Aoyagi merely humbly admiring Akiyama’s logic and eloquence, while admitting there is a difference? Is the difference small enough to ignore and allow Aoyagi to think of himself as a voiceless puppet for Akiyama, the ventriloquist? How should we think of their differences, the gap between advocacy for state-subjection and conviction of democratic
equality? What if it is our common sense that democratic equality and state-subjected equivalence are very different, that should be reconsidered, and not Aoyagi’s seemingly contradictory remarks? If the democratic and subjectified kinds of equality share at least the same condition, will not Aoyagi’s integrity be saved? From the above-discussed viewpoint that sees the same massness in the conditions of democracy and fascism, Aoyagi’s narratives and behaviors seem to be of perfect integrity. From this viewpoint, Aoyagi’s possible contradiction seems to be merely showing the relatedness of the concept of democracy to the state of subjection via the general modern condition of people’s subjectification to commodity logic.

Kant would explain the same relation using moral law instead of commodity logic. This is probably the reason that in Aoyagi’s narrative of the fallen soldiers, the idea of equality is gained as a result of rendition; and still that idea sounds fitting the concept of democracy. The soldiers in the narrative are rendered to a bare, minimal sense of human, to the generic, biological condition of death. Because of the rendition to generic biologism, which is necessary for the concept of human rights to emerge, every soldier, statused or not, can be equal to others. The individual, as Aoyagi calls it, thus seems not so dissimilar to Akiyama’s subject, in its serial numbered difference from other individuals that are formally identical with each other (identical in the general form of life and death).

Aoyagi’s singularity is his ambiguity, with which his conviction of democracy is intervened by his seeming desires for and fears of gendered difference (e.g. “scaring” the young, female bureaucrat). Similarly anachronistic moments can be observed in his remarks on the remains of Korean and Chinese forced laborers and draftees. During the war, they fought and worked for or as the Japanese against their will in the mines, construction sites, and battlefields of Manchuria, the Pacific, or the Japanese Islands. Like Japanese soldiers’ remains, their bodies
have yet to be returned home.\footnote{According to a Chinese historian, Paoching Luo, out of the approximately 38,000 Chinese on the Japanese state list, who were forcefully brought to the Japanese Islands as various kinds of laborers, the Japanese Foreign Ministry said about 6,800 committed suicides, while 14,200 otherwise died and 7,000 became crippled (see his lecture, “Senso no Kioku: Chugoku to Nihon no Mirai,” delivered in 8/21/2006 in Sarufutsu, Hokkaido, Japan). According to my informant who was active in the Action Committee to Soothe the Spirits of Those Chinese Hostages Who Incurred Difficulties (Chugoku-jin Horyu Jun'nan-sha Irei Jikko l'in Kai), resident Chinese in Japan and Japanese cooperated in 1950-60s to recover and return 2,764 (as of 1964) Chinese forced laborers' remains over 9 times. The act was despite the fact that there was no peace treaty yet forged between the two countries. As for Korean forced laborers, a Japanese historian, Shoji Yamada supposes the number to be about 667,000. Of them, at least about 12,000 were killed in the Japanese Archipelago, according to the American military’s investigation conducted in the Korean Peninsula in 1946. In addition, quite a few number of Koreans were forced to work on the Peninsula (Yamada is not certain about the number). Since Korea was colonized, more than 6,000 Koreans were drafted as Japanese soldiers; 145,000 as military personnel; and 100,000-210,000 as sex slaves of the Japanese military. See Yamada’s unpublished paper, “Senji Dō’in (Kyōsei Rennō)-sareta Chōsen-jin to sono Izoku no Sengo” presented in Kyōsei Dōin Shinsen Shōgen Network Kessei Sōkai: Nikkan Kyōdō no Shinsen Kyūmei wo Mezashite,” held in Zai Nihon Kankoku YMCA Kokusai Hall, 7/18/2005. Some of their remains are still missing in the battlefields (see, for instance, a Korean TV station, KBS’s program, “Witness of Palau: Koreans Sent to the Pacific,” which was broadcast in 8/15/2004). Others have haphazardly been returned to South Korea over several occasions (e.g. the 4,597 bodies repatriated, according to the GHQ order, to the interim government of the Republic of Korea in 2/26/1947) or kept in Japan’s Health and Welfare Ministry (2,328 sets of bones), Yūten-ji Temple in Tokyo (1,147), and others. In 2005, the ROK and Japanese states joined the resident Koreans in Japan and Japanese activists to “investigate the truth (shinsen kyūmei)” of these kinds of forced mobilization. According to a Japanese participant, Kazuyuki Kawamura, as of 6/20/2005, about 20,000 South Koreans have formally asked investigation of their individual cases (personal conversation).} Making a stark contrast to his democratic advocacy for the Japanese remains, Aoyagi states that whether the Japanese state should recover and repatriate the Korean or Chinese remains, especially those that are still scattered through Japanese soil, is ultimately a “matter of logistics” (gijutsu-teki na mondai), that is, whether Japan has already forged relevant treaties with their countries. I would imagine, according to the sense of mathematical balance implanted in the concept of democratic equality, that perhaps these victimized lives should be more highly prioritized than the lives of the combatant Japanese, since these other Asians were enslaved. However, apparently these victims merely mark the national boundary around Aoyagi’s concept of democracy. Instead of pursuing true generality as any project that endeavors to be modern should, Aoyagi, on the subject of Chinese or Koreans, retrogresses with his nationalization of the terms of equality.

These conservative tendencies notwithstanding, Aoyagi’s democratic activism still seems to try to make a difference from other fascists or nationalists. At least, that is what Aoyagi...
claims in mentioning democracy in spite of the “theorist” Akiyama’s favoritism of the agential state and its subjects. Aoyagi’s difference from Akiyama is not anything like his embrace of the emancipatory potentialities that accompany the concept of democracy. Rather, Aoyagi seems to show the most rendered sense of equality, based on the biological fact of human mortality, which, again, resides in the foundation of democracy as the concept of human rights. Still, I think Aoyagi’s insistence on this appellation would make at least a minimal difference when we consider it against the historical background in which it is insisted. According to Aoyagi, it is only “ordinary people” (shomin) (in its provenance, the “non-statused”) like his uncle, who were dispatched and starved to death in logistically neglected battlefields such as New Guinea. The “statused” (erai hito) were allowed to remain either within the “inland” (naichi) (i.e. the Japanese islands) or nearby, if they were drafted at all, he says. For these “miserable” (mijime-na), ordinary deaths, “the emperor is accountable three ways,” Aoyagi determines—“he started, managed, and delayed the end of the war.” Throughout the Fifteen-Year War, the emperor was Hirohito (reigning 1925-1989). Surprising or not, this is the theory that is usually mentioned by leftists in Japan. In addition to the leftist-sympathetic Asahi Shinbun Newspaper, he and Akiyama talked to all of the major political parties in Japan except for the communists, until the social democrats decided to represent their activism in congress.

“But,” continues Aoyagi, even though the emperor Hirohito is accountable for the war, “His Majesty Himself lived and died a happy life, didn’t He?” That is, a happy life as compared to the miserable deaths among the plebeians in the southern battlefields. I sip my cold cup of tea in the air of a barely contained grudge. The air is also whirling, as his democratic ambitions momentarily try to ascend from the reduced sense of equivalence to the true sense of equality, the kind of equality that makes his calling of “His Majesty” sound almost violently sarcastic.
A similarly violent ambition for real equality seems to characterize Akiyama’s narrative of the emperor as well:

In the underground of the Chidorigafuchi Cemetery, the dead, who are nine times more in number than the 39,000 persons of the whole Chiyoda Ward [of Tokyo, where the Cemetery is located], are enraged and shouting, as they are mercilessly treated [and pushed] into the approximately 100 square-foot space [of the vault]. Living in the vicinity, Chiyoda residents must feel disquiet. Needless to say, on the other shore across the Chidorigafuchi Pond stands the Fukiage Palace [in which the emperor, currently Akihito, and his family live].

The passage could be taken as Akiyama’s expression of respectful care for the emperor, who, according to him, might be endangered by the “enraged shouts” of the dead—treat the dead better, and the emperor is safe. In this interpretation, his moral nationalist position might seem to be intact. Yet, he says earlier in the same manuscript that the soldiers’ lives were expended in variously harsh battlefields of the Fifteen-Year War, as they were “running out of bullets, cut out of food supplies, eating grass and insects, and unable to surrender [they were ordered not to surrender to save the emperor’s face], while told to absolutely obey (zettai fukujū) the slogan, ‘the superior’s order is His Majesty’s order.’” Therefore, Akiyama says in a conversation with me, Hirohito is “accountable” (sekinin ga aru) for the deaths of these “pitiful” (awarena) soldiers, since these deaths occurred by his order, at least nominally (although in Akiyama’s thought, Hirohito has less “grave” (jūdai-na) responsibility than that which should be attributed to what he calls the “military complex” (gunbatsu), as I have mentioned). But he seems to at least have reasons to leave the emperor out as the object of his moral reincorporation, no matter how much the emperor is structurally interchangeable with the concept of the Subjective state. Here, his visceral sense of ethics seems to be based on his sympathetic identification with the

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“pitiful” soldiers. This identification is likely class-based, when he clearly separates the foot soldiers from the military complex of the state and (implicitly monopolized) industries.

In contrast to these petty bourgeois inheritors of the emperor’s infants’ fascism, postwar elites, such as the playwright and novelist Yukio Mishima, have been adamant about the fantasy of organizing Japan around the concept of the noble emperor yet again. If Akiyama and Aoyagi are blind to the Korean, Chinese, and other bodies accumulated under the emperor’s name, Mishima and other elites do not see even the Japanese foot soldiers’ deaths as significant at all. In one exceptional short story, “Voices of the War-Heroes’ Spirits” (Eirei no Koe), Mishima certainly discusses the soldiers’ grudges against Hirohito. In this story, the fallen Japanese soldiers of the Fifteen-Year War are among other lives that have been supposedly “sacrificed” to the emperor and then resuscitated as their spiritual voices in a séance held in stormy Tokyo. However, different from Aoyagi and Akiyama, whose enmity is based on the unequal treatment of the soldiers’ lives and deaths as compared to their classed and/or statused superiors and the democratically respected postwar Japanese, Mishima’s soldiers chant again and again in their ghostly voices, “How come His Majesty [Hirohito] chose to desecrate Himself?” Mishima is mentioning Hirohito’s 1945 radio declaration that he would no longer be a “living god.” To Mishima, status differences among the soldiers are ideologically important; yet the reality that there were heavier casualties among ordinary soldiers does not exist. His pen is instead always trapped by the sepia-colored romanticism of ritual suicides by royal princes and “manly” (otoko-rashii) officers. The foot soldiers have to exist, but exist as the bottom of the pyramid so that statuses and ranks can build up from there. In “Voices of the War-Heroes’ Spirits,” the soldiers’ chant of their grudge against Hirohito thus questions, why did he not maintain hierarchical Japan by remaining the sacred pinnacle of such a pyramid? If Aoyagi and Akiyama’s emperor is
morally denigrated due to his betrayal of the promise of fundamental equivalence, then Mishima’s emperor is similarly denigrated due to his betrayal of the promise of pyramidal harmony. According to Mishima, the particular emperor, Hirohito, is accusable, yet the pyramid, i.e. the emperorship and accompanying ideologies of statuses, genders, etc., should rather be revived and fortified.69

Like the Meiji oligarchs, Mishima’s desires of hierarchies are his fears of the mass-form, of its logic of repetition, ethics of copying, and process of alienation. It is in contrast to these elites’ inclinations toward corporatist hierarchies that this chapter has analyzed petty bourgeois lives as they are situated to select fascist equivalence. While this equivalence is different from equality, as democracy promotes, there is certain power in the petty bourgeois advocacy for equivalence. Appropriating the commodity logic of equivalence that penetrates their mass-condition, these fascist actors seem to critique the elites’ anachronistic hierarchies and, ultimately, the modern capitalist contradiction of class. If there is at least a minimal level of truthfulness, then this truthfulness might be derived from this contradiction itself—the contradiction that class exists despite the otherwise equivalence-guaranteeing logic and philosophy of modernity and capitalism. Proportionately to their disadvantageous class-positions, the petty bourgeois actors’ desires of equivalence have to be radical, the radicalness that democracy partly shares yet ultimately cannot match. To the extent that class persists in the modern capitalist society, the radically accentuated picture of massified equivalence, as fascists present, would keep appearing, disguising itself as a utopian picture of classless equality. The subsequent chapter will explore this relation between fascism and class some more.

Chapter 2. Theories of Delay: The Petty Bourgeois Formation of Postwar Fascism

The holders of postwar fascism in Japan, such as Kakunosuke Akiyama and Shōji Aoyagi, whom I have introduced in Chapter 1, represent the petty bourgeois class. The petty bourgeoisie consists of small industrialists, teachers, tradesmen, artisans, carpenters, clergy, and others, who are more or less independent of big corporations and creative in the nature of their trades. When the monopoly economy was established during the Great Depression and has been fortified throughout the postwar and especially in the current global recession, the autonomous business bases and idiosyncratic rhythms of working that the petty bourgeois members enjoy might provide impressions of delays. Their labor power being derived from what appears to be inalienable resources of humanity, such as dexterity, talents, or religiosity, the petty bourgeoisie might seem to be outside and behind the world trend, in which humanity and originality exist only as the nostalgic traces of mass reproduction.

The petty bourgeois delay has supplied inspirations to culturalist theories of Japan as non-fascist. In these theorists’ portrayals, the petty bourgeoisie embodies “premodern” Japan or the time-resistant “Japanese culture.” According to these theorists, it is the non-linguistic violence supposedly embodied by the petty bourgeoisie, which caused, or at least supported, what they call the imperial absolutism or the fascism of the emperor system or other presumably Japan-specific regimes prior to and during the Asia-Pacific War (1931-1945). Since fascism to these theorists is an advanced, modern phenomenon, these supposed regimes maintained by the “feudalistic” petty bourgeoisie and emperor should never be regarded as fascism, according to them.1

My position admits the delay and difference of the petty bourgeois class. I also agree that the temporal and spatial difference of theirs explains their affinity with fascism. Unlike the culturalists, I suppose that the petty bourgeois difference has been historically and economically, versus culturally and traditionally, created. The petty bourgeoisie has been created as the necessary other of the mass-reproducing economy. In 1950s Japan, the petty bourgeoisie as a class was made to absorb tens of thousands of soldiers and civilians repatriated from the country’s former colonies and occupied territories; during the 1980s, that class was needed as the manufacturing basis for the country’s new economic phase of the “small lot production.”

At the same time, the aforementioned, culturalist production of the petty bourgeoisie as the quintessential “people” (minshū) or “folk” (minzoku) of Japan intervenes in reality. The fantasies of the people or folk are powerful, carrying nostalgic desires of the original and the authentic, which incessantly arise in the late capitalist everyday. The petty bourgeois enclaves of fascism, which I have called death spaces in democratic Japan, are subsequently created and misrecognized to be the manifested surface of the Japanese ethno. The task of this chapter is to disentangle the dialectic between the fantasy of the Japanese ethno and the reality of the petty bourgeois class, between the levels of language and materiality, in order to understand why fascism remains and emerges in these death spaces.

I will accomplish this task by using my ethnographic data as well as written materials on a death space of fascism, Yasukuni Shinto Shrine, Tokyo. If Akiyama’s suburban apartment is a secretive tomb of postwar fascism, the Yasukuni Shrine is a sensational stage of international controversies on the country’s unresolved past. By folkizing the shrine, one is ultimately able to exonerate the Japanese of their political and ethical accountability for their past fascism and the
war. The issue of politico-ethics will be the guiding thread of my two-tiered (textual and material) discussion of fascism’s agent, the petty bourgeoisie.

The Setting: A Death-Space Resounding with War-Heroes’ Voices

“Good morning,” I say, approaching the first veteran that I encounter in this “Shinto shrine” Yasukuni. He is “Shōji Yamada,” an 81 year-old (as of 2008) veteran of the Asia-Pacific War and a retired police officer. In the last summer when I conducted my preliminary fieldwork, he was one of the most cooperative informants. Today, he envelops his lean, tall body with a light blue shirt, grayish pants, a white baseball cap, and black leather walking shoes. On his left sleeve is pinned a navy blue armband, on which white letters read the Association to Respond to the War Heroes’ Spirits (Eirei ni Kotaeru Kai). Good-postured and easy to talk to, the only outward signal of his age would be a white tank-top (called “running”) worn under his thin shirt— for some reason, most Japanese males of his age have to wear one. Among several other male elders present, who all wear similar running, caps, and the same armbands, Yamada blends in well.

“Good morning,” I repeat. It is about 10:30. The August sun is already scorching, but the air is fresh and propitious with a feeling of unborn futures. These veterans are not tired yet, even though they must have already finished about two hours of their ad-campaign for the Association. The Association (otherwise called Ei Kai by its younger supporters) was established in 1976 by the Imperial Army and Navy’s Veterans’ Associations (Riku Kaigun Taieki Gunjin Kai), the Headquarters of Shinto Shrines (Jinja Hon Chō), and other religious organizations. Immediately after its establishment, the “Association to Respond” claimed it had 1.2 million members mainly
among veterans and other rightists. Collectively, they have tried to “respond” (kotaeru) to the Japanese “war-heroes’ spirits” (eirei)—that is, to remember and memorialize the fallen Japanese soldiers of the Asia-Pacific War and prior imperial wars that Japan forged. There is a moral sense in their wording; they believe that the fallen soldiers “sacrificed” (gisei ni shita) their lives for the survivors of the wars and the subsequent generations. The Association’s ad-campaigns and lobbying activities are supposed to be their moral responses to the favor that they think was thus given to them by the soldiers. “Lend your ear to the heroes’ voiceless voices” (eirei no koe-naki koe ni mimi wo katamukeyo) is their motto; they come here to the Yasukuni Shrine, where the soldiers’ spirits supposedly reside, in order to listen.

Having learnt to speak clearly and loudly among these veterans, not only due to their age, but due to their conservatism (articulate speech or haki haki-toshita hanashi-kata supposedly shows the speakers’ respect to the listener), I raise my voice and repeat my greeting to Yamada for the third time. Surprisingly, he is not even looking at me. There is no sign of recognition in the face of this 81-year old. Looking into his eyes, I introduce myself again—likely for the first time in his perspective.

“Ah,” says he finally. “I’m sorry. I was just absent-minded...wondering if I have such a beautiful acquaintance as you.” An apparent lip-service to compensate for his being “absent-minded.” But at the same time, his empty words here perform. “Performative” speech, according to J. L. Austin’s categorization, is a speech act in which “the issuing of the utterance is the performing of an action.” Different from “constative,” i.e. descriptive, enunciation, performative

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2 About the history of the Association, see an article by a leftist activist, Satoshi Uesugi, 2006; p.16.
3 J. L. Austin, How to Do Things with Words, 2nd Edition, eds. by J. O. Urmson and Marina Sbisà (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1997(1962)); p.6. Strictly, the performative should be limited to only those verbs that are in the first person singular present indicative active. Yet, as Austin admits, even descriptive enunciation can produce as much social force and (unintentional) results as strictly performative speeches.
remarks subject themselves to the category of felicitous/infelicitous, instead of true/false. In this current case, Yamada’s speech performs to render me a felicitous existence in his kind of masculine world, that is, a female, the supposedly aesthetic object that exists only at her surface level. On my part, even a single word of a circumstantially appropriate response would suffice as the sign of my interpellation. It is true that this type of creation, repetition, and confirmation of gender relations are a matter of everyday life in contemporary Japan, the United States, or anywhere else. The difference is probably that here in the Yasukuni, the idea of gender difference is more positively asserted as part of a certain moral system, a system that claims to efface the problem and jouissance of females’ commodification. As an ethnographer from the larger society, who is facing this moral enclave, I could be either offended by the heightened gender difference and leave, or ignore the politics and enter the enclave. But like most other situations, the choice is not a real choice, since it is already compromised by other necessities (e.g. the research, the normative concept of sociality, and so on).

“Ha ha,” I ambiguously laugh and change the topic. “Have you gotten a lot of visitors today?”

“So, so,” Yamada mockingly frowns. Behind us, several other veterans are indeed idly seated in front of the two folding tables, which are placed parallel to the Approach (Sandō) to the Hall of Prayer (Haiden). The Approach is a straight thoroughfare that has about five-lanes-worth of width and two traffic-lights-worth of length. Its destination, the Hall of Prayer, is the supposed house of the soldiers’ “spirits” (rei). Three or four middle-aged staff members of the Association

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4 Austin, Ibid.; pp.18-20.
are standing near the tables, handing their pamphlets to visitors. On ordinary Sundays like today, about a dozen Association members come here and campaign for fallen Japanese soldiers, raising awareness of the small number of Yasukuni visitors. While the Association is a powerful lobbyist, the Sunday campaign itself is politically meaningless, given the number of the visitors. The veterans and other supporters come anyway, as it provides them with the precious time and space in which they gather and unite together.

The Association’s political power is that of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). The almost single-handed ruler of postwar Japan until recently, the LDP has sat on the Association’s board since its establishment. In return, the Association and other veterans, as well as like-minded families gathering in the Association of Bereaved Families of Japan (Nihon Izoku Kai), have been some of the biggest constituencies of the LDP. Representing these conservative inheritors of the war, the LDP submitted to the national Diet the Bill to Nationalize the Yasukuni (Yasukuni Kokka Goji Hō An) five times over the 1969-73 period. Initially, “nationalization” of the shrine was to secularize the shrine, so that the state could own and run the shrine as a war-memorial. For these rightists, the shrine should be respected at the international state-level as “the Japanese version of the U.S. Arlington National Cemetery or Westminster Abbey of the U.K., where the Japanese prime minister, emperor, and international representatives can officially visit without any reserve” (their cliché). To them, the “reserve” (wadakamari) that these state representatives were supposed to have should not be related to the war-crimes, atrocities, and other controversies surrounding the Japanese soldiers, but to the issue of the church-state separation. Once the shrine abandoned its position as a private religious organization and became a secular state-apparatus, the state-representatives (especially the Japanese PM and emperor)

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6 When the families’ association was established in 1947, their number was said to be 8 million. Even as of 1994, the association claims it has 1 million members. See Nobumasa Tanaka, Hiroshi Tanaka, and Nagami Hata, Izoku to Sengo (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1995); p. 44 and 76.
would not have any reserve (or rather legal problems) visiting it, according to the LDP and its supporters.

The LDP bill to secularize the shrine was lastly rejected in the 1973 Diet without a possibility of re-submission, due to leftist opposition. The leftists found the bill historically and constitutionally problematic. The constitutional principle of the church-state separation (Article 20, Clause 3) should still matter, even after the proposed secularization of the shrine, particularly when the shrine had been adamant that the fallen soldiers should remain in a Shinto-designated spirit existence. The leftists also problematized the history of the shrine, in which the shrine as a religious organization had been established in 1869 and maintained by the prewar state. According to them, as a result of this church-state convergence, the prewar state could mobilize the Japanese in both their public (political) and private (religious) aspects. Due to this history, even if the shrine should ever be secularized, the leftists say, people would still be finding a statist, in addition to religious, significance in the shrine; the state could use this political-religious confluence at the shrine whenever it conceives “theocratic” ambitions, the leftists claimed. For these two reasons, the leftists argued that their rejection of the LDP bill was a historical result of democratic Japan.7

The conservatives though, went under the table, establishing a powerfully staffed and budgeted lobbyist organization—the Association to Respond to War-Heroes’ Spirits, as I currently observe in Yasukuni. From the start (1976), its political purpose was to otherwise realize the rejected LDP bill—to officialize the shrine. Various strategies have been taken—most recent-

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7 The representative of this line of argument will be Shinobu Ōe, *Yasukuni Jinja* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1984). “Religion” is a highly problematic category to be applied to the shrine, as I will discuss later. Nonetheless, when it comes to legal strategies that can be adopted against the shrine, leftist activists have only a few choices, of which the reference to the church-state separation has turned out to be a somewhat potent one (several winning cases at local levels). About the numerous relevant lawsuits brought against the shrine and the state, see Ōe, Ibid.; pp.154-160, 190-197 and Nobumasa Tanaka, *Yasukuni no Sengo-shi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2002). More discussion to follow in Chapter 3 of the current dissertation.
ly, the endeavors to build up popular support for the shrine in its current (religious) status. So far, the Association has mobilized local affiliates of Japan Bereaved Families Association, in order to facilitate the issuance of the “resolution to urge the prime minister to formally visit Yasukuni Shrine”; allegedly 37 out of 47 prefectural assemblies have actually issued such a resolution.\(^8\) In this resolution, the prime minister is supposed to visit shrine as a religious facility. The Association has also been collecting relevant signatures from ordinary Japanese; as of 2006, it claims it has obtained 10 million supportive signatures.\(^9\) This trend radicalizes the previous LDP’s efforts, which sought to secularize the shrine in respect for the Constitutional framework; now, revising the Constitution is within the Association’s scope. Still, the old and new efforts are the same in their insistence on the moral national remembrance of the war.

Given the whole Japanese population of about 100 million, Yasukuni supporters are increasing, yet still in the minority. On regular Sundays like today, what might strike a visitor of the shrine would be its emptiness. Standing at the First Gate (Dai Ichi Torii), which is two 37 yard, horizontal steel poles, lifted and supported by 27 yard-high steel pillars (27 yards in diameter each), one can take in the whole vista that leads to the Hall of Prayer through the concrete Approach. Only a small number of visitors would interrupt the view.

Even to these few, potentially conservative visitors, the Association’s radicalized nationalism might seem to be too extreme, judging from how they pass by its tables. Today for instance, the tables are flanked by those paper panels that read, “The Lie of ‘The Nanjing Massacre’— There Were No Slashers of One Hundred”,\(^10\) “We Can’t Stand Any More! We Won’t Forgive!

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\(^8\) See the Association’s leaflet, “To Be Our Member” (unpublished).

\(^9\) See the Association’s “To Be Our Member,” Ibid.

\(^10\) The Nanjing Massacre was committed by the imperial Japanese army between December 1937 and February 1938. Many Chinese civilians were robbed, killed and raped, while their exact number is still being debated among historians. See Joshua A. Fogel ed., Nanjing Massacre in History and Historiography, forwarded by Charles S. Maier (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000) and Takashi Yoshida, The Nanjing Massacre in History and Memory: Japan, China, and the United States, 1937-1999 (Ph.D. dissertation; History Department,
Stand Up Against China’s Egoism!—Grab one of our fliers about the demonstration NEXT Sunday”; and “The Channel Sakura Will Change Japan—the New Satellite TV Channel, the Japanese Cultural Channel.” Some of the visitors though, might be attracted by these very slogans and stop at the tables. Guarded by the staff in the same black T-shirts, the tables look outstandingly Gothic. The T-shirt has the Association’s name in the back, along with imperial Japan’s rising sun flag (kyokujitsu ki) and such slogans as “Do Not Let the Glory of the Great East Asia War (Dai Tōa Sensō) Wither.” A few would buy the T-shirts, which come in different sizes and also have a dark blue version. The price is 3,500 yen (about 35 U.S. dollars) each. In this morning, a middle-aged man wearing a light, moss-green suit and tie hands a 10,000 yen (100 dollar) bill for a black shirt and adds he needs no change.

According to the members, donations and signatures are made mainly by Japanese males. This is the category of people that dominates the Association’s membership (an exception is “Misa,” a middle-aged, Japanese female staff, who performs a perfect secretarial role). Among the visitors, I see some Japanese females. Foreign visitors are predominantly males, who would occasionally sit with the staff and discuss the Asia-Pacific War and other controversial topics.

Columbia University; 2001). The “slashers of one hundred” are Second Lieutenants Toshiaki Mukai and Tsuyoshi Noda, who were found guilty and executed in 1948 in the Kuomintang Military Tribunal, Nanjing, of using their nihon tō swards and murdering more than 100 Chinese civilians each. According to propagandist articles published by Japanese newspapers then, Ohsaka Nichi Nichi Shinbun and Tokyo Mainichi Shinbun, Mukai and Noda had been competing with each other about which one of them could kill one hundred first. Since 2006, when Mukai and Noda’s families sued the newspaper companies and others on account of defamation, the two have been brought to a new attention of Japanese rightists. The families lost their lawsuit in the Supreme Court (2006).

The rising sun flag was used by imperial Japan and replaced by the current flag of the sun (nisshō ki). In a Chinese movie, Devils on the Doorstep (dir. by Jiang Wen; Home Vision, 2005), and other victims’ representations of the Asia-Pacific War, the rising sun flag is a symbol of the Japanese invasion and atrocities. Due to that history, display of the flag today is a taboo even within Japan. A similar thing is true with the term, the Great East Asia War, which is now popularly called the Pacific War (Taiheiyō Sensō). The Great East Asia War carries the reactionary racist ideology of “saving (the rest of) Asia out of the whites’ colonial hands.” About the last point, see Stefan Tanaka, Japan’s Orient: Rendering Pasts into History (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).
A Chinese man, about 30 years old, who is talking now with one of the Association veterans, bearded “Tagawa,” is a good example. Wearing a huge camera hanging from his neck, shallowly sitting in the folding chair that is offered by the staff, he asks in his learnt Japanese,

“Do you think Prime Minister [Yasuo] Fukuda will visit this shrine on August 15\textsuperscript{th} [the date when Japan surrendered to the Allied Forces in 1945] this year?”

Though as didactic as he always is, Tagawa is sincere, unlike other rightists. A typical rightist can be condescending to Chinese, based on his/her sense that they were defeated in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-5 and also occupied by Japan throughout the Fifteen-Year War (1931-45). Younger generations of rightists can be hysterically hateful about China, reflecting their new recessionary anxieties, which must be heightened by the existence of the economically emerging neighbor, China. A middle-aged sympathizer of the Association, the man that I remember only as an employee of United Airlines, now murmurs on the side, for instance,

“Heck, that [whether the PM Fukuda would visit the shrine] isn’t the Chinese’ business.”

Rightists have been arguing that China’s strong opposition to the Yasukuni Shrine “infringes upon Japanese sovereignty.” Mr. U.A., who says he had joined an attack on the Soviet embassy in Tokyo in the 1960s, is one of the few middle-classed activists that I know among the Yasukuni participants. Before 1945, somewhere in one of the either occupied or colonized territories of Japan (\textit{gaichi}), his grandfather was a medical doctor and his father was a banker, according to him. Mr. U.A. was born in 1948. His sun-tanned, 10 year-old daughter always accompanies him to the shrine. These days, he has been active in a rightist-filled Internet-site, \textit{Channel 2}, under the pseudonym of “Anonymous Soldier” (\textit{Mumei Senshi}), he informs me.

“Well, listen,” facing the Chinese man, Tagawa hand-combs his long, white beard, about to start a long lecture as usual. He looks amused. He is the type of moral person who would
strongly believe in orders among genders, ethnicities, and different age-groups—his amusement is the emotion that ramifies from his sense of superiority, I suppose, which is based on his likely perception of his positionality in these orders (he is an old, Japanese male). “Ask anything to this grandpa (ojiichan),” he usually says to me, thus putting me in the place of a younger, female, fictive relative of his. He claims that “the more kids you’ve got the better it is” and casually discloses certain reproductive facts between him and his wife, as if she was his vessel. Now Tagawa, the self-acclaimed patriarch of the Association, says to the Chinese visitor,

“A prime minister of Japan is Japan’s representative. Do you agree? You do? Good. I think it is natural that Prime Minister Fukuda, as the representative of Japan, considers to pay homage to Japan’s war-heroes’ spirits here in Yasukuni on 8/15, because they died for the country.”

Now, the Chinese man has a problem. Politely, he starts to make a counter-argument.

“I agree with you that the state-representatives should pay homage to the fallen state-soldiers. But, in the Yasukuni, you enshrine even the class-A war-criminals [who were convicted in the International Military Tribunal for the Far East and accordingly executed in 1948].”

In my understanding, he is here repeating the Chinese state’s official position against the Yasukuni Shrine. Those ordinary Chinese, Korean, and other victims of the war, with whom I have spoken, usually oppose the shrine’s cultural nationalism in general and its egocentric lack of political ethical sense. The approximately two million fallen Japanese soldiers, whom the shrine has consecrated, are the invaders and colonizers to the victims. The Chinese state has criticized the enshrinement of only the six class-A war-criminals among other two million instances, perhaps based on its communist belief in ordinary Japanese and political pragmatism to forge a relationship with democratic Japan.
Nevertheless, Tagawa confidently rejects the Chinese negotiation.

“The Tokyo Tribunal was the victors’ tribunal. Did they try the American crime of dropping the A-bombs [in Nagasaki and Hiroshima Cities]? No.” Just like certain Americans regard the dropping of the atomic bombs over civilians as not a crime against humanity but an act of patriotism, the Japanese class-A war-criminals, including the then Prime Minister and Minister of War, Hideki Tōjō, should be regarded as war-heroes, Tagawa continues. According to his logic, de-apotheosization of those, whom he regards as the national contributors, would be immoral, particularly when the de-apotheosization fulfills foreign demands. The leftists have also pointed out the U.S. immunity in the Far East Tribunal, but their argument has been that both American and Japanese crimes should have been equally tried and punished, if found guilty, and not that both crimes should have been exonerated and nationally glorified, as they are now.¹²

Thus refusing even the Chinese (i.e. the victims’) offers of tolerance and future-oriented friendship, the Yasukuni Shrine and its supporters boast its politics-resistant spatiality. History shatters in the shrine, which to many Japanese rightists, must look as the sign of its integrity. Hence, toward the weak smile of the Chinese man, Tagawa shows his persistent attitude of moral superiority—their debate could be a long one.

Among the majority of Japanese as well, the Yasukuni Shrine is not particularly revered, though in a different sense than in other Asian and Pacific cases. The shrine’s historical revisionist extremity is one reason. For another, when one further reflects on the reason that the shrine’s stubborn upholding of the imperial historical views might likely seem extreme to many Japanese, it would be helpful to analyze here that a friend of mine and an employee at an elite trading

company in Tokyo remarks that Yasukuni to him is “uncanny” (*kimochi warui*). Comfortably living with his wife and two kids, this man in his mid-thirties would never consider spending one of his precious Sundays visiting Yasukuni, as the Association veterans and their younger supporters have done for the past decades. Theoretically, the uncanniness of the shrine, which he says he feels is that of the repressed memories of the Japanese empire. According to Freud, the uncanny (unheimlich) is “something which is secretly familiar [heimlich-heimisch], which has undergone repression and then returned from it.” Even though the empire collapsed only sixty-three years ago, it never surfaces in everyday narratives of contemporary Japanese. Every Japa-

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13 The English, “uncanny,” might be translated into the Japanese, bukimi. Bukimi divides into the negative suffix of bu and kimi. Although I do not find an entry of kimi in Kadokawa Shoten’s Kokugo Jiten (Japanese Dictionary), kimi warui, according to this dictionary, means kimochi ga warui, which makes one suppose that kimi and kimochi are interchangeable. In the entry of kimochi in the same dictionary, one learns that kimochi means kokoromochi (mood), kanjō (emotion), and kibun (feeling). In the meantime, warui in kimochi (or kimi) ga warui means bad; ga is a particle that attaches itself to the subject. Since bukimi means “not kimi” and kimochi ga warui is “bad kimochi” or “kimochi is bad,” while kimi and kimochi are estimated to mean the same thing, I suppose bukimi and kimochi ga warui are extremely similar to each other in their meanings. Perhaps kimochi (ga) warui seems to be more colloquial than bukimi, the sheer kanji (Chinese) term. In the last analysis, one of the Japanese translations of the English uncanny is kimi no warui, according to Shōgaku-kan’s “Progressive” English-Japanese Dictionary. Interestingly, the dictionary, which is regarded as so standard that it is adopted as Yahoo Japan’s dictionary function, does not include bukimi as the Japanese of uncanny. Besides kimi no warui, the dictionary lists the following under the entry uncanny—shinpi-teki-na (mysterious), fukashigi-na (strange), and hitonami hazurete [kimi no warui hodo] jōzu-na [surudoi] (extraordinarily [to the degree of creepiness] good [insightful]). Whether kimi (or kimochi) ga warui or bukimi, the Japanese translation of uncanny seems to omit the connotation of the return of the repressed (see below); both bukimi and kimochi (ga) warui, to me, seem to emphasize the object’s atmosphere of creepiness, repulsion, and abject and not so much the subject’s psychologically dynamic involvement in it, like repression.

14 Sigmund Freud, “The ‘Uncanny,’” The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XVII (1917-19) (London: Hogarth Press, 1955), pp.219-256. The quote is from p.245; square brackets original. According to Mladen Dolar, Lacan invented the term, extimité, as the French translation of unheimlich. Dolar emphasizes the difference of the extimité—for one thing, according to Dolar, the extimité is a historical concept that marks modernity. For another, Dolar says, the extimité is also qualitatively different from the unheimlich, since Lacanian anxiety is “not produced by a lack or a loss or an incertitude; it is not the anxiety of losing something (the firm support, one’s bearings, etc.). On the contrary, it is the anxiety of gaining something too much, of a too-close presence of the object. What one loses with anxiety is precisely the loss—the loss that made it possible to deal with a coherent reality. ‘Anxiety is the lack of the support of the lack,’ says Lacan; the lack lacks, and this brings about the uncanny.” See Dolar, “‘I Shall Be with You on Your Wedding-Night’: Lacan and the Uncanny” in October 58 (Fall 1991), 5-23; p.13; parentheses original. Marilyn Ivy refers to Dolar in her Discourses of the Vanishing: Modernity, Phantasm, Japan (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995); p.85. Despite Dolar, perhaps the modernity of the uncanny is unmistakable also in Freud’s accounts of involuntary mechanicity, with which the repressed object in the uncanny situation is supposed to return—see Freud on his Italian journey (Ibid.; pp.236-8). Similarly, Freud mentions the symbol’s predominance in his study of carved crocodiles; he says that the inverted dominance of the symbol (the crocodiles) over reality is uncanny (Ibid.; pp.243-5). These two qualities of the Freudian uncanny, the symbol’s predominance and its repetitious power, could be considered in comparison with the modern capitalist commodity’s equivalent characteristics.
nese presumably holds visceral memories of the empire bequeathed by his/her family. However, nobody seems to mention them, except symptomatically (e.g. in fantastic nationalistic cinema), after the political, legal, and socio-cultural rupture that the country experienced in 1945. The overt displays of the imperial flag (the rising sun) or the shouts of the Great East Asia War (the prewar appellation of the Asia-Pacific War) in Yasukuni are typical examples of the uncanny returns of the repressed, that is, the lost empire of Japan.

There is more to the shrine’s uncanniness. During and after the war, Yasukuni has promoted not only the imperial glory with the flags and marches, but the fascist beauty of mass-deaths. Apotheosization of the soldiers, which was and is the shrine’s main purpose, is the soldiers’ commodification, their abstraction into the identical form of the “spirit.” In order to erase their class differences and become the self-same form of the national spirit, the soldiers engaged in suicidal missions, while the rest of the nation was fascinated with the fascist commodification of the soldiers. Inside and outside the shrine, the spirit (rei) is otherwise called tama(shii), carrying its etymological root in jade, that is, the ancient commodity-cum-money.

Still promoting and openly presenting the imperial and fascist practices and ideologies, as if they had never been condemned and prohibited, the shrine today is the uncanny theater of Japan’s repressed past. The shrine’s and LDP’s recent efforts to promote the shrine as the “religious” and not political facility can be regarded as the acts to try to re-repress the returned past in the shrine with the new languages of the folk, people, and their customs—I will return to this point later. My corporate friend merely represents the majority of Japanese’ response to the idea

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15 According to Dick Stegewerns, one of the first cinematic symptoms was registered by a movie company, Shin Tōhō’s series of war-representations. As soon as the occupation forces left the country, the company started to replicate prewar propagandist themes of devotion, comradely, or bravery in movies entitled Dōki no Sakura, Gunkan March, Gunshin Yamamoto Gensui Rengō Kantai, etc. See his “‘Nihon Yaburezu (Japan Undefeated): The Cinematic Contest for Japan’s Collective War Memory,” presented at the 9th Annual Asian Studies Conference Japan, 6/19/2005, at Jōchi (“Sophia”) University, Tokyo.

16 The emperor has also been called “jade”; yet in Japanese, it is gyoku and not tama. See Chap.1.
of the Yasukuni in postwar Japan. Even among actual visitors to the shrine, such an explicit exposure of their unconscious past, as staged by the Association, is apparently too uncanny. Many of these visitors could be bereaved families, or veterans, or newly interpellated moral nationalists, who would like patriotic memorialization of the soldiers without the Real, i.e. too much remembrance of the losses. The anomaly among the anomaly (the Yasukuni visitors), the Association is probably one of the only few groups in contemporary Japan which have tried to remember or rather symptomatically embody, the empire and its fascism.

**The Class-Structure of the Death-Space**

The Yasukuni shrine’s fascism-preserving spatiality is its supporters’ spatiality. The supporters, such as the members of the Association to Respond to the War Heroes’ Spirits, have exhibited their affinity with the Yasukuni spatiality through their different class-characters. On the top of the hierarchized class-characters, there is one that is represented by the Association board of former supreme court judges and LDP congressmen, who rank and file members call sensei or sirs. Sensei never spend their time and effort in the Sunday campaign at Yasukuni; probably only few of the rank and file have ever got to have a chance to actually talk to them. Sensei’s job is to represent the moral spatial claims made by the rank and file and in exchange, to conserve their current elite statuses.

Even among the rank and file, veterans are hierarchized according to their former ranks, which, in turn, seem to be intimately connected to their class statuses. Let us take an example of the veteran, who others call the “company commander” (chūtai-chō) (I am not sure about his actual rank). The commander’s resonant voice signifies and performs to establish his dominance over other veterans. While the Japanese call a humble person a “person with lowered hips” (ko-shi no hikui hito), that is, a person who easily bows, the commander is a man with a straight pos-
ture, which I have never seen bent. Various gifts are given to him. The Association staff would bring with them a big box of expensive peaches from Yamagata Prefecture that they say was mailed to the commander. In that particular Sunday, he was not around, so other veterans sat around the box during their lunch break, “worshiping” \((\text{ogami}-\text{nagara})\) it, as one of them jokingly said. Ordinarily, the commander shares with the rank and file whatever is given to him—bottles of locally brewed \textit{sake}, ice cream in the summer, or warmed \textit{imagawa yaki} snacks in the winter, which these veterans call “shared hem” \((\text{o-suso wake})\), that is, kindly shared feeling of the king’s gown. The gown that this naked king dons is the perception that he commands political influence and enjoys business connections. Some say he owns a lucrative, independent business; others say he was once a congressman. What I witnessed myself was that an array of his subordinates and friends throughout the country sensitively responded to the news of his presence in Yasukuni on any particular Sunday, apparently compelled to call his cell and dispense variously considerate presents to refresh him in the middle of the exhausting ad-campaign under the elements.

Although the veterans do not salute the commander any more, apparently they never forget that they fought under him during the Battle of Imphal. The Japanese started to march from Burma to conquer Imphal in Assam, north eastern India, in March 1944. Through the logistically inadequate campaign, in which the soldiers died of starvation (40,000 starvation deaths versus 30,000 deaths in action), the commander led his company out alive, if not intact, anyway.\(^{17}\) Today, in his presence, no veterans dare to initiate a conversation, which would interrupt the talkative commander.

Among these veterans, it might be easy to find remaining loyalty to the commander. But, their deference to him is likely also related to their class differences from him. Whether through

politics or business, his seeming success might build on the success of his natal family. Genera-
ly, many officers were from good socio-economic backgrounds, which they maintained and ad-
vanced in the postwar by taking advantage of the network of other officers. Yasuhiro Nakasone,
for instance, a former navy officer, became a prime minister that way; Ryūzō Sejima, the former
CEO of Itōchū Trading Company, was an Army staff member. Lacking family resources and
military connections, ordinary veterans merely suffered—tiding over day after day was all they
did after they were repatriated to Japan.

The commander at Yasukuni exercises his power to create a hierarchical order among the
rank and file. Apparently, it is not his style to enjoy monopolizing power; he seems to need lieu-
tenants and wants his lieutenants to have their own subordinates. During the lunch-break from
the ad-campaign, when the members retire under the trees that are planted on both sides of the
Approach to the Hall of Prayer, the commander would assign every one of them to a seat, which
apparently makes concentric circles with him at the symbolic center.

“Yo! Z! I haven’t seen you for a while. Why don’t you sit next to me?” he would invite a
veteran among others in his usual, a bit vulgar and thus “masculine” diction. Amazingly or not,
the patriarch, Tagawa, is not particularly high-ranked in this order, perhaps reflecting the com-
mander’s anti-intellectualism. As for me, I am the lowest ranked or an irrelevant outsider at best,
who should be seated in the periphery of the symbolic sphere of his power. The anti-
intellectualism aside, his machismo does not seem to allow him to understand such an existence
as a female graduate student. Anthropology, my major, would seem to him to be an ominous
omen of anti-mercantilism and political insignificance.

Perhaps for other reasons than my gender or status, some staff members at the Associa-
tion seem to have grown suspicious of me. Everybody knows that I have been merely studying,
versus supporting, either the Association or the shrine. I have never spontaneously disclosed my political position; neither has any participant directly asked me. In the gray area between participation and observation, my affiliation with a U.S. university has also played an ambiguous role. Once, somebody let me know that some members said I was an “American spy.” Others do not seem to mind my existence, perhaps reflecting the U.S. semi-colonialism of postwar Japan. In that context, showing political or cultural allegiance to the U.S. dominance has become a sort of conservative act—my affiliation would not be the sign of my “enemy” status but the embodiment of my supposedly conservative deference to the semi-colonial authority. Still, even given the broad spectrum of the rightist ideologies in the country, I have always been in the margin of the field. I have neither been invited to any events outside the shrine, nor given any member’s number. I usually just show up in the shrine on Sundays, occasionally to discover that the campaign was canceled for some reason. The activists just tolerate my existence, with a volatile increment of suspicion. I think the commander has assigned me a symbolically accurate position in his lunchtime seating.

When the commander is not around, the opening under the thick canopy of evergreen trees echoes with quiet murmurs and small laughter, as the Imphal survivors make relaxed jokes to each other. Although I tend to be either neglected or forgotten, hanging with the veterans, I have never felt the rejecting exclusivity of the commander or staff members. The veterans and I would usually sit and nibble on convenience-store-bought rice balls together.

These seaweed-wrapped balls of cooked rice with little pickles or tuna salad inside (o-nigiri) are bought with donated money and carried in the hands of sympathetic college students. The leader of these students, “Takuya Kanno,” is now stacking the rice balls on one of the four folding tables that are borrowed from the shrine. Lease of the tables and others (folding chairs,
plastic cups, strainers, pots, brooms, etc.), in addition to the access to the shrine’s property for the campaign purpose, shows the close relation between the Association and the shrine. If leftists dared to demonstrate in the shrine, they would likely be arrested.\textsuperscript{18}

The student, Kanno, belongs to the Association’s companion organization, Japan Youth Memorial Association (\textit{Nihon Seinen Ikotsu Shūshū Dan}; its another self-appellation is JYMA), which supplies voluntary students’ labor-power to the state-project to recover the Japanese soldiers’ remains throughout Asia and the Pacific. Established in 1967, the JYMA (also called “J” by the students) has dispatched the total of 1,353 students over 4,448 days in 226 different missions.\textsuperscript{19} Though somewhat contradictory to the shrine’s ideology (for, the shrine argues that the soldiers should be memorialized in the abstract form of spirits), the JYMA has been allowed to carry out its own ad-campaign in the shrine side by side with the Association. The two organizations cooperate with each other on the everyday basis, borrowing stationery from each other, watching out for the other’s booth when nobody else is around, and preparing lunch together. Kanno was thus handed the Association money by its long-term, “secretary”-type of woman, Misa, to buy those foods that the old males would like—the rice balls, bottles of sake, cans of beer, smoked and sliced squids, and kabuki sembei (rice crackers that are deep fried and seasoned with sugar and soy sauce).

With long hair that is died light brown, Misa provides me with an idea of what the so-called “Yankees,” that is, delinquent Japanese youths with “blonde” hair, would be like when...
they hit middle age. As a result of the long years of the Yasukuni campaign perhaps, she is
tanned to be almost leather-skinned—or, probably she has to go to a tanning salon to attain that
level of tan. Attentive, formal, and efficient, though, during the break when she is left alone only
with her truly close cohort, I notice that she would squat over the ground (called yankee zuwari),
deeply inhaling cigarettes and letting the smoke out of her nostrils. One of her favorite friends is
a chubby, middle-aged man outside the Association affiliation. Usually in a rather shabby T-shirt
and a baseball cap, the man says he has his weekday suppers in an Okachimachi (laborers’ town
in Tokyo) tavern. Trying some of the approximately 500 different kinds of shōchū spirit made
from sweet potatoes or wheat which the tavern boasts, he usually spends at least 5,000 yen
(about 50 U.S. dollars) a night, according to him.

“Even when I try to save my money by ordering just edamame (boiled, young soy beans
in pods) and hiya yakko (chilled tofu), the bill always amounts to 5,000—their shōchū is irresis-
tible,” he explains. Another favorite dinner of his is the 2,000-yen fried pork-shoulder, served in
another downtown district in Tokyo, Kamata. In her conversations with him and other friends,
Misa’s polite diction is completely replaced with husky-voiced, street-corner slang. Apparently
uncomfortable in front of me, Misa, however, once let me know that she named her primary-
school-year son “Hayabusa” after a Japanese battleship—a somewhat unusual name for a Jap-
nese person. Kanno might similarly incorporate the country’s past; Taku as in Takuya (his given
name) could mean colonial development.

Presently, Misa has temporarily retired from the exhausting campaign in the Approach
and started to pour more green tea to each veteran’s plastic cup. As for the veterans, they have
not even touched the tea. They are good with enough booze and snacks that Kanno brought them.
They are rather giddy, unleashed from the commander’s voice and eyes. Random talk is struck
up everywhere, the kind of randomness that renders any contexts, backgrounds, or differences meaningless. It is certainly an important technique of sociality, in which these super-mature males (most of them are over 80 years old) must be versed. Yet, used in such a violent stage as the Yasukuni Shrine, their conversational randomness seems to have more dimensions than sociality.

“I bought a pedometer some time ago,” a veteran says to another, to take an example. A strange everydayness that shatters the veterans in the treed opening, as if it were an innocent picnic with neighbors, as if there had never been the controversies of the invasive soldiers, the invaded others, their deaths, and aftermath. This veteran, who worked in one of the ward offices of Tokyo for 37 years after the war, continues— “A pedometer, ‘cause the doctor said I had to lose 2 kg (about 5 lbs).”

“Oh, that’s easy [to lose 2 kilo],” Yamada, the former police officer, chimes in.

“You think so, huh? But, that wasn’t that easy,” the retired ward-officer jokingly sighs. “I got totally compelled to walk 10,000 steps a day. And now, look, I have a feeling that I’ve got bad knees.”

“What about your weight, though? Did you at least lose 2 kg?”

“I gained some more, actually. I guess I kept drinking, as my knees hurt.”

As everybody laughs, the veteran who sits next to me demands my attention. Somewhat drunk, he has been positively nodding to every remark made during the lunchtime today. A happy, almost euphoric elder, who I will later know was a landscaper by occupation, pulls a silver chain that he hangs from his neck to boastfully show me a free pass to the Tokyo bus system. According to him, those who are over seventy years old are given those passes.
“Depending on your income,” another veteran, who comes to our table to get another can of beer, stresses. The man with the pass laughs to show that he does not take himself too seriously. He continues that it takes him about an hour and several buses to come here from his place near the not-so-gentrified, Arakawa River bank, eastern Tokyo. He has a slight hearing difficulty. This former landscaper’s tanned hands and face are covered with age-spots and moles, perhaps as a result of long years in working outdoors. His thick fingers are stiff and clumsy, probing into his black wallet to pull out a bunch of lottery tickets. According to what he explains in his thick accent of downtown Tokyo, he buys about 20,000 yen (200 U.S. dollar)-worth of tickets every year.

“20,000! Ah, you should at least occasionally win it then, I imagine?” another veteran, a ramen-noodle shop owner, who sits next to him away from me, ridicules him.

“True. Tell me, how much would you win? A hundred yen (a buck)? Two hundred?” the ward bureaucrat asks.

“You’d never know. I usually win about 2,000 yen every year!” the landscaper corrects them. “Of course I should. ‘Cause, every morning, I put the tickets up on the shrine of Daikoku-sama [a shinto god] and pray.”

Daikoku is one of the Seven Deities of Happiness (Hichi Fuku Jin) that was adopted from the Chinese belief system. Mixed with a mythological hero and god, Ōkuni Nushi, Daikoku is supposed to be effective for the believer’s commercial success. In practice, this is the first time that I have ever encountered a living Japanese who actually believes in the god/deity. According to the landscaper, he even owns a shrine (kami dana) that is dedicated to the god. It is not that Daikoku has ever vanished from Japanese lives. To the contrary, the deity triumphantly reigns over parts of the everyday as a cartoon image of a happy fatso, the corporate identity of Yebisu.
By tying the image with the mandolin tune taken from the film *The Third Man*, Yebisu seems to try to promote their beer as a nostalgic product. As a real practitioner, the landscaper’s *Daikoku* belief exceeds the corporate goal of the nostalgic effect; and this excess seems to make him different.

The veterans then start to amuse themselves discussing their gambling careers, in which some have been lucky, others have been not so lucky. According to their collective conclusion, a gambler’s luck will be evened out over years—the ramen shop owner, for instance, who won about 1,000 U.S. dollar equivalence in *pachinko* pinball machines in the last week, has spent more than that at least in the last couple of years, according to him.

A small break of silence, and we remotely hear “Terasaki Minoru,” the JYMA’s middle-aged “adviser” (*komon*)’s amplified speech (*agi* as in agitation) that he has started some time ago in the Approach.

It is deplorable that excessive immorality controls Japan today. Streets are inundated with people’s shameless indulgence in pleasure. A sincere heart will be decomposed by people’s ignoble forgetfulness of their obligations. Our obligations as Japanese today are to inter and memorialize those war heroes who went to the battlefields and fell there like blossoms (*sange-suru*). Their deaths will be truly wasted as fallen blossoms, if we don’t remember that the deaths were sacrifices, sacrifices for us the younger Japanese. Ladies and gentlemen, now is the time to look back, to inherit our predecessors’ (*senjin-tachi no*) nobleness, integrity, and courage, with which they self-sacrificed for us.

The juxtaposition of the veterans’ talks of gambling and Terasaki’s castigation of “shameless indulgence in pleasure” might be ironic. Yet in the rightists’ curiously arithmetic sense of morality, the veterans have already fulfilled their share of obligations, so now they can sit back and receive returns. The speaker, Terasaki, is recognized to be the JYMA ideologue; he should know

20 See Carol Reed dir., *The Third Man* (London: London Films, 1949); the music score is by Anton Caras.
21 The company’s power is such that *The Third Man*’s song now resounds every time a train arrives at Yebisu Station on the Yamanote Line, Tokyo. The station’s name is coincidentally Yebisu, of which fact the company takes advantage and has constructed its kingdom around the station—collectively called *Yebisu Garden Place*, its factory, office, and shopping center now prepare new commercial and corporate scenes for many commuters.
such mathematics very well. A short and chunky man with a mustache, he was born as a son of a former Japanese spy among the Korean and Manchurian residents in Manchukuo (1932-45), according to him. Already during his college years in nationalist Kokushikan University, he had established the Study Group of the Imperial Historical View (Kōkoku Shikan Kenkyū Kai). Nowadays, as an owner of an independent print-shop in Tokyo, he takes orders from the university as well as the JYMA.

As usual, Terasaki’s speech is as smooth and appropriate for a speech in the Yasukuni as it could be. The smoothness is the result of an excessive degree of formality in his speech, in which fallen blossoms, pleasure-inundated streets, decomposed hearts, and other metaphors are too clichéd at this point to bear any fresh messages whatsoever.\(^\text{22}\) A psychoanalyst, Rika Kōyama, suspects that nationalists in general might be urged by the “oral pleasure” of pronouncing lofty metaphors and ideological terms, rather than by their meaning per se.\(^\text{23}\) Indeed, provided the small number of visitors at Yasukuni, who almost never stop to listen to any “agitation,” Terasaki would not expect too powerful an effect of his efforts on listeners. He seems to be intoxicated with the melodramatic tone of his speech itself, the idiosyncratic air of which might further narrow down the number of his listeners.

On the part of the former foot soldiers as well, Terasaki’s speech easily constitutes a part of the *mis en scène*, which their conversations themselves have turned out to be. At least the veterans are not even listening to the speech except as a sort of scenic buzz. Thus, one of the veterans, “Kamiya,” an owner of a spirit shop in downtown Tokyo, now says, almost out of the blue, “Hokkaidō [Island] is great.” He has actually been chewing the dried scallops, the delicacy from

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\(^\text{22}\) About the use and abuse of the metaphor of cherry blossoms by the fascist state of prewar Japan, see Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms, and Nationalisms: The Militarization of Aesthetics in Japanese History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002).

the northern island. It was of course the commander who had left the scallops with us—he had to leave for some business-related purposes.

“Hokkaidō is great. They’ve got everything there; salmon, crabs, sea urchins.”

“Salmon roe, as well,” the ward bureaucrat adds.

“Ah, salmon roe is good, isn’t it?” another veteran in the table of the spirit shop owner agrees.

“And then Atka mackerels!”

“Ah, Atka mackerels are good.”

“In the winter, I always have them with hot sake.”

“In the summer, ‘firefly squid’ with the vinegar and miso sauce.”

“Dr. Takahashi,” a former military doctor in the commander’s company, who is now 94 years old, starts talking about his late wife.

“She always prepared me firefly squid with cold sake. She took good care of me, you know.”

He then explains how he cannot make it for 8/15 in Yasukuni this year, since he would have the obon ritual for her. Obon is a relatively commonly practiced ritual among ordinary Japanese nowadays, in which the dead are symbolically “invited” back to this world on the backs of a cucumber horse and eggplant bull with a chopstick set of legs each. Although I’m sympathetic about the doctor’s grievance, the rank and file have become bored.

“And then, remember? We used to pickle papaya,” a veteran who has said was dispatched to Malaya before Imphal, suddenly interrupts the doctor. Apparently under the influence of sake, his skin has turned purple-red with all the veins standing out. I suspect that he might have a long history of habitual drinking. There is an impression of gnarled stiffness in his big, box-like body,
which might have had to adjust itself to a hard-working environment, where he might have been placed. Some time ago, he showed me a laminated picture of himself in an imperial army uniform. The stars and other ornaments that he wore in the picture were those of a private 1st class, according to him. Smooth and round-cheeked, he was 22 years old.

“I do remember,” Tagawa, the bearded “patriarch,” who sits across the table from the “Malayan” veteran, nods, “it was good.” I assume the pickled papaya that they are talking about had been available before they embarked on marching through Burmese jungles to Imphal.

“Then, we ate papaya tempura [deep fried in batter].”

“Ah, that was good!” another sighs. The man who went to Malaya then told me how his platoon cut banana trees down (in Malaya?) to eat the soft, white core of the trunk.

“It was good,” he squints his eyes, as if to reproduce the taste on his tongue. “But then, later I heard that they took 4 to 5 years after they planted a tree before they could harvest bananas. I feel bad [for the Malays, whose banana trees his platoon cut down].”

“We had to eat everything—even grass out there,” says Yamada the former police officer, probably mentioning later days in the march.

“But that didn’t agree with us. Do you remember? We all got our mouths inflamed [due to the wild grass].” Before I even notice it, the doctor has joined the new topic of the Burmese jungle-diet for survival.

The veterans’ conversations make a metonymical chain in which random topics line up side by side—death of one’s wife, one’s weight, gambling, drinking, sacrifices and obligations (as in Terasaki’s speech), wartime thefts of civilians’ properties (banana trees), the sense of guilt, and the sense of being victimized (about having to eat the grass). The wide-range of these topics might prevent any one of them from making a lasting trace in the participant’s mind.
the same time, one might notice that these topics in their entirety make a vague, overall meaning; that is, if one looks at the whole conversations as a set, the randomness of each topic might not look so random. Today in Yasukuni I have started to faintly perceive that the veterans, in talking about those random-sounding matters, might be avoiding something, avoiding such an unavoidable discussion as the Japanese soldiers’ atrocities to begin with. In the ideological banners or official remarks, these veterans easily say “there was no Nanjing Massacre” or “we are here in Yasukuni to protect the heroes’ spirits” (eirei o omamorisuru) from international infamy or leftist demonstrations. Part of their declared missions is to prove viscerally, i.e. with their own war-experiences, that the Japanese soldiers were not atrocious. Yet in the private conversations among themselves, the veterans seem to completely omit these politically and ethically controversial points. Probably their unspoken logic is that since they, the actual participants in the war, do not talk about them, the atrocities did not exist. But then, why would I sense fear and pleasure—or the feeling of relief—in these veterans’ interactions? The fear is sensed in the urgency with which the conversations are concatenated together, the hurried rhythm with which a veteran inserts his conversation immediately after another, picking up and expanding an arbitrary word or idea that is used in the previous conversation. The sense of relief would then be detected in the distance, the wide distance over which a veteran leaps to another, totally arbitrary topic, so that nobody, including the veterans themselves, notice who they really are or what they really did. The whole set of conversations is thus sustained together as a rapidly flowing chain of displacement, the displacement that seems to happen only because the veterans might be afraid. The meaning of the set of conversations—avoidance—might emerge at certain moments, in which the veterans are momentarily out of topics or when the listener all of a sudden notices the bizarreness of the combination between gambling and Yasukuni. At other moments, the listener is likely distracted, or may
be even amused, by the diversified topics, the surprising transition from one to the next. According to Kaja Silverman, the metonymic formation of language is characterized by this type of “transversality,” i.e. a movement back and forth between the words and content, consciousness and unconsciousness, as well as between the two adjacent words. This is true also to metaphoricity, a technique to present a cluster of associative terms, through which a meaning is expected to be condensed. At the Yasukuni, Terasaki’s speech would make a good example of a metaphoric usage of language. A generation apart from the veterans, Terasaki can probably afford for those words that associatively remind one of the Real, the life and death in the war, though the Real should still be distanced from him—hence his use of metaphors.

Socially, the metonymic technology of displacement is most prominently mobilized by the newspaper. “What is the essential literary convention of the newspaper?” Benedict Anderson asks.

If we were to look at a sample front page of, say, *The New York Times*, we might find there stories about Soviet dissidents, famine in Mali, a gruesome murder, a coup in Iraq, the discovery of a rare fossil in Zimbabwe, and a speech by Mitterrand. Why are these events so juxtaposed? What connects them to each other? Not sheer caprice. Yet obviously most of them happen independently, without the actors being aware of each other or of what the others are up to. The arbitrariness of their inclusion and juxtaposition (a later edition will substitute a baseball triumph for Mitterrand) shows that the linkage between them is imagined.

The linkage, i.e. the meaning of the newspaper metonymy, that Anderson finds is “calendrical coincidence” between the events, for one thing, and “simultaneous consumption” of the same newspaper in the imagined nation, for another.

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The nation and its simultaneity can of course be said to be the signified of the Japanese newspaper as well. Still, I would like to be a little more specific so that I can provide a better idea of the social and historical backgrounds that surround the Yasukuni veterans’ talks. I am suggesting that the widely practiced operation of metonymy in the Japanese newspaper is creating and created by the Yasukuni veteran-type of war-narratives. Whereas Anderson would say all the papers published in Japan today cannot escape from their imaginary framework of the nation, I argue that the nation thus signified by the papers cannot be better grasped without taking into consideration the kind of repressive movement that I have discussed—the avoidance of Japan’s past atrocities, the atrocities that made Japan’s fascism a lost ideal. The newspaper metonymy in postwar Japan operates this movement along class- and gender-lines. Take a look at the business paper, Nikkei or Nihon Keizai Shinbun, whose front pages are usually the juxtaposition of random technical details of economic indices, bureaucratic procedures, or corporate strategies, so that the suit- and tie-clad elite males could bring more money to their employers, i.e. big, global corporations.27 Asahi, Yomiuri, and Mainichi are the papers that are more gender-neutral than Nikkei, meaning to provide to both male and female bourgeoisie a wider range of news from which the metonymical configuration is made, as compared to the economy-focused Nikkei. When it comes to Nikkan Gendai and other tabloids, Sports Nippon and other sports papers, one can immediately see that they are totally different affairs from these four national papers in the gender and class of the expected readers. If Nikkei the business paper is read by bourgeois male commuters, the tabloids and sports papers are also supposed to be read in crowded subways, but by male salarymen in small corporations, or hard-working men in shops, factories, construction, and so on. In these tabloids and their ilk, naked female bodies are notoriously ubiquitous, juxta-

27 Yoriko Shōno’s prose, *Time Slip Combinato* (Tokyo: Bungei Shunju, 1998), literarily addresses the male metonymies of Japan’s “high-growth period” (1955-1973), taking the form of an everyday travelogue of coastal Kawasaki, the now forgotten base of the country’s heavy and chemical industries.
posed with pictures from warring Afghanistan or sensational murder cases. When one can occasionally see the repressive-unrepressive movements regarding Japan’s atrocities and fascism visibly played out among the four national papers, especially between the leftist Asahi and rightist Yomiuri, as Asahi’s critical revelation of and Yomiuri’s nationalist excuse for the atrocities and fascism, the tabloids and sports papers are comparable to Nikkei in their sheer forgetfulness of the past. Nikkei helps the reader sublimate the related libido into the economic activities; the tabloids and others in comparison shock the reader into forced oblivion.

A similar technique of anesthesia was used by prewar Japanese tabloids and other publications, Mark Driscoll suggests, in order to make the petty bourgeois and lumpen nerves numb in the face of fascist violence. These readers of the tabloids were the kinds of Japanese, Driscoll argues, who would actually go colonize the peripheries of the Japanese empire as shop owners, petty officers, officialized pimps, or military spies. The violence that these Japanese committed against other Asians and Pacific Islanders were fueled by the metropolitan tabloids’ erotic-grotesque articles and at the same time fueled them in return. With the metonymic technique, these articles rendered each individual colonized life into a sensational fantasy. Their tolerance of shocks and violence being thus heightened, the petty bourgeois readers could freely express their class-specific resentment out in the colonies.28

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28 Driscoll, *Absolute Erotic, Absolute Grotesque: The Living, Dead, and Undead in Japan’s Imperialism, 1895-1945* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010). In the case of the Korean Peninsula, the historian Sōji Takasaki says, the Japanese colonizers arrived first as the consulate staff members, and then as postal workers, and after 1910 when Japan officially integrated Korea, as the officials at the Government-General. After the Great Depression, many Japanese opened restaurants, bars, and brothels. In crises, such as the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923, these petty bourgeois colonizers’ violence was turned back to themselves as the fear of retaliatory violence by the Koreans. “More fundamentally,” according to Takasaki, this fear must have been “caused by the intuition that their [the Japanese] existence was denied by the Koreans.” See his *Shokumin-chi Chōsen no Nihon-jin* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2002); p.140.

About the concept of the grotesque, according to Bakhtin, it is associated with the farmers’ class—the “fruitful earth and womb.” “‘Downward’ is earth, ‘upward’ is heaven. Earth is an element that devours, swallows up (the grave, the womb) and at the same time an element of birth, of renascence (the maternal breasts)... To degrade an object [is]...to hurl it down to the reproductive lower stratum, the zone in which conception and a new birth take place. Grotesque realism knows no other lower level; it is the fruitful earth and womb. It is always conceiving.” See
Yasukuni Shrine’s petty bourgeois veterans seem to belong to this genealogy of tabloid violence. The violence of these veterans’ metonymic talk levels off the political and ethical singularity of an event in juxtaposition with other events. These veterans’ violence works in the same fashion as the prewar tabloid’s working, but with more complexity than the prewar instance due to its different meaning. The prewar tabloid’s meaning is estimated to have been the ideals of fascism and nationalism, and their respective ideologies of equivalence and simultaneity. The psychological complex that arises from posteriority, i.e. a delay from the actual violence, was not yet developed. To other Asians and Pacific Islanders, these tabloids meant pains and losses, due to the ideologies’ exclusivism and totalitarianism. After sixty-three years since the end of the war, the veterans add the meaning of avoidance and repression to nationalism and fascism. To other victims, this is not just totalitarian rendition, but also the denial of justice. As I will detail in Chapter 5, justice is what these victims seek, in addition to legal, political, and financial compensations. These necessarily require the perpetrator’s admission of its atrocities. As the inheritor of the petty bourgeois violence of the tabloid, the Yasukuni veterans thus seem to have unintentionally enhanced the level, and diversified the kind, of violence toward their victims, as compared to their predecessors.

The bourgeoisie like Dr. Takahashi and Mr. U.A., or the grand bourgeoisie such as the commander and the LDP sensei, do not mind the postwar violence of the petty bourgeoisie. They not only patronize these petty bourgeois actors, they also join them by promoting the metonymic repression via business paper Nikkei and other venues. The petty bourgeois violence seems to be indiscriminate, though, trying to slyly exclude the commander and pulling down Dr. Takahashi

his Rabelais and His World, trans. by Helene Iswolsky (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1968); p.21 (parentheses are original). Criticizing the centrality of the problematic concept of folk in Bakhtin, Peter Stallybrass and Allon White argue that the idea of the farmers’ grotesqueness should be reconsidered together with the bourgeois desires and fears of filth, fat, the feminine, etc., which co-emerged with modernity. See their The Politics and Poetics of Transgression (London: Methuen, 1986).
onto their grotesque, tabloid plane of gastronomy and, as will be discussed, sexology. The job of
the bourgeoisie and grand bourgeoisie is to corporatistically and otherwise organize the petty
bourgeoisie, so that their desires for rendered equality do not become excessive.

In addition to metonymy, metaphoricity is another technique that these veterans mobilize
in order to repress the Real of the past. Listen to how they compare between different fruits from
different lands that Japan conquered—bananas from Taiwan, mangoes from the Philippines,
mangostines from Malaysia, and so forth.

“I’m from Katsunuma,” Yamanashi Prefecture, the veteran who went to Malaya starts the
new thread of conversation. “Grapes are awesome in Katsunuma.”

“Ah, Katsunuman wine is the best,” Kamiya, the liquor shop owner agrees. “I’m from
Sendai [in Miyagi Prefecture]; we don’t grow any fruits at all.”

“You need a warm climate for that,” “Sakita” comes back from the bathroom and informs
us. He uses a cane to support his left leg. He used to run a “factory” in downtown Tokyo. “Look
at Taiwan. I think their bananas taste so good.”

“Well, the Philippines is warmer than Taiwan, but their bananas are just plain,” says Ta-
gawa the patriarch—of course he knows it all. I am still not sure about his occupational back-
ground.

“They [the Philippine bananas] used to [be plain]. Now, they are all right,” the “Malayan”
vetran adds. “In the South, I ate mangoes, mangostines, durian fruits, everything. I like them so
much even now.

“The Southern women are hot as well, aren’t they?” he continues. “They are gentle
(yasashii) and friendly (kidate ga ii)—they are the best.”
“Is it so?” Sakita the factory-owner disagrees. “I like northern women better. They have light and smooth skin. Look at Niigatans.” Japanese nationalism in general represents Niigata Prefecture, one of the biggest producers of rice (the Japanese staple), as the place where “light-skinned” (irojirono) women are born—a la “Komako,” the main (“geisha”) character of Kawabata Yasunari’s aesthetic novel, Yukiguni.29

“When I came back from the South to Taiwan...,” the ramen shop owner, who had been taking a brief nap in his seat, joins the conversation. He is now remembering his 1945 repatriation to Japan. “When I came back to Taiwan, Taiwanese women looked so pretty (kirei). And then, when I finally came back all the way to Japan, Japanese women were so much prettier.”

“After that kind of life [in the jungle], any women looked pretty to me.”

“According to me, the best chicks are in Kyūshū [Island in Japan]. They’ll totally serve (tsukusu) you.”

“Ah, Kyūshū women. I heard they’d dry their laundry in the lower rack than their men’s.”

Now, they are talking about their experiences in brothels (yūkaku) in prewar Japan, where, according to them, “no man would dislike to go” (soko ni iku no ga kirai na hito nante inai).

Unlike the previous conversations on the pedometer, gambling, or the late wife, which randomly succeed each other in a temporal row, the current conversations on fruits and women semantically associate each other at the spatial level. It is spatial, since the associative relation among either fruits or women refers to a stretch of the socio-culturally institutionalized synonyms. This is how metaphoricity works, which is comparable to the contiguous movements between metonyms. Metaphoricity is to metonymy what Saussure’s paradigm is to his syntagms. According to him, “[t]he syntagmatic relation is in presentia. It is based on two or more terms that occur in an effective series. Against this, the associative relation unites terms in absentia in a

potential mnemonic series.”30 The syntagm is observed in an actual discourse in which each term is arbitrarily selected in the constraint of the discourse’s linear nature. If one looks at each individual term thus selected, the term is accompanied by an invisible cluster of related terms, the terms that are related to the selected term via the analogy of sound, meaning, or grammatical function—this cluster makes a paradigm. As Silverman stresses, it is in the combination between the selection from the same kind and each selection’s juxtaposition with others, that is, between the paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations, between the metaphoric systematicity and metonymic flow, which signification occurs; and the speaking subject is born.31 Neither term in any one of these binary combinations is able to signify or subjectify if it is left alone.

Let us go back to the Yasukuni veterans’ conversations on fruits and women. These conversations are comparable to these veterans’ syntagmatic displacement of the pedometer, drinking, gambling, and so forth, which seems to be compelled by fear, as well as pleasure, the seemingly cursory selection of each term without so much heed. The paradigmatic association of fruits and women seems to differ from this mechanism, due to the dominance of pleasure. By naming each individual item in the paradigm of fruits—grapes, bananas, mangoes, mangostines, durian fruits, and then the paradigm of women—Taiwanese, “southern,” Kyūshūan, Niigatans, these veterans even look to be playing a certain kind of game, the game to reveal and exhaust these ordinarily hidden paradigms. The pleasure is presumed to lie in the act of differentiation, whose minuteness might then refer the player to the idea of abundance, the richness of a given paradigm. The game that they might thus play seems to unintentionally replicate the theoretical


31 See Silverman, Ibid.; p.81. Though, here, Silverman is talking about the combination between Freud’s primary and secondary processes, which is closely related to the pairs of the syntagm/paradigm, and metonymy/metaphoricity.
game of structuralists. According to the rule that Lévi-Strauss sets, the theorist player is supposed to log all the versions of a myth that there are, in order to see the myth’s meaning (“structure”) and its historical growth.\(^\text{32}\) An anthropologist would point to Franz Boas’s similar efforts, which were dedicated to clarify the historical pattern of a cultural item’s regional diffusion.\(^\text{33}\) But of course there is a difference. If these scholars’ cataloguing endeavors were motivated by their respective theoretical interests, as well as the sense of urgency that native Americans and others that they studied were being extinguished as socio-cultural groups, there is some impression of wastefulness in the Yasukuni veterans’ conversations. Perhaps this impression is caused by the fact that those other Asian and Pacific women who were raped, enslaved, murdered, and otherwise victimized by the prewar Japanese male civilians and soldiers are dying every day, with their unmet demands that the perpetrators admit and apologize for their crimes. These victims’ traces become more faint and illegible in history, the more these veterans “remember” and narrate; in the cases of Lévi-Strauss and Boas, their natives are meant to become more “alive” and legible in their texts, the more these scholars research and record.

In this regard, it is interesting that the waste is manifoldly accumulated in the Yasukuni conversations; that is, the Real of the conversations (the Japanese crimes against women) is protected by multi-layers of displacement. First, there is the overall act of rendition of the Real to the supposedly totally agreeable, conversational topics of fantastic women and exotic fruits. As a result of this rendition, the victims are coated with the aromatic juice of tropical fruits to be “friendly” and “gentle”; or they are screened by snow curtains of northern Japan to be “serving” and “pretty.” Certain, ongoing sexism must be working in order for these sexually-rendered, fan-


tastic women to be the everyday conversational objects. Second, when one looks at the relation between these two clusters of the symptomatic metaphors, viz. women and fruits, one will notice that the women do not enter the conversations before the cluster of fruits is conversationally exhausted. Collectively, the fruit metaphors function at the meta-level ("meta-metaphor"), so that they metaphorize another collectivity of the female metaphors. The strong, olfactory and gustatory senses that are attached to fruits are introduced first to base the tactility of the female metaphors, in the economy in which the more vivid the metaphor is, the more likely the interpreter becomes fetishistic about the metaphor and thus becomes distanced from the signified. The result is the wasted pile of the metaphor-ornaments, innocently aesthetic-looking without any political or ethical meaning whatsoever.

Recall the silence in the middle of the veterans’ metonymic conversations earlier—probably that is the hidden dynamo of the conversations, or more precisely, the fear of the silence is, while metaphoric conversations, at least in Yasukuni, might get going around the sheer charm of the metaphors, or around the speakers’ attraction to that charm. The force of the metaphors is such that the veterans are completely forgetful about my existence. Though graphic expressions are lacking in their conversations, their comparative study of those women is shot through with strong yearning and honest criticism that are usually kept from being expressed in the presence of a woman. I think the reason that they never mention the Real is not my presence, neither as a female nor as an outsider. These veterans are attracted without remembering that these metaphors are the products of their own denial of the truths. As soon as they are enunciated as an unconsciously-spread screen of protective smoke, the 2-D images of the female metaphors

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34 According to Anne Allison’s ethnographic observation, the “hostess club” women in contemporary Japan acquire this type of objectified position vis-à-vis the male corporate workers on their way home, casually trying to bond with each other as the subjects—an important aspect of the everyday, which accrues no stigma on the part of the males. See her Nightwork: Sexuality, Pleasure and Corporate Masculinity in a Tokyo Hostess Club (University of Chicago Press, 1994).
seem to gain their own lives, flying across time and space to associate themselves with the geisha ideal of Kawabata’s Komako or with the vulgar icons in the contemporary tabloid. Here, I am not suggesting that only metaphors should be discussed in the larger context of commodification, its power to abstract and differentiate, and the enchanted individual’s subjectification through awe and pleasure. Again, metonymy in contemporary Japan is the literary mode of the newspaper and tabloid, the agents and products of mass-reproduction. The veterans’ metaphoric talks of the women merely reveal the ordinarily overlooked foundation of the tabloid metonymy, which are the ever-proliferating variations of the masses. Only by being grounded on this foundation, each piece of news in the tabloid can become the slightly different replication of its equivalent from the previous day—the column that is occupied by a woman in a green bathing suit today likely featured another with a red bikini yesterday. The tabloid never exhausts women to feature, as long as it taps the inexhaustible pool of female masses with different clothing and hairdos, who are, nonetheless, uniformly made to self-commoditize. The female masses’ mode of self-commodification would be different, were it not for the desiring male agency, and more historically specifically to postwar Japan, were it not for the former imperial soldiers’ and their descendants’ unconscious wishes to forget their past crimes against women. The tabloid women and the Yasukuni women in the veterans’ conversations are of course pretty, and enigmatically so, due to the dual kinds of forgetfulness among these men.

At the nexus between the paradigmatic and syntagmatic alignment of commodities, especially female commodities, fascism probably arises as a way of consuming these commodities. In the age of mechanical reproduction, consumption is always in danger of turning into excess. Since, in such an age, things have historically started to submit themselves to the subject of consumption in the expendable, easily and massively consumable forms. In its turn, the subject is
able to expend, that is, thoughtlessly devour, the massive amount of the objects until the act of consumption itself becomes meaningless, only since the subject’s senses have accordingly been modified to form and accommodate the mass-tastes. The numb subject of mechanical reproduction is thus fully subjectified by commodity logic to be able to forever enjoy mass-reproduced objects as such. This subjectified condition is comparable to what George Bataille calls the “sovereignty” of the expending subject.\(^35\) The Bataillean subject is rather the Subject of the “unproductive glory” of consumption or its post- or ex-reason.\(^36\) Think about the Kwakiutl potlatch that Bataille discusses, in which rival chiefs literally expend a precious copper shield after another, tearing, burning, throwing them to show the chiefs’ excessive generosity, unperturbed pride, and masculine bravado. In this discussion of sovereign expenditure, Bataille is surely developing a potent critique of the production-oriented modern capitalism and its subjectified producers. Again, un-sovereign expenditure, as Bataille might have in his mind as an antithesis of his discussion, is practiced as the everyday violence of mass-consumption—endless intakes of the tabloid images, hours and hours in front of the TV, accumulated baubles from penny stores, which do not accompany any sense of sovereignty at all. When one thinks of fascism, though, Bataille’s criticism of these modern capitalist formations becomes negatively illuminating. In the previous chapter, I have argued that an aspect of fascism is explained by focusing on the desire to establish sovereignty in the otherwise completely automatic everyday, as was shown in the concept of the aryan Subject of the Holocaust and other mass murders. From this viewpoint, the way in which Bataille develops his criticism seems to be dangerously double-edged—its critique of modern capitalism might be uncritically participating in the problem of fascism. But if one uses it carefully, Bataille’s oscillation would become a useful instrument to see how the \textit{desires} of

\(^{36}\) Bataille, Ibid.; p.29.
sovereign expenditures are generated in a modern capitalist society. And I argue that such desires are unevenly distributed in the society along the class, as well as gender, lines.37

The petty bourgeoisie and lumpen proletariat might be particularly conditioned for the desires of fascist expenditure, to the extent that their humble existence might be characterized by deprivation, seduction, and excess of consumption. They might find the possibility of expenditure tempting and even emancipating. In contrast, the proletariat are perhaps too close to the line of mass-reproduction to be completely drawn to consumerist fantasies to begin with. As for the bourgeoisie, the class joins the petty bourgeoisie in their excessive consumption, yet its figure in this sphere is always female. The first difference that this might make is the object of the bourgeois consumption. When the petty bourgeois habit of emancipatory expenditure and ability to feel grotesque joy in the expenditure take the object of commoditized females, the feminized figure of the bourgeois consumers tend toward self-consumption—bulimia, anorexia, or “binge” shopping.38 The violence of their expenditure here targets the commoditized body of the self; infinite self-reflexivity is the mode of the bourgeois consumer’s consciousness. Second, even though suicidal patterns of consumption might also characterize the petty bourgeoisie (e.g. the

37 A similar double-edge of Bataille can be seen in his idea of community. In Jean-Luc Nancy’s reading, Bataille tries to come up with the way to move toward the true community of singularities; or Bataille is concerned with that movement itself. The Bataillean concepts of the sacred and the sovereign are thus anti-nostalgic, according to Nancy. “In this sense,” in Nancy’s word, “Bataille is without doubt the one who experienced first or most acutely, the modern experience of community as neither a work to be produced, nor a lost communion, but rather as space itself, and the spacing of the experience of the outside, of the outside-of-self.” See Nancy, The Inoperative Community, ed. by Peter Connor, trans. by Peter Connor, Lisa Garbus, Michael Holland, and Simona Sawhney, forward by Christopher Fynsk (Minneapolis and Oxford; University of Minnesota Press, 1991); p.19. If I rephrase my critique of Bataille in Nancy’s term, then I am simply asking the meaning of assuming the Romantic (that is, impossible) “space” outside modern capitalism without reflecting on modern capitalism as a temporal regime. Similarly to Bataille, Roger Caillois considers modern warfare in terms of the sacred, joy, and regeneration, without the view of commodification. See his Man and the Sacred, trans. by Meyer Barash (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980(1959)). Contemporary Bataillean reflection on fascism and Nazism can be found in Dominique LaCapra, Representing the Holocaust History, Theory, Trauma (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994) and History and Memory after Auschwitz (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998). See also Saul Friedlander, Reflections of Nazism: An Essay on Kitsch and Death, trans. by Thomas Weyr (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993(1983)).

male friend of Misa, who would drink 5,000 yen-worth of spirit every night, perhaps disregarding his income level), these patterns seem to accompany at least some traces of the subject. As compared to their delayed sense of masculinity, through which the predatory Subject of the petty bourgeois consumers might be retroactively erected (e.g. the drinking Subject of the spirit shōchū a la hardboiled Philip Marlowe in Raymond Chandler), the bourgeoisie might appear to be more “advanced” in the sense that their consumption seems to be more automatic. While the veterans’ favorite pastime, gambling, can help the Subject be lost in the act of repetition itself, the loss of the Subject might be better facilitated when one is equipped with more means than underprivileged cases. Hence, the petty bourgeoisie awaits the moment of institutionalization, perhaps, when their hitherto financially restricted desires for automatic and eternal expenditure can be finally fulfilled at reasonable costs through officially fascist programs (e.g. the prewar Japanese institutionalization of colonial sex-slaves).

Let us introduce a psychoanalytic perspective once again, from which I would like to reconsider the prominence of the commoditized objects of consumption in the veterans’ conversations. In addition to women, the conversations feature fruits, seafood, the jungle diet and dieting with the pedometer, making me suspicious that these veterans might suffer from melancholia. According to Freud, melancholia is pertaining to the loss of an ideal or loved object, in which the

39 “Where would one find a more evident contrast than the one between work and gambling?” Walter Benjamin asks—here, he is talking about the “work of the unskilled” in an effort to see the key to the mechanical reproductive kind of labor. “The latter [the unskilled work in the factory], to be sure, lacks any touch of adventure, of the mirage that lures the gambler. But it certainly does not lack the futility, the emptiness, the inability to complete something which is inherent in the activity of a wage slave in a factory. Gambling even contains the workman’s gesture that is produced by the automatic operation, for there can be no game without the quick movement of the hand by which the stake is put down or a card is picked up. The jolt in the movement of a machine is like the so-called coup in a game of chance. The manipulation of the worker at the machine has no connection with the preceding operation for the very reason that it is its exact repetition. Since each operation at the machine is just as screened off from the preceding operation as a coup in a game of chance is from the one that preceded it, the drudgery of the laborer is, in its own way, a counterpart to the drudgery of the gambler. The work of both is equally devoid of substance.” See his “On Some Motifs in Baudelaire.” ed. and with an intro. by Hannah Arendt, trans. by Harry Zohn. Illuminations: Essays and Reflections (New York: Schocken Books, 1968(1939)), pp.155-200; p.177; italics original.
patient is characterized by his/her unconsciousness of the loss itself.\textsuperscript{40} Freud observes that one of the melancholic symptoms is extreme orality. The patient tends to enter a voluble series of exaggerated accusations of the self; or s/he might refuse food or drink in the feigned mourning of the loss. Freud says this is because the patient is still at the oral stage of his/her psycho-sexual development.\textsuperscript{41} From this standpoint, the patient’s self-accusation, or even suicide in extreme cases, is understandable, since the oral stage is the stage of narcissism. The narcissistic ego could merely incorporate (“cannibalize”) the object as part of the ego and not as other than the ego.\textsuperscript{42} Upon the object’s loss, the self-accusing subject is actually accusing the lost object incorporated inside the subject. Ultimately, melancholia as the amnesia of loss is explainable by this “life” of the object in the self; in the psychological reality of the self, the object has not been lost yet.

Earlier, I have introduced the concept of the uncanny, which is an emotional quality that is generally observable when the repressed returns to consciousness. Similarly, I have argued that the metonymic and metaphoric movements that the Yasukuni veterans and the country’s newspapers discursively make are at least partially explainable in terms of what is repressed by such movements—the past Japanese crimes against women. I hope the current discussion of melancholia gives more specificity to these repressive formations. Again, according to Freud’s argument, the melancholic does not avoid the lost object per se; s/he pathologically omits the memories of the transformations that this object went through—losses, damages, or defamations. The object in the patient’s mind remains to be the hateful or lovable ideal. It is remarkable that


\textsuperscript{41} In Freud’s teleological trajectory through which one is supposed to develop from a child to an adult, the oral stage comes after the very first stage of “organ pleasure,” which features the subject’s auto-eroticism. The narcissist incorporation, the devouring of the object, is then succeeded by the “sadistic-anal” mastery of the object. The full maturity of the subject is the complete social situation of genital love, according to the Freudian perspective. See his “Instincts and Their Vicissitudes,” in Philip Rieff ed., General Psychological Theory: Papers on Metapsychology (New York: Touchstone, 1997(1963)), pp.83-103; p.102.

\textsuperscript{42} Freud, “Mourning...,” Ibid.; p.171.
the un-lost ideal of femininity indeed describes a dimension of the Yasukuni veterans’ fantasy women. To begin with, the other female victims of the prewar Japanese violence were institutionally incorporated in the Japanese empire not as heterogeneous others with their own political interests and ethical rights but as convenient companions of the Japanese acts of invasion. “Comfort women” (ianfu), the Japanese called the enslaved ones, an amazing level of narcissism. In this calling, I sense that love and consideration were pretended—the fantasized traits of deferring femininity, perhaps supposedly in awe of the masculine prowess of the invasion. In my faint memories, the fantasy of the comfort women was one of the pornographic themes in Japan until pretty recently, perhaps up until a South Korean ex-slave, Haksoon Kim, belatedly made public testimony in 1990 for the first time among other similarly victimized women. Even before this testimony, the way in which the prewar Japanese males had established their masculinized Subjects had long been officially denied since Japan’s defeat in 1945. After these multiple waves of denial, the comforting images of other women disclosed in the Yasukuni Shrine today are strictly melancholic. According to this insight, the orality of the Yasukuni conversations work to make the loss of the feminized object palatable, by letting the veterans symbolically “swallow” the loss in the form of fruits, seafood, or drinks. Without the meaning of true mourning, though, this act of swallowing is actually de-symbolized; swallowing here is not functioning as a figure of accepting the facts of loss and of the subsequent transformation of the self. Therefore, the veterans are fascinated, creating the imaginary taste of the banana trunk’s core on the tongue, forgetting about tasting the bitterness of the loss. The veterans might briefly consider the feeling of the banana tree owner, insofar as the consideration does not become excessive. When it comes to other Asian women they encountered during the war, these women are apparently forever to live in
these veterans’ minds as the desirable objects; these women’s scars and deaths that should have ended the veterans’ narcissistic dreams do not seem to have ever been recognized by the veterans.

Note here that these veterans’ melancholia is attributable also to the larger society. Freud briefly mentions that successful mourning is a semiotic process through which the subject is to understand the life-transforming meaning of the loss to the subject (see Chapter 5).43 The psychoanalysts Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok elaborate on this linguistic and social nature of mourning, referring to another analyst, Sandor Ferenczi. According to Abraham and Torok’s reading of Ferenczi, the process of mourning, or introjection in Ferenczi’s terminology, cannot dispense with the subject’s transferential love of another object than the one that is lost, e.g. the sympathetic analyst, family members, and so forth. Through the encouraging interaction with the new object of love, the subject’s “early satisfactions of the mouth, as yet filled with the maternal object, are partially and gradually replaced by the novel satisfactions of a mouth now empty of that object but filled with words pertaining to the subject.”44 Here, Ferenczi via Abraham and Torok is talking about the original loss of the mother’s breasts and the acquisition of language as the symbolic substitute for the breasts. “So,” Abraham and Torok continues, “the wants of the original oral vacancy are remedied by being turned into verbal relationships with the speaking community at large. Introjecting a desire, a pain, a situation means channeling them through language into a communion of empty mouths.”45 One can say that it is the “communion of empty mouths” that has lacked in the post-1945 Japanese society. In a sense, the whole society has been melancholic, fantasizing that Japanese do not have to mourn and introject the war, fascism, and their losses. Or, people have unconsciously tried to forget about these losses in the manic mo-

45 Abraham and Torok, Ibid.; p.128.
mentums for economic activities. A certain, corporeal kind of symbiosis with the fascist symbols and ideas has thus continued to be unconsciously imagined. In such an environment, the veterans’ chance to be able to find in the society helpful inspirations, supports, or discussions regarding how to talk about the losses as losses is critically deprived. The leftist activists that I will consider in Chapter 5 are exceptional mourners. In a totally different sense from these activists’ case, the Yasukuni veterans are presumed to be uncanny to the rest of the society, perhaps to the degree that these petty bourgeois veterans have been historically spared from the manic aspirations for high-growth production. While the bourgeois could at least temporarily sublimate the Real of their melancholia (the denigrated ideals of fascism in the invasive war) into the economic accomplishments, the slow tempo of the petty bourgeois lives might allow the class members to develop another symptom out of the same melancholia—the repeated representations of and verbose elaboration on the lost ideals. The petty bourgeoisie, in other words, has had the time and “freedom” to dwell on the past. To the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeois representations are uncanny, since these representations are connected to the repressed source of the bourgeois mania, viz. the denigration of the ideals. It is relevant to consider a point of difference between Freud and Abraham and Torok here. On the one hand, Freud argues that melancholia occurs in the realm of unconsciousness, as in the Japanese bourgeois case. On the other hand, Abraham and Torok think that the pathology concerns itself with what they call the “preconscious-conscious system,” whereby various representations of the Real are supposed to be first set apart from the rest of the psyche and then included in preconsciousness/consciousness—like an alien ulcer, a secretive addendum. What I am suggesting here is that the theorists’ difference be seen as su-

46 Abraham and Torok, Ibid.; p.135. According to them, melancholia, especially when it has something to do with the ego’s ideal, should not be repressed in unconsciousness to be subjected to the dynamism between unconsciousness and consciousness, between repression and the return of the repressed. The deep disillusionment and, in many cases, unspeakable shame, that the subject received from the object should cause the related libido to
perimposing the class difference in the Japanese case, viz. the relative difference between the petty bourgeois visibility and bourgeois invisibility in light of their symptomatic representation of the war and fascism. In either case, the Japanese have suffered from ill mourning—even if the petty bourgeois veterans turned to the society for support, they would not be able to gain it from those who are themselves in need of support.

When the past Japanese violence is thus repressed or at least preserved without being worked through in both the bourgeois and petty bourgeois instances, the repressive or preservative language of melancholia gains quite the power of attraction and repulsion. According to Walter Benjamin, melancholy is related to Saturn in the Arabic astrology, indicating long journeys, as well as dialectic polarity. According to Benjamin’s reading of a relevant text, “Saturn which ‘as the highest planet and the one farthest from everyday life, the originator of all deep contemplation, calls the soul from externalities to the inner world, causes it to rise ever higher, finally endowing it with the utmost knowledge and with the gift of prophecy.’” Evocative, perhaps, if the passage is read in terms of the utmost knowledge of the historical facts that have yet been consciously admitted by the melancholic Japanese of the postwar. Exploring the motifs of distance and mystery some more, Benjamin describes melancholia also as “the concept of the pathological state, in which the most simple object appears to be a symbol of some enigmatic wisdom because it lacks any natural, creative relationship to us.” The object’s “natural, creative relationship” to the subject is thought to lack in melancholia, due to the unconscious act of repression in Freud’s case and the preconscious act of preservation in Abraham and Torok’s inter-

48 Benjamin, Ibid.; p.140.
pretation. Although he is not taking the purely psychoanalytic approach, Benjamin can be read psychoanalytically, as he continues that melancholia is the “state of mind in which feeling revives the empty world in the form of a mask, and derives an enigmatic satisfaction in contemplating it.” To borrow the theory of commodity fetishism once more, it is the perpetrator Japanese who unconsciously or preconsciously “mask[ed]” their violent past with oral metaphors and melancholic atmosphere. The enigmatic satisfaction with the mask’s surface enhances even more, the more the Japanese are generationally distanced from the chance to recognize and introject what actually happened in the past. Before the discussion of the generation, however, I would like to think about the class structure of the postwar melancholic formation in Japan some more.

**Historical Creation of the Petty Bourgeois Class**

The Japanese petty bourgeoisie, as well as farmers and lumpen proletariat, have been in a position to more easily develop postwar melancholia than any other populations in the country, to the degree that they formed the major constituency of prewar fascism. Consisted of retailers, carpenters, plumbers, monks, petty bureaucrats, gardeners and others, the petty bourgeois class tends to “[view] the production of commodities as the absolute summit of human freedom and individual independence,” according to Marx. No doubt this petty-bourgeois view about their own production is created by the kinds of productive means that the class members possess, viz. dexterity, talents, religiosity, and others that might appear to be inalienable resources of humanity. With these resources at hand, the petty bourgeoisie tends to enjoy autonomous business-bases and idiosyncratic rhythms of working. In the post-1920s world, this being of the petty bourgeoisie makes a point of difference. An Italian historian, Luigi Salvatorelli, for instance, said in 1923

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49 Benjamin, Ibid.; p.139; emphasis is mine.
that the petty bourgeoisie was “not a real social class, with its own functions and its own forces, but a conglomeration, lying outside the productive process essential to the capitalist civilization.”\textsuperscript{51} I surmise that the relative independence of each of the class members made in the historian’s mind the impression of the “conglomerate” class and the class’s reliance on humanity and originality made the impression of a difference. In the age of mechanical reproduction and monopoly economy, the petty bourgeois difference is of a temporal nature—a delay. Of course, I am not imagining an epoch prior to modern capitalism, to which the petty bourgeoisie should belong. Their delay is that within the regime of modern capitalism—what they produce (e.g. crafts, sermons, plumbing services) are commodities after all. In fact, the petty bourgeoisie tends to show remarkable mass-character. Perhaps due to its delay in its production means, this class-group might be more motivated to be “like others,” as compared to, say, the bourgeoisie, who would stop wearing the hitherto trend-setting clothing or accessories, as soon as the petty bourgeoisie starts copying them with lesser materials. Desires for equivalence, in addition to material delay, thus feature the petty bourgeois class. Marx suggests that these features could ideologically result in the Proudhon-type of “scientific,” i.e. unrealistic, socialism. Of many arguments that Proudhon makes, Marx points out that Proudhon wishes “that the inconveniences resulting from the impossibility of exchanging commodities directly, which are inherent in this form, should be removed.”\textsuperscript{52} The idea of direct exchange without money represents at once the nostalgia of a handicraft-bartering community in some past and the fantasy of an immediately exchangeable commodities without any medium, i.e. commodity fetishism that has been more advanced in the mode of mechanical reproduction than in other modes. Barbaric futurism and mechanical mythology, the petty bourgeois radicalism of Proudhon seems to share similar desires and materialities.

\textsuperscript{51} In Renzo de Felice, \textit{Interpretations of Fascism}, translated by Brenda Huff Everett (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1977); p.315.

\textsuperscript{52} See Marx, Ibid.; p.161.
ty with those that are exhibited by the petty bourgeois fascism in trans-war Japan. Perhaps this
is the reason that the post-1920s state and other authorities in Japan were initially so careful not to let the masses be taken by socialism on the one hand and fascism on the other hand. Socialism has never been popular among the Japanese masses except for the immediate postwar period. Their affinity rather with fascism seems to show the extent to which they have historically been placed in a desperate position, the position in which they are determined to establish equivalence even or only in death.

The material delay that makes the petty bourgeois envy, longing, and oddly futuristic is of course not particularly essential to the petty bourgeois members as persons. The delayed characteristics of naturalism, communitarianism, or spirituality, which these members as landscapers, priests, or ramen-shop owners likely possess are the historical products of the modern capitalist society at large. The historical task that is assigned to the petty bourgeois class is to produce the fantastic chronotopes of gardens, cathedrals, or pop and mom’s corner-stores and to insert them into the larger society that operates along the abstracted rhythm of the monopoly economy. It is a necessary task, since the totalitarianism of modernity has to bear desires for its deleted opposites. Although they are not outside but inside the modern regimes, the petty bourgeois existence eventually becomes fantastic in itself by professionally fulfilling modern desires. “Green thumb,” religiosity, morality, and other tools in trade, which are usually associated with the class, grow out of its fantasy-fulfilling occupational habits. With their special “talents” or “handiness” or “humanity,” the petty bourgeoisie adds the surplus value to the commoditized fantasies of modernity, to which they are professionally assigned.

A more historically specific way to explain the postwar Japanese petty bourgeois delays would be to refer to what Deborah Milly calls “lumpy equality” of the society, that is, “inequalities in earned income and benefits” among the country’s working population. According to her, the so-called “life-time employment,” generous salaries, good benefits, and other mythically favorable features for workers are observable only among big corporations. As of 1990, 50% of all firms in Japan have 1 to 29 employees, providing them with much worse salaries and working environments than those of big corporations. “This dual structure,” Milly argues, is “closely associated with conditions of underemployment and low productivity in the 1950s. Agriculture, small-scale production, a day labor absorbed the surplus labor force in rural areas until the demand for labor began to increase in the late 1950s.”

Put differently, the currently observable, lower stratum of the dual employment structure is a leftover from the 1950s, when the stratum functioned as the country’s “reserve army” of labor. This reserve army was created when the Japanese empire collapsed in 1945, discharging about 3 million Japanese soldiers and military personnel, in addition to 3 million civilians, who had resided outside the Japanese Archipelago. They accounted for approximately 10% of the then 70 million population of Japan.

Repatriated, these Japanese (hikiage-sha) found that the domestic infrastructures and workplaces had literally burnt down to ashes due to the U.S. airstrikes. In rural villages or subsistent realms in cities, the repatriated or otherwise unemployed Japanese and resident Koreans rented out their rooms, if

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57 About the repatriation of these Japanese, see Rūichi Narita, “Hikiage ni kansuru Joshō” in Shisō, Vol.11, No.955 (2003), 149-174; see especially p.149 for the statistics that I cite. Also see Tanaka et. al., Ibid.; pp.101-2.
their houses had not been bombed, or manufactured trinkets for black markets—soap, candies, spirit, shoes, and the ilk.  

In Milly’s suggestion, the more or less informal stratum for the reserve army that was thus created in the 1950s might be traced back ultimately to the 1920s. In the series of recessions that eventually led to the Great Depression, the devastated farmers and peasants of rural Japan increased its supply of labor force to fledgling capitalism in cities on one hand, and expanded its reserve of potential workers in their villages on the other. It had been the state intention since the late 19th century that the agrarian sector of the country should be neglected and sacrificed for growths of the heavy and chemical industries (the policy of shokusan kōgyō). More generally, this type of neglect and sacrifice are necessary for capital’s accumulation and concentration. According to Marx, the theoretical origin of the reserve army is in the rate with which capital’s variable component (labor) decreases over time, in contrast to capital’s constant component (e.g. machines), which relatively increases. The contradiction that the reserve army in general is facing is that “[t]he greater the social wealth, the functioning capital, the extent and energy of its growth, and therefore also the greater the absolute mass of the proletariat and the productivity of its labour, the greater is the industrial reserve army.” For the Japanese economy to develop at that moment in history, people had to be gradually unemployed and reduced to the kind of pauperism that Marx describes in the 19th century British case. During the Asia-Pacific War, the Japanese problem of village unemployment was temporarily solved, since the surplus laborers were mobilized as soldiers and colonizers. As soon as they were repatriated, though, these soldiers were absorbed back into the village repositories of labor. In Yoshio Asai’s statistics, 48% 

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58 Among various literary representations of the then (re-)emerging sectors of subsistent Japan, see a novelist, Shōhei Ōka’s essay, “Shinkei-san” in Ōka Shōhei Zenshū 3 (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1994), pp.337-350, for instance.


61 Marx, Ibid.; p.798.
of the working Japanese in 1950 was working in the agrarian sector, while 20% of the whole population was estimated to be merely “incompletely” employed.\(^{62}\) 30% of the whole households in the country in 1955 was below the poverty line, another study informs.\(^{63}\) This means that many of the underemployed stayed in their home villages, occasionally working as farm hands, day laborers, or itinerary workers, Asai surmises.\(^{64}\)

The picture that might arise from these studies would be the vast number of lumpen Japanese, who originated in the impoverished villages of the 1920s, engaged in the war as the vanguards, and ever after, constantly underemployed in and around the country’s agrarian and/or informal sectors. The class of the petty bourgeoisie has related with this population as a supply station of jobs and also as a social switchboard, in and out of which the lumpen could move from the informal section of the society to the social contacts as carpenters, gardeners, ramen-shop owners, so on and so forth. In Marx’s observation as well, “capital usually knows how to transfer these [people in the reserve army] from its own shoulders to those of the working class and the petty bourgeoisie.”\(^{65}\) No doubt the petty bourgeois class could serve as the reserve army’s temporary job-station, due to the class’s independent business bases and embodied means of production. In the “small batch production” (\textit{tashu shōryō seisān}) that has started in the 1980s, the diversified consumption and short spans of the market-trends have been supported by this type of “flexibility” of the petty bourgeois labor.\(^{66}\) One of the most typical commodities of such a mode of production, vinyl and other faux “leather” shoes, for example, are known to be produced by

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\(^{64}\) Asai, Ibid.; pp.200-1.

\(^{65}\) Marx, Ibid.; p.797.

\(^{66}\) About the small batch production in the country, see Marilyn Ivy, “Formations of Mass Culture in Postwar Japan,” in Andrew Gordon ed., \textit{Postwar Japan as History} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp.239-258.
family-sized manufacturers in Kamata, downtown Tokyo, or Nada, Kōbe, or other petty bourgeois towns. I am sure that as soon as a boom of certain styles of shoes is gone, some shoemakers reduce their production or go out of business, thus discharging their laborers into the country’s reserve army. A new boom of another type of shoes, then, will employ some laborers out of this reserve, thus maintaining the porousness of the class’s boundary. As the economy enters the current phase of recession starting in 1990, one of the cliché ideas of the unemployed salarymen is that these middle-aged, ex-corporate workers become ramen vendors on the street.

The nostalgic images of shokunin or craftsman circulate in the mass media of this period, effectively leading the population of “freeters,” i.e. those who are free of stable jobs, into another freedom of the petty bourgeois independent businesses. The delay from the everyday tempo that the reserve army is forced to sustain during their unemployment seem to give this population elective affinities with the petty bourgeois situations, either in the immediately postwar days or now. This genealogy of the interaction between the petty bourgeois class and the reserve army of labor is rhizomatous, hidden under the otherwise teleologically modernizing-looking history of the Japanese economy. In the rhizome, the reserve army has conserved and, when necessary, supplied its labor force for and to the economy via the petty bourgeois and proletarian classes. Harnessing the surplus and shortage of labor-demands through its institutionally imposed being

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67 Kobe manufacturers of those shoes were spotlighted as the victims of the 1995 Kobe Earthquake. For example, see Gavan McCormack, The Emptiness of Japanese Affluence, with a forward by Norma Field (Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1996); p.13.

68 Rhizome is the metaphor borrowed from Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, “Introduction: Rhizome,” in their A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia, translation and foreword by Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987); 3-25. The petty bourgeois rhizome in postwar Japan has been conventionally neglected by various reasons. Modernization theorists were perhaps blocked by the theory’s built-in inability to see delays and multiplicities—see for example, Ezra F. Vogel, Ibid. Sociologists similarly seem to have been determined not to see material contradictions and class conflicts in the society. Their focus on people’s consciousness, esp. the collective consciousness as mass-consumers, is almost symptomatic of the contradictions and conflicts that they try not to see. See Yasusuke Murakami, Shin Chūkan Taishō no Jidai (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Sha, 1984). More recently, a popular author, Atsushi Miura, covers the neoliberal petty bourgeoisization of the society by the mass-cultural aesthetic of such a term as the consumers’ “strata” or kaisō—of course versus class. See his best-selling Karyū Shakai: Aratana Kaisō Shūdan no Shutsugen (Tokyo: Kōbun Sha, 2005).
of subsistence, the invisible reserve of extra labor-force has been of the structural importance to
enrich the economy over the vicissitudes of the Great Depression, the Asia-Pacific War, or the
current, neoliberal recession.

One of the most recently revealed tips of the reserve army-petty bourgeois rhizome
would be those students, who gather in the Japan Youth Memorial Association at the Yasukuni
Shrine. Facing the bearish labor-market, these petty bourgeois sons and daughters seem to suffer,
perhaps partly since their parents’ independent businesses are not meant to bear many corporate
connections. The students’ leader, Takuya Kanno’s father, for instance, is a local bureaucrat;
“Shihori Naitō” and “Tōru Mita” are respectively a daughter and son of a suburban Hachioji City
grocery-store in Tokyo and a dry cleaner in an affluent ward of Tokyo, Setagaya. According to
their explanation, one of the reasons that they have been active in the JYMA is their belief that
the nationalist activities that they conduct there are favorably perceived by corporate recruiters.
“Keita Sakamaki,” for instance, says that he has secured his “life-time employment” at Tokyo
Electric Power Company by impressing the recruiter with his experiences of remains-recovery
missions. Besides the nationalist tenets, I suspect the strict gender and seniority orders, for which
the students are trained in the JYMA and Yasukuni Shrine, would be welcome by corporations.69
Still, Sakamaki would be one of the few successful students among others. I know some of them
have ended up in the rank and file level of the Self Defense Forces. Others have become an izakaya
tavern manager, a pachinko pin-ball parlor employee, a worker in a florist chain, or freeters.
Perhaps it is due to their anxieties and ambitions that I am more amicably treated by the students
than among other groups of Yasukuni participants, although with a cautious distance (no ex-

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69 These orders, which are of course observed in the larger society, are strictly ruling rightist organizations.
The JYMA almost caricaturizes these rules in its strictness, as its mainly male, core members have traditionally been
recruited from the violent bands of notoriously nationalist colleges, Takushoku (meaning “implantation and
development,” that is, colonialism) and Kokushikan (the “hall of national martial arts”).
change of numbers, etc.). It seems that my studying in the U.S. provides them with a certain impression in the meritocratic context in which the English language is instrumentalized as one of the calibers with which to measure one’s mnemonic and other abilities, and thus one’s potentiality to find a job.

At the same time, the same petty bourgeois situation, which might work to these students’ detriment, seems to allow them to don a surrealistic aloofness. Tall, wan, and thin, Mita, the dry cleaner’s son, for instance, is almost aristocratic in his bored disdain of the world and serene gentleness—the character that would be inexplicable if he were not supposed to inherit his father’s independent business. “Akira Ōishi,” to take another example, so far seems to be content with his two-year contract with the Health and Welfare Ministry. After he completes his contract as the “second-tiered” (ni kyū), that is, petty, officer exclusively in charge of the remains-recovery project, he says he will return to Niigata Prefecture to inherit his parents’ part-time agriculture.70

The fantastic character of the petty bourgeoisie, which might be reflected by Mita’s false serenity or Ōishi’s temporary contentment, would not be shared by the farmers. Although they produce in the similarly fantastic realm of nature and soil, the farmers’ class, according to Max Weber,

is so strongly tied to nature, so dependent on organic processes and natural events, and economically so little oriented to rational systematization that in general the peasantry will become a carrier of religion [and other modern ideologies] only when it is threatened by enslavement or proletarianization, either by domestic forces (financial or seigneurial) or by some external political power.71

70 It seems that the position that Ōishi currently occupies in the ministry is reserved for the JYMA graduates. The state-project of remains-recovery is under the ministry’s jurisdiction, which it keeps by providing one “first-tiered (ikkyū)” officer and the former JYMA staff per mission.
Weber argues that this is because the peasants operate on their own “primitive rationalism” or the “original, practical and calculating rationalism.” 72 Mimetic practices are one example; magic or “coercion of the god” is another. 73 “It [mimetic or magical behavior] follows rules of experience, though it is not necessarily action in accordance with a means-end schema,” he says. 74 Counter-intuitively then, the farmers and peasants are made to produce according to their kinds of pragmatism rather than socially held fantasies of the agrarian, according to Weber.

This does not mean that the farmers are outside the reach of fascist desires. According to Masao Maruyama, the prewar Japanese farmers and peasants were ideologically distinct for their “tint of ‘agrarian anachronism’” (nōhon mu-seifu shugi). 75 As compared to the emperor-capped, family-state ideology of the official corporatism, the farmers’ anarchism, which is represented by Seikyō Gondō or Kōzabrō Tachibana, idealized a local agrarian unit, such as shashoku. According to the publisher Kadokawa’s “Japanese Dictionary,” sha in shashoku is the god of a given locality and shoku is the god of cereals. I suppose it is related to the Shintoist veneration of rice-production that the dictionary also says shashoku could also mean the state—the state in Shinto is supposed to protect and promote the production of rice. Gondō explores these implications of shashoku and says, “shashoku means the content and substance of the composition in which each individual first feels the need to cohabit with others and then makes a village community [with them] and then a county, and then a city, and then a country.” 76 In Maruyama’s interpretation, the “content and substance” of this array of differently-sized community units is agriculture. 77 As each community should be a self-sustaining, agrarian base, the larger units, such as county and

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77 Maruyama, Ibid.; p.46.
country, were imagined to be assembled “from below,” i.e. combining their smaller units. Since the purpose of the larger units were promotion and protection of the smaller units’ agrarian projects, the combinatorial movement within a shashoku country was supposed to go against the centralizing force of the state, Maruyama argues. The perverted sense of the farmer’s anarchism lets Gondō remark that “if the whole world is subsumed under the Japanese control, then the concept of the Japanese state would become unnecessary. Yet, one cannot remove the idea of shashoku,” that is, agriculture and agrarian village. The whole world would then become an assemblage of the mechanically replicated shashoku community without the state, if one follows this remark.

The communitarian model of fascism is contrasted to petty bourgeois fascism that I have portrayed, using the concept of expenditure; in the previous chapter, I have also called petty bourgeois fascism the “death communal” beliefs and practices. Unlike the pragmatic organicism of the farmers’ anarchism, the death community of the petty bourgeoisie starts from the industrial mechanicity of the reified “masses.” The masses are totally displaced from the land, and due to their displacement, each individual one of them is able to connect directly to others as the same, displaced commodities. The organicist fantasies of the emperor and other autonomous Subjects

78 Maruyama, Ibid.; p.46.
79 Maruyama, Ibid.; 46. Seiyata Yumino, a student of Kōzaburō Tachibana’s private school (juku), Aikyō (Love of the Home Village), also spells out farmers’ fascism as follows. According to him, first, each individual should “strive to be a better, great, and independent human being. Individuals [then] should forgive and cooperate with each other. [But] in order for this goal [mutual forgiveness and cooperation], one should first live that kind of life [forgiving and cooperative life] himself [as an individual]. Then [after mutual forgiveness and cooperation], individuals should believe that, if people in the whole world have similar minds to theirs and lead their kind of life, peace for the whole humanity will be brought about. This is the reason that we do not acknowledge class struggle. We should make sure that we walk in the path that leads to peace among the whole humanity through the process in which everybody self-disciplines and individuals become great. We hope the state politics and social institutions to be better, yet they are not perfect after all. If individuals that base them are bad, then any kind of politics or institutions won’t be good really. If you hope the better politics, better institutions, welfare of the nation, and welfare of the whole humanity, then, as the first step, struggle to be a good citizen...” In Tetsunari Matsuzawa, Tachibana Kōzaburō: Nihon Fascism Genshi Kaiki Ron Ha (Tokyo: Sanichi Shōbō, 1972); p.100. The fascist part of the quote is perhaps Yumino’s rivalry with the idea of class struggle and his ironic conceptualization of the “whole humanity” to be constructed with “similar minds” of people—the picture here (possibly unintentionally) approximates that of a mechanical reproductive utopia.
80 Maruyama, Ibid.; p.46.
are belated adds-on that the petty bourgeoisie makes to this desolate assemblage of inorganic commodities; thus a version of postwar fascism could comfortably be the emperor’s infant ideology without the emperor, as I have so termed in the last chapter. The petty bourgeoisie is prepared for fascist anachronism, as the class is socio-culturally made to return to, versus stay in, the concept of the organic.

As for the bourgeoisie, first, they enter history as the consumers of the “delayed” ideologies that the petty bourgeoisie produces—the nation, masculinity, or nature, through such products as ramen, bodyguard-services, gardens, etc. The surplus-value that the bourgeoisie could and does add in this process is more desires, more elaborate fantasies, until or beyond the point where the bourgeois acquisitiveness becomes excessive and violent. Different from the pragmatic farmers and the financially restricted proletariat, the bourgeoisie as the consumers have certain understanding of and resources for the fantasies that the petty bourgeoisie creates.

Similarly, as producers, the bourgeoisie unconsciously assume the ideologies of the nation, gender, nature, and others that the petty bourgeoisie provides. Computer programs, newspaper articles, or medical services, which the bourgeoisie produces, would be unimaginable outside these ideological frameworks that they have already consumed. For sure, in the understanding of the young Marx, which is inherited by vulgar Marxists, the bourgeoisie and elites single-handedly produce ideologies as their labor-divided occupation, while the petty bourgeoisie, the proletariat, the farmers and others specialize in internalizing the bourgeois ideologies. However, when one concurs with the mature Marx that ideologies are primarily required in production as the unconsciousness of commodity fetishism and are then articulated in discussion as the conscious afterthoughts or scientific interpretations, the simplistic view of labor division between

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the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie, as between intellectual and manual laborers, looks untenable. Rather, these classes’ relation seems to develop within the semiotic chain that has no beginning or ending. In the chain, the bourgeoisie produces the second-level discourses, based on those which the petty bourgeois ideologues have created and relayed to the bourgeoisie. The more one climbs up the class ladder toward the grand bourgeoisie, the more the second level ideology or what Roland Barthes calls “myth” tends to work to corporatistically or otherwise organize, versus sympathetically pursue, the fascist discourses that the petty bourgeoisie creates. The Yasukuni “commander” and sensei would be good examples of the way in which the grand bourgeoisie typically participates in fascist production. Probably it is the nature of its meta-level participation, which makes the bourgeoisie and grand bourgeoisie less observable in the process of producing the actual fascist spaces like Yasukuni.

The class of the petty bourgeoisie, meanwhile, is not unitary. In the conglomerate class, as Luigi Salvatorelli calls, law-enforcement officers or petty bureaucrats, for instance, would not share the same experiences with independent business owners. Depending on where one is located in the scale from stable employment to subsistence, the petty bourgeois subject might or might not be characterized by autonomy, inventiveness, nature, and others. Ideologically, some members of the class, most notably gardeners, might be more sympathetic with the farmers’ type of anarchism instead of the death communal ideology, as compared to other petty bourgeois

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83 According to Charles Sanders Peirce, sign is “Anything which determines something else (its interpretant) to refer to an object to which itself refers (its object) in the same way, the interpretant becoming in turn a sign, and so on ad infinitum.” See Peirce on Signs: Writing on semiotic by Charles Sanders Peirce, ed. By James Hoopes (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991); p.239; parentheses and emphases original.
84 “[M]yth is a peculiar system,” Barthes argues, “in that it is constructed from a semiological chain which existed before it: it is a second-order semiological system. That which is a sign (namely the associative total of a concept and an image) in the first system, becomes a mere signifier in the second.” The “sign in the first system” is otherwise called the “language-object, because it is the language which myth gets hold of in order to build its own system.” Myth, in other words, is metalanguage. See his “Myth Today” in Mythologies, selected and trans. from the French by Annette Lavers (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972), pp.109-159; the quotes are from pp.114-5; italics and parentheses original.
members. As I have analyzed in Chapter 1, a self-employed industrialist, Kakunosuke Akiyama, unintentionally advocates for the death communal ideology. I am sure that there should be numbers of other axes that materially and ideologically crisscross the class. These axes incise the idea of the class into the fragments of economic interests and ideological positions. These fragments are so heterogeneous that no unitary Subject can represent the class as a whole. Salvatorelli’s idea of aggregation is probably the closest that one can get to the conceptual contour of the formation of the class. I have hitherto pushed this idea further and drawn this contour as a collection of porous, constantly shifting, yet materially specific borderlines with other class groups.\(^{85}\) According to Gayatri Spivak, this type of relativist approach should be taken to other classes as well. She calls this approach the “differential isolation of classes.”\(^{86}\) As she quotes, Marx says “in so far as millions of families live under economic conditions of existence that cut off their mode of life, their interest, and their formation from those of the other classes and place them in inimical confrontation [feindlich gegenüberstellen], they form a class.”\(^{87}\) The structuralist sense of class is unmistakable in this quotation, in which a class is defined in its difference from other classes. In this understanding, class interest is historically (impersonally) determined so that “the identity of the interests [of class members]...fails to produce a feeling of community, national links, or a political organization.”\(^{88}\) This is a sort of discrepancy that requires the representation of the class in both tropological and political senses (see also Chapter 3). With this discrepancy in mind, I

\(^{85}\) E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1964), has similarly adopted this relational approach. According to him, “class happens when some men, as a result of common experiences (inherited or shared), feel and articulate the identity of their interests as between themselves, and as against other men whose interests are different from (and usually opposed to) theirs” (p.9). He is not talking about the “subjectivism” of class, viz. a class group as the Subject of history and certain class consciousness as readily available to the class members, since he also states that “[t]he class experience is largely determined by the productive relations into which men are born—or enter involuntarily” (p.9).


\(^{88}\) Marx, Ibid. in Spivak, Ibid.,p.31; emphasis original.
have examined different Yasukuni participants’ preconscious narratives of fascism, while presentation the petty bourgeoisie as a material category that is “freer” than the farmers, but not as free as the proletariat, with freedom here meaning the Marxian sense of abstraction into and conformity to the form of the commodity (or the labor force as the commodity—see Chapter 1).

What prevents the petty bourgeois freedom from becoming as fully free as that which the proletariat “enjoys” would be their institutionally assigned naturalism (in the case of landscapers, artisans, small landowners, etc.), creativity (craftsmen, inventors, small industrialists, teachers, and others), and subsistence (shop owners, monks, food vend- ers, restauranteurs, etc.). Hence, even Akiyama, a less “naturally” conditioned member of the class, is interpellated by the nostalgia of the Subject.

In multiple ways and levels, the aggregate group of the petty bourgeoisie is delayed, that is, forced to return to the less abstract levels of production. Within the mechanical reproductive regime, the class is made to live the myth of autonomy only insofar as the economy requires the class to let itself be traversed by the ebb and flow of surplus labor. As a temporary station to accept this constantly moving force of labor, the petty bourgeois class is characterized by another temporal mode of deferral. To each individual member of the class, any kind of determination should be deferred all the time, due to his/her incessant travel back and forth between employment and unemployment, in and out of the petty bourgeois situation. The petty bourgeois dependence on supposedly perpetual ideas (e.g. the nation, Subject, nature, etc.) has been generated from these delays and deferrals. These delays and deferrals are generated by specific history and the economy of modern Japan, and not by the fantasized culture and essence of eternal “Japan,” as some theorists effectively argue—I will examine how they do so and how their arguments unintentionally contribute to the Yasukuni politics of melancholia.
The Petty Bourgeoisie in Texts: The Emperor’s Folk, the Cruel Ethno

The commoditized delays and delayed commodities that the petty bourgeoisie produce can easily lead to a misconception of their “folkishness” (minzokusei). While I have attributed the petty bourgeois delay to the class-specific factor of their intermediate level of abstraction as well as the historical creation of and requirement for the reserve army of labor in the trans-war Japanese economy, other theorists tend to see the petty bourgeois actors of fascism as delayed in nationally or “culturally” specific ways.

The practical founder of the postwar studies of fascism in Japan, the political scientist Masao Maruyama argues that the main actors of Japanese fascism were petty bourgeois. He categorizes them into what he calls the “middle class I,” which peculiarly includes the farmer; his “middle class II” is consisted mainly of the bourgeoisie. During the war, according to him, the members of the middle class I were all “mini-emperors” (shō tennō) in their respective “mini-cosmos” (shō uchū), that is, in the workplace, neighborhood, farms, and other socio-cultural orbit in which each of them assumed a leading position. The Japanese emperor (tennō) to Maruyama is a “premodern” remnant, whose cultural power has hindered Japan’s modernization. It seems that the petty bourgeoisie and farmers as mini-emperors is an idea that sees a replication of the cultural power of the emperor in each locality. Japan here becomes the space that is integrated by the emperor, or rather by the “Japanese culture” that is supposed to be embodied by the emperor. Each member of the farming and petty bourgeoisie groups is the microcosmic carrier of this

90 Maruyama, “Nihon no Shisō,” a chapter from his book under the same title (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1961); 45.
91 The monadic view of the country might have been initiated by a Meiji oligarch, Aritomo Yamagata, who in 1888-1890 constructed a system of local self-governance so that each local unit would become a micro kokutai or a miniaturized version of the moralized idea of the nation-state. See Carol Gluck, Japan’s Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985); 191-7. Yamagata’s invention was inherited by
delayed, “feudalistic” culture of Japan or the emperor. Supposedly, the petty bourgeois culturalism is despite and against the bourgeois efforts for modernization; Maruyama remarks that the Japanese bourgeoisie “speedily” became modernized, since the petty bourgeoisie and farmers deposited the backward culture of Japan for them.

Within each mini-cosmos, the farming and petty bourgeois “emperor” is supposed to have used the “moral” and “emotional” means to dominate his “subordinates,” that is, laborers, students, congregations, tenants, peasants, and so forth. The premodern politics of immediacy and embodiment (c.f. Maruyama’s definition of modernization is formalization) was coupled with the petty bourgeois type of aesthetic representation, Maruyama suggests, which was literalization. In response to the state propaganda that Japan should win the war, even if the Japanese had been left only with bamboo spears, with which to poke the U.S. bombers, for instance, the mini emperors urged their subordinates to actually sharpen bamboo sticks, Maruyama says.

The cultural tie between the farmer/petty bourgeoisie and the emperor determined even the nature of the prewar state, according to him. The reason that he calls the prewar regime “ultra statism” (chō kokka shugi) is its extraordinary dependence on this tie. The state’s “fanatic” monopoly on “truth” (shin), “morality” (zen), and “beauty” (bi) was possible only since the farmers and the petty bourgeoisie supported the emperor as their cultural, as well as political, sover-

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92 Maruyama, “Nihon Fascism no...,” Ibid.; 82.
93 Maruyama’s metaphor is “as if to proceed into uninhabited plains.” In his “Nihon no...,” Ibid.; 45.
95 Maruyama, “Nihon Fascism no...,” Ibid.; 69.
eign.\textsuperscript{97} Outside the network of the “infinite interactions” (mugen no oufuku) between the culturalized emperor and petty bourgeoisie/farmers, the bourgeoisie, the only “awakened” party in modern rational ways, was the victim.\textsuperscript{98} The victimization of the bourgeoisie is the ongoing threat even today, since the culture shared by the emperor, the farmers, and the petty bourgeoisie represents the “old layer” (kosō) of the Japanese ethnicity.\textsuperscript{99} Impregnated with the violence of “non-objective,” “direct and sensuous” relations, the petty bourgeoisie and farmers to Maruyama are implicitly the ethno and folk, which are supposed to still keep a moral cultural space in the otherwise modernized society of postwar Japan.\textsuperscript{100}

The implicit idea of the folk in Maruyama seems to be an uncritical and probably unintentional continuation of the earlier, nativist folklorist, Kunio Yanagita’s concept of jōmin. The jōmin, which literally means either the folk that is constantly out there or the folk that is there in ordinary lives, was “discovered” by Yanagita in the 1920-30s, aesthetically covering the then emerging masses in cities. Even though he did not particularly theorize it to be paired with the ethnicized emperor, Yanagita’s mostly rural jōmin was timely in the historical context in which

\textsuperscript{97} Maruyama, “Chō Kokka Shugi no...,” Ibid.; 17.
\textsuperscript{98} Maruyama, “Nihon no...” Ibid.; 47.
\textsuperscript{100} Maruyama, “Nikutai Bungaku kara Nikutai Seiji made” in Gendai..., Ibid., 375-94. In this article, he explains the pre- or non-formalized (“direct”) relations among the petty bourgeoisie, using such terms as “fiction” and “fetishism.” See J. Victor Koschmann’s commentary in his Revolution and Subjectivity in Postwar Japan (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996); 170-93. Maruyama’s folk is implicit, since he does not actually use this term. In an earlier article of “Nihon Fascism no...,” whose analysis of the fascist constituency keeps a social-scientific position perhaps due to its rivalry with Marxist scientificity, the mini-emperors and their subordinates are combined to be called alternately “people” (minshū) and “masses” (taishū). Later, in “Nihon no...,” as he starts theorizing these people/masses in terms of the “communal human relations that can be called the ‘natural state’ of the Japanese society” (p.51, note***), Maruyama’s early people/masses practically take on the meaning of the folk (minzoku) with their supposed “‘substance’ of the agrarian village” (p.49). The agrarian substance is said to be observable, for example, in the “loud recitation of ‘Fuji no shirayuki-ya noooee e’ [the white snow of Mt. Fuji is—taken from the old folk song genre min ’yō?] in Ginza [downtown Tokyo] brothels and bars or in village meetings or wherever” throughout Japan (p.51, note***)—a retrospective articulation of the earlier implication that the people/masses are the folk and that the modern, urban development has never changed the village community-based essence of their folk character.
fascists intended to mobilize the masses not as such, but as the nationally and culturally aestheti-
cized being.\textsuperscript{101}

While supplying countless insights and inspirations, which are fresh and interesting even
today, the ahistoricity of Maruyama makes certain part of his theory close to the status of fantasy.
As Sebastian Conrad points out, the driving force behind Maruyama’s fantasy seems to be his
nationalist desires for cultural continuity of Japan over the war.\textsuperscript{102} What is more, there seems to
be an apologetic intention in his theoretical exoneration of the Japanese bourgeoisie from its ac-
countability for the war and fascism. As he remembers his own personal experience as a bour-
geois foot-soldier dispatched to the Korean Peninsula, he was merely beaten up by his Japanese
superiors of petty bourgeois and farming origins.\textsuperscript{103} By implication, it was according to the supe-
rior’s orders that he and other bourgeois soldiers had to join the Japanese efforts to keep colo-
nizing the Koreans. As the same victim of the culturally caused cruelty of the Japanese petty
bourgeoisie and farmers, Koreans and the Japanese bourgeoisie can be united, he suggests. To
him, his kind of bourgeois nationalism did not facilitate Japan’s fascism; the bourgeois produ-
cion and consumption of the culturalized emperor and of the folkized petty bourgeoisie/farmers
would have no material effects.\textsuperscript{104}

\textsuperscript{101} The literature on the jōmin is vast—See Marilyn Ivy, “Ghastly Insufficiencies: Tōno Monogatari and the
Origins of Nativist Ethnology” in her Discourses of the Vanishing: Modernity, Phantasm, Japan (Chicago: The
University of Chicago Press, 1995), pp.66-97; Harry Harootunian, Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and
Community in Interwar Japan (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000); esp. the chapter “The

\textsuperscript{102} Conrad, The Quest for the Lost Nation: Writing History in Germany and Japan in the American Century,
trans. by Alan Nothnagle (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010(1999)). “As a result” of Maruyama's
nationalism, Conrad argues, “it was not the criminal character of the fascist regime (which was merely presumed)
that took center stage in his study, but rather the alleged backlog of modernity in Japanese society that had led to a
state of affairs in which even Japanese fascism seemed premodern and irrational, a cheap imitation of the real thing:
Japanese fascism as a derivative discourse and practice” of nationalism (p.90; parentheses original).

\textsuperscript{103} According to Eiji Oguma, Maruyama “hardly wrote about his military experiences. Barely, he once said
that [his position in] military had been that of a ‘handmaid,’ trying to read the superior’s expressions. Also, it is
said that he was beaten with boots by another soldier.” See Oguma’s ‘Minshu’ to ‘Aikoku’: Sengo Nihon no
Nationalism to Kökyō-sei (Tokyo: Shin’yō Sha, 2002); p.55.

\textsuperscript{104} About prewar commoditization of the emperor, see Chapter 1.
What might enable these psycho-fantastic elements (apologism and nationalism) to be sublimated into the theory of the folk and the cultural emperor is likely the institutionally caused delay of the petty bourgeoisie and the pragmatism of the farmers. Especially the petty bourgeoisie is important here, since without this class-group’s material delay and delayed appearance, the postwar rupture of the Japanese society was such that one would have had exceeding difficulty conceiving any idea of the past or cultural continuation. In the postwar, the petty bourgeois delay was newly created by its refreshed tie with the reserve army of labor, the result of the collapsed empire and the subsequent saturation of the labor market with the repatriated Japanese. Yet, the petty bourgeois struggles with and away from the lumpen population, their limited access to globalized technologies and connections, and their resultant dependence on the local, informal sectors of the economy seem to have inspired Maruyama and other leftists to construct a fantasy of the feudalistic folk with old Japan’s cruel essence. Maruyama thus theoretically takes advantage of the material delay and difference of the petty bourgeois class, while the class is raised to the status of cultural authenticity through the theorist’s desires and anxieties. To the extent that he has been theoretically dominant in the postwar studies of Japanese fascism and also to the extent that the fantasy of the folk is still powerful in the society for the similar psychological and nationalist reasons to Maruyama’s case, Maruyama’s interpretation of the petty bourgeoisie has been widely replicated by postwar scholars.

Post-Maruyaman scholars of leftist intentions tend to discuss the Yasukuni Shrine as the fantastic arena in which the folk are supposed to meet the state or the emperor. These scholars, such as Bunzō Hashikawa, Shinobu Ōe, or Tetsuya Takahashi, seem to suppose that agrarian or petty bourgeois families of the fallen soldiers, especially rural ones, are the perfect representa-
tives of the folk. Variously, these scholars would call them “moms” or “grandmas.”\textsuperscript{105} If we follow the scholars’ portrayals, these families typically speak dialects. With them, the families would express their tearful gratitude for “tenshi-sama,” a supposedly folk way to mention the mythical relation between the emperor and the sun goddess, \textit{amaterasu}.\textsuperscript{106} Even though their sons and grandsons were “short” (\textit{taran}) of perfection, they have become the Shinto existence of spirits/gods after their deaths under the name of the divine emperor; their gratitude is supposed to point to the folk religious belief in Shinto.\textsuperscript{107} The oft-adopted (and perhaps one of the only) evidence of what the leftist journalist Nobumasa Tanaka calls “people’s Yasukuni” (\textit{minshū no Yasukuni}) is an article taken from a prewar companion magazine of fascism, \textit{Shufū no Tomo} (Housewife’s Friend).\textsuperscript{108} Perhaps reflecting wartime censorship, the female families, whose conversations at Yasukuni are supposed to have been immediately logged in the article, might seem to have “always lived humbly, without complaining about any kind of hardship of the world,” as Hashikawa surmises.\textsuperscript{109} This appearance of theirs, according to him, is the sign of folk callousness, the callousness that is “replete with the monstrosity of ancient primitivism.”\textsuperscript{110} The shrine in his eyes is the place where the mother-folk’s monstrosity and primitivism are appropriated by the fascist state. As long as the state is supposed to be “religious,” due to the existence of the emperor as a Shinto god, the appropriation should be smooth. For, outside the textual world and

\textsuperscript{105} See, for instance, Ōe, Ibid.; the quote is from p.4.
\textsuperscript{106} The quote is from Hashikawa, “Yasukuni Shisō no Seiritsu to Henyō,” \textit{Chūō Kōron}, Vol.1051 (October 1974), 227-244, Tanaka Nobumasa, Ibid.; pp.48-52, and Takahashi Tetsuya, \textit{Yasukuni Mondai} (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 2005); pp.21-6, who all share the same source, as will be discussed.
\textsuperscript{107} Hashikawa, Ibid., Tanaka Ibid., and Takahashi, Ibid.
\textsuperscript{108} Tanaka, Ibid.; pp.48-52. Yasukuni in his and others’ theories of the folk could be coded with the phonetic \textit{katakana} writing system, perhaps in order to refer to the supposed orality of the folk, which these theories seem to assume. The Housewife’s Friend article that Hashikawa originally quotes and then circulates among these scholars is entitled “Haha Hitori Ko Hitori no Aiji wo Okuni ni Sasageta Homare no Haha no Kanrui Zadan Kai” and published in June, 1939.
\textsuperscript{109} Hashikawa, Ibid.; p.229.
\textsuperscript{110} Hashikawa, Ibid.; p.228.
with their “folk emotions and thoughts,” these mothers are assumed to have been always Shintoist. ¹¹¹

Perhaps these post-Maruyaman scholars’ common characteristic is their blindness to the commodity character of fascism. Fascism at the shrine will be better understood when approached from the angle that focuses on how the soldiers have been formalized as the mutually identical, commoditized “spirit” for the nation, than when seen from the position that conceptualizes how the soldiers and their families have been carrying the supposedly inalienable spirit of the folk-nation, which is assumed to be callously cruel and innocently loyal to the emperor. By the same token, I argue that the bereaved families, veterans, and other visitors of the shrine are all the masses and not the folk. As the mechanically reified masses and not as the fantastically substantiated folk, these visitors are fascinated with the soldiers’ sublimation into something larger- and better-looking than themselves, viz. the abstract form of the commodity that every one of the 100 million Japanese could potentially purchase and consume.¹¹² The families and others gather here also since they would like to see their own mass-figure to be organized on the TV, newspaper, and other mass-media (as Chapter 4 will demonstrate, the shrine on 8/15 has been the stage for mass-rallies, particularly since the 1990s). On ordinary Sundays, as I have described, it has specifically been the petty bourgeois members of the masses that have been active in the shrine. From my perspective, this is not because they are more folksy than other segments of the Japanese, but because their mass character has been historically made to retroactively adopt the mode of production and ideology of subsistence, nature, and other delays of modernity.

¹¹¹ Hashikawa, Ibid.; p.227. Similarly, Takahashi (Ibid.) argues that the article represents “the folk at the bottom [of the society], who might not have had a chance to come out of their locality through their lifetime, had it not been the war [and the invitation from Yasukuni to attend its meeting as bereaved mothers]” (p.25).

¹¹² Therefore, it is possible that kamikaze suicidal pilots’ movies have always been so cheaply and facilely made—the whole process of film-production becomes automatic, when it is reproducing already mass-reproduced materials (i.e. the Yasukuni spirits). One of its recent representatives would be Ore wa Kimi no tame ni koso Shini ni Iku, written and produced by Shintarō Ishihara and directed by Taku Shijō (Tokyo: Tōei, 2007).
The theory of the Yasukuni of the folk bears material effects. Recently, the shrine has carried out a campaign to folkize itself, a campaign to which the Maruyaman and other leftist scholars have ironically contributed. In the campaign, various ethnological events have been forged and appropriated. In *mitama matsuri* (spirit festival), for instance, which the shrine spells in the Japanese writing of *hiragana* (versus the adopted Chinese writing system of *kanji*), traditional-looking lanterns replace electric lights. Various venders adorn the Approach to the Hall of Prayer, selling their nostalgic baubles, such as cotton candies or balloons. Young and old visitors adopt the shrine’s nostalgia of the folk, wrapping their bodies with *yukata* or cotton *kimono*, “traditional” clothing for the summer. According to the shrine’s webpage, “‘mitama matsuri’ started in the year 22 of the Showa reign [1967 A.D.], following the ancient Japanese custom of *obon.*”¹¹³ In one of the prefectural branch-shrines of Yasukuni (*gokoku jinja*) in Aomori, the branch-shrine and the local association of families have been promoting the same festival of *mitama matsuri* to “normalize the shrine as an ordinary Shinto shrine” and to “reach ordinary Aomori residents.”¹¹⁴ The Hiroshima branch-shrine that I visited on January 15ᵗʰ, 2008, was crowded, as women in *kimono* and men in *haori-hakama* tried to go through a Shinto rite of initiation, *seijin shiki* for 20-year-olds, there. Like Yasukuni, these branch-shrines have existed since 1901 for the fascist purpose of abstracting (“spiritualizing”) fallen Japanese soldiers; historically, these shrines have nothing to do with Shinto, customs, or ordinary lives.¹¹⁵ I reiterate that the folkization of these shrines is a recent attempt, which probably corresponds to the aforementioned, strategic change of the LDP and the Association to Respond to the War Heroes’ Spirits. With the imported orientalism that defines Shinto in terms of related customs and not beliefs (see Chapter 3), these political groups as well as the shrines seem to want to forge the alibi of the

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¹¹³ www.yasukuni.or.jp/schedule/mitama.html
¹¹⁵ On these branch-shrines or *gokoku jinja*, see Ōe, Ibid.; pp.160-4.
shrines’ folkishness; this orientalism translates the thusly forged folk customs into some “Japan-specific” religiosity. According to the LDP and Association’s argument, the shrines should be officialized as the religious war-memorials of Japan. They say the Constitution should be revised, if this position is problematic due to the Constitutional principle of church/state; the shrines should not be modified according to the Constitution.

Although many Yasukuni critics have practically had their leftist theories penetrated by nationalism, as they suppose the Yasukuni of the folk, the shrine, of course, refuses to ideologically build on these scholars. The aforementioned “father of Japan’s folklore studies,” Kunio Yanagita, is one of the shrine’s officially adopted ideologues, even though his Yasukuni theories supply the leftists as well. According to his long essay, “A Tale of Ancestors” (Senzo no Hanashi), Yanagita says, for instance, that the Japanese “people” (minzoku) have always lived with the dead. He argues that the dead are culturally regarded as remaining in the nearby mountains, river banks, or oceans as generic “ancestors” (senzo). According to him, Japanese “gods” (kami-gami) are the conceptual extension or exception of the ancestors, so the gods in Japan are much closer to this world than Christian and other monotheisms’ gods. In Japan, humans, in turn, have appeased and utilized the gods’ power through various everyday rituals, Yanagita argues. He suggests that the people of Japan can be defined through these rituals as everyday customs (shūzoku). His intention to legitimize the Yasukuni Shrine according to these

116 Ōe, for instance, extensively quotes Yanagita, arguing that the shrine and the state have appropriated those various folk-customs and -beliefs that Yanagita says have been widely practiced among what Yanagita calls “everyday folk” (jōmin) of Japan. Ōe’s quotes of Yanagita include such potentially useful concept as “goryō” belief, for instance, that the “spirits” of the wrongly punished and/or killed victims of the state come back to this world to harass the living (see Ōe, Ibid.; pp.115-120). Ōe, though, would be embarrassed to realize that a postwar fascist novelist, Yukio Mishima, writes his problematic “Eirei no Koe” (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shin Sha, 1966), based on the similar idea to the goryō that Yasukuni soldiers have grudge against the emperor (although from a different reason—Mishima’s soldiers cannot accept the self-humanization of the emperor, for whose sacredness they are supposed to have sacrificed their lives). Ōe on the g-ryō (likely) unintentionally replicates Mishima, as a result of Ōe’s disregard of the everyday, which started in Japan in the 1920s. Like the fascist writer, Mishima, it is as if Ōe did not want to consider that the goryō-type of ghosts and spirit in mature modernity takes on another level of spookiness than its original, embodied evilness.

theoretical ideas is suggested in the end of the essay, which, according to him, was written during the war, “hearing sirens [to warn the U.S. airstrikes] everyday.” "At least those ‘lads’ (wakōdo) who fought and died for the [Japanese] state should never be alienated into anonymous cemeteries,” he wrote. The Japanese state’s consecration of the lads at Yasukuni is well aligned with Japanese folk culture, thus properly consoling the lads and continuing the culture, according to Yanagita’s unsaid argument.

As the right and left theories of the folk in Yasukuni have begun to be practiced by the shrine and its local affiliates, the petty bourgeois Japanese are quick in discerning the shrines’ interpelling voice. The recent appearances of yukata or kimono (“traditional” clothing) in these shrines are the signs of their quickness. An obscure writer, Yōzaburō Satō, who is a former worker in the construction industry, similarly states in a newspaper interview that Shinto “shrines have been misused by politics in these one hundred years and more, as a result of which the shrines have been changed. The Yasukuni Shrine is a good example of this process.”

Although 59-year-old Satō admits that Yasukuni is half a “state-shinto” (kokka shinto) shrine, that is, a shrine that is a state apparatus for the state’s warring efforts and its efforts to “religiously mobilize people,” Satō says, another half of Yasukuni still carries the characteristics of “old Shinto” (ko shinto), that is, the folk Shinto that is said to have been believed and practiced prior to the Yasukuni construction. The old Shinto aspects of Yasukuni is associated with his personal memories of his childhood, when “a shrine that housed a local god had always been in [his] everyday

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118 Yanagita, Ibid.; p.207.
120 Yanagita-type of argument is repeated in Jun Etō, “Seija no Shisen to Shisha no Shisen,” Etō and Keiichirō Kobori eds. Shinban: Yasukuni Ron Jū: Nihon no Chinkon no Dentō no tame ni (Tokyo: Kindai Shuppan Sha, 2004), pp.8-47, where he argues that Yasukuni is a matter of “the Japanese culture” (p.13). A neonationalist cartoonist, Yoshinori Kobayashi, in his Yasukuni Ron (Tokyo: Gentō Sha, 2005), draws nostalgic images of dancing Japanese in kimono and yukata as representatives of the “people’s (minkan no) pure wishes to soothe the war-heroes’ spirits, which have continuously supported the Yasukuni Shrine” (p.20). See also Yūzō Tsubouchi, Yasukuni (Tokyo: Shinchō Sha, 1999).
121 Below, all the quotes from Satō will be found in “Doyō Hōmon: Jinja Aruki wo Tsuzukeru: Shomin ga Takushita Koe wo Kiku: Satō Yōjirō-san (Sakka)” in Tokyo Shinbun, 10/4/2008.
life.” “All year around,” he says, “I was playing in the shrine’s ground—sumō wrestling, top-spinning, hide and seek, and samurai fencing. We picked cherries in the end of the spring, and shii nuts in the fall.” His implication is that the Yasukuni Shrine should be seen in the line of this mythical-sounding shrine, which was supposedly incorporated in his juvenile everyday. He supports his folkization of Yasukuni with his kind of theory of the folk as a prelinguistic being. “Unlike Buddhism,” he states, “Shinto doesn’t have enduring tenets or rules of conduct. In other words, no language [has been adopted by Shinto]. That’s why I’m attracted [to Shinto]. History is ordinary people’s. Sadly, ordinary people don’t have language, so they can’t leave history [or linguistic records of their history].” Buddhism to Japanese nationalists is of foreign origins and is associated particularly with Chinese culture. Different from the foreign/Chinese religion of Buddhism, according to Satō, Shinto does not have language. He suggests that it is because its practitioners, “ordinary people” (shomin), have lived outside language. Although the shomin could usually connote the mass, Satō’s shomin here seems to be synonymous with Kunio Yanagita’s jōmin, or the (constant/everyday) folk, given Satō’s ahistoricity and culturalism. To the extent that Satō suggests that Yasukuni is the folkized shomin’s, the shrine similarly becomes an oral existence without history. This is a kind of fantasy that could not be constructed unless one forgets about the shrine’s connection with a violent past and the political controversies that surround the shrine today. The violence and controversies of the shrine that Satō is amnesiac about are those of fascism and imperial wars, in which the shrine’s “gods” (saishin) were killed as soldiers, as well as killing 20 million other Asian and Pacific civilians.

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122 One of the first explicit expressions of such anti-Chinese (=Buddhism) nationalism in Japan made by a scholar of Japanese literature, Norinaga Motoori in the 18th century. See a Derridean reading of Motoori’s texts in Nobukuni Koyasu, Motoori Norinaga (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1992). The Japanese version of logocentrism that Koyasu thus finds in Motoori is repeated again and again. See, for instance, Takaaki Yoshimoto, Kyōdō Gensō Ron (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1982).
The dialectic between the representation and reality of Yasukuni participants, i.e., the dialectic between the concept of the folk and history of the Japanese petty bourgeoisie is added another dimension by the younger generations, represented by Shihori Naitō, a junior at Takushoku University and a member of Japan Youth Memorial Association. The dimension that these generations contribute to the dialectic is perhaps better analyzed with psychoanalytical tools than with others. If we follow the theory of Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok, the linguistic and psychological structures of melancholia are transgenerationally carried and complicated. After the grandparents’ repression and the parents’ visceral feeling of the repressed secrets in the grandparents’ unconsciousness, Naitō and her cohorts probably do not even know that most Japanese families have war- and fascism-related secrets. The family secrets are totally alienated from the subject of the third generation and after, with these secrets only indirectly facing the subject behind the ever-enigmatic, and thus fascinating facade, such as the concept of the folk.\footnote{See Abraham and Torok, Ibid.}

If the façade was ever removed, the subject would see the grotesque secrets of murders, rapes, or arsons creeping out of the yet-to-be-worked-through vault that the grandparents had constructed in the inter-generational psyche. In another context, Walter Benjamin says the grotesque does not originate in the folk, as Bakhtin supposes, but in “‘burial’—in the sense of concealment—which the cave or grotto expresses.”\footnote{Borinski, \textit{Die Antike I}; p.189; quoted in Benjamin, \textit{The Origin of...}; Ibid.; p.171.}

Imagine the shocking effects of the underground Chinese graffiti on the WWII Japanese atrocities, as in Léos Carax’s part of the co-directed film \textit{Tokyo!} (2009)—these effects are those of Benjamin’s grotesqueness.\footnote{Michel Gondry, Léos Carax and Bong Jooho dir., \textit{Tokyo!} (Liberation Entertainment, 2009).} Note that Carax’s underground functions as an arena in which to express wishes for justice. Benjamin similarly says that the grotto provides a “refuge for many ideas which people [are] reluctant to voice openly before
princes…”

In postwar Japan, the power of the “princes” or the generationally established social institutional or individual psychological superego has been such that the subterranean graffiti of the Real has never been revealed to shock the younger generations. Through the aesthetic façade of the folk, though, the immured Real exudes the compelling atmosphere of the grotesque—what a mysterious and horrendous sound it is, the “folk in Yasukuni”! This structure of mysteries and the surrounding desires resemble those of the commodity, its grotesque allures, as Marx mentions, and people’s fetishism of such allures. It is based on such a structure that Naitō could say such politico-ethical nonsense as following:

“I like to help the Ei Kai veterans [the veterans at Eirei ni Kotaeru Kai or the Association to Respond to the War-Heroes’ Spirits], because they remind me of my late grandparents.”

Emphatically, her grandparents had been “ordinary” (futsū no) civilians, according to her. “They weren’t rich or anything,” she claims. Having popularized her grandparents this way, Naitō suggests that it is by using her ordinary grandparents as the reference point that she has seen the Yasukuni veterans. Or it could be that the veterans’ appearances of the ordinary elders might come to the fore first to force her to “help” them as her grandparents. What Naitō apparently cannot even fathom is these veterans’ potential criminality in the war, their sustained support of fascism through the postwar, and these acts’ political and ethical significance to Burma, India, Malaysia, and other countries which they invaded during their march to Imphal.

Naitō’s grandparents as ordinary people obtain a hint of the folk, when she says they were part-time farmers in rural Yamagata Prefecture, until their old age made it difficult for them

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127 “Nevertheless,” Marx says, “the table continues to be wood, an ordinary, sensuous thing. But as soon as it emerges as a commodity, it changes into a thing which transcends sensuousness. It not only stands with its feet on the ground, but, in relation to all other commodities, it stands on its head, and evolves out of its wooden brain grotesque ideas, far more wonderful than if it were to begin dancing of its own free will.” See “The Commodity” in his Capital, Ibid.; pp.163-4. Benjamin would read that the grotesqueness of the commodity as being derived from the ever-unconscious secret of people’s own will and creativity.
to live by themselves any more. Then they sold their Yamagata farm and house, and continually
changed their residence in Tokyo from one reluctant relative’s guest room to another. Finally, the
grandparents passed away in a small room adjacent to Naitō’s parents’ grocery shop in a local
city, Tokyo.

“Before they passed away, my parents had always been fighting over them,” says she. “I
really hated to be at home in those days. But then, as I think about it now, even I didn’t particu-
larly care about them [the grandparents], either.”

According to her connotation, her activity in Yasukuni constitutes the redemption of what
she seems to regard as her immorality. What makes it count as an act of redemption might be the
ordinary and folk-like images of the grandparents. For, only as the melancholic images of ordi-
nary people and the folk, which she might have unconsciously created in order to forget about
her qualms, the grandparents could superimpose themselves over another set of images of ordi-
nary people and the folk, offered by the veterans. Only in the phenomenal realm of melancholia,
the two totally different sets of elders (her grandparents and the veterans) can connect with each
other. It is through this common realm of superficiality, her qualms might be resolved as her re-
paying to the veterans, the veterans who are the grandparents in their appearance.

Naitō’s redemptive act is likely helped by the above-mentioned, recent campaign of Ya-
sukuni, which is meant to folkize the shrine and its participants. The prior instance, in which the
image of the ordinary elder was mass-reproduced and consumed widely to wipe off the bad
memories of the war and fascism, was in 1989, when the then-emperor, Showa, passed away.
The media and other cultural industries of the country then compared the emperor’s physical ap-
pearance with that of an actor, Chishū Ryū. In the 1940-50s director, Yasujirō Ozu’s movies and
others, Ryū played many paternal roles. In the nostalgia boom of Ozu, which was conservative in
itself, the emperor’s historical accountability for prewar Japanese fascism and the war was abstracted into the cinematic figure of Ryū, the model of a good and old-fashioned father of an ordinary Japanese family.\textsuperscript{128}

Described as “folkishly simple” (soboku) by her fellow JYMA students, Naitō seems to have a certain sense of self-identification with and desires for self-representation as the folkish. It is perhaps out of these desires and sense that she has selected a relatively back-breaking part-time job in a ramen shop in her local city. There, she receives 950 yen (about 10 bucks) hourly for her nighttime waitressing job, plus a bowl of ramen as her midnight snack, according to her.

“Funny, Shihori-chan,” another student at the JYMA, the usually skimpily dressed “Yuko Kogure,” once ridiculed her. “Why, there’re so many more cool (oishii) jobs, you know.” According to her, the nighttime shift in a bar was at least 1,500 yen per hour.

“Yes, snacks will come with that as well,” Kogure assured her. She is from an upper-middle-class family in Setagaya Ward, Tokyo. There is a long story of her adolescent delinquency and moral salvage by a Shinto-related new religion.

“I hate to get money without feeling I actually labored for that,” Naitō then insisted. “I think money isn’t like that [that is, money can’t be earned without the equivalent amount of physical toil].”

One plus one always has to be two—no accrual of surplus-value is allowed. She says she learnt that philosophy in her parents’ grocery store, “having looked at their backs,” that is, by emulating their moral attitude toward labor and money. Even though she refers to neither the folk nor ordinary people as a term, her sense that “hates” the interest-bearing exchange of the com-

\textsuperscript{128} Eiji Ohtsuka, “Shōjo-tachi no ‘Kawaii’ Tennō,” Chūō Kouron (December 1988), 243-9, ethnographically mentions many commoditizing practices concerning the dying emperor then. When the emperor was commoditized as the “pure” and “sacred” outside of capitalism (as “senile elders” (boke rōjin)), Ohtsuka supposes, the consumers of the commoditized emperor, girls, could project their own designated identity of “weakness and vulnerability” upon the emperor (p.248).
modesty seems to underline her support of the Yasukuni Shrine, where she says is reminded of her popularized and folkized grandparents, the supposedly pre- or non-capitalist being.

If one can discuss Naitō’s Yasukuni activity in terms of the technique of melancholic folkization, then it might be by means of the same technique that she seems to be able to (unconsciously) co-opt other Asian victims’ politics. When I mention the South Korean, Korean-Japanese, and Japanese project to recover forced Korean laborers’ remains through the Japanese Archipelago, her eyes sparkle with interest.\(^{129}\)

“Would I have a chance to participate? Where would the next site [of recovery] be? When? Do you know the contact, Kasai-san?”

\[^{129}\text{Discursive and physical excavation of these Korean and Chinese forced laborers has been conducted for decades along ethnic lines and among local blocs. One of the representatives of these efforts would be that made by Chóngryŏn (Sŏren in Japanese), the resident Korean association of supporters of North Korea, which has collaborated with sympathetic Japanese intellectuals to establish the Investigatory Task Force of the Truth of Abduction of Koreans (Ch'ŏnsŏn Kyŏngsi Rengi Chinsŏ Chŏsa Dan) in 1972 in Okinawa. As of 2007, it has 300 North-Korea-supporting, Korean residents in Japan, in addition to 400 Japanese, as its members, through its 25 prefectural affiliates. See their unpublished pamphlet, “Kinkyū Shikai: Yūten-ji no Ikotsu Mondai wo Kenshō-suru,” distributed in their meeting under the same title in Nihon Kyōiku Kaikan, Tokyo, 3/9/2007. On the Japanese part, a Sōtō-shū Buddhist monk and peace activist, Yōshikiko Tonomura established Karachi Folk History Seminar (Karachi Minshū-shi Kōza) in Karachi, Hokkaido, in 1976, in order to exhume about 80 bodies of Koreans and more, who were estimated to have been forced to construct the local Uryū Dam. See his “Kaisetsu” to Seiichi Morimura, Sasa no Bohyō (Tokyo: Kōbun-sha, 2003), pp.359-367. Noriaki Fukudome, a former college professor, has been similarly active in Fukuoka Prefecture, Kyūshū Island; Sōtō-shū monks, Tetsuou Sakata and Shū Tanimoto, in Takayama City, Gifu Prefecture. Both Takayama and Fukuoka are known to have used these victims to mine their minerals. In 2005, the civil activist-cum-president, Roh Moo-hyun, of the ROK formally joined these civilian efforts in Japan to start renewed investigation and repatriation of the Korean remains. Accordingly in the same year, the hitherto haphazard, Japanese and resident Korean groups in Japan have gathered together under the umbrella of the Network to Investigate the Truth of Forced Mobilization (Kyŏngsi Dō’in Shinsŏ Kyūmei Network). Their united movement has gained a momentum, resulting in various meetings and excavation camps throughout the Japanese Islands. The most popular among them would still be Yōshikiko Tonomura’s camps in Hokkaido, which he has held for decades about a couple of times a year, gathering hundreds of Korean, resident Korean, and Japanese youths, scholars, and activists, for excavation, discussion, and friendship. The one in which I participated in 8/17-26/2006 in Sarufutsu Village, Hokkaido, was an internally dynamic and contradictory commune in the middle of the somewhat hostile Japanese residents in the village. The almost irreconcilable differences between multiple historical views and political positions represented by different sub-groups within the camp seemed to be still bonded together against the hostility and through the participants’ love and youthfulness. What I mentioned to Naitō in Yasukuni is one of the Hokkaido camps.}
I remind her that, even though the Korean and Korean Japanese participants in the project might try to accept the Japanese efforts for reconciliation, Koreans in general were the victims of the Japanese invasion, colonialism, and fascist violence.

“Please let me know more about it—I just don’t know.”

I feel I should believe her claimed innocence, given her collegiate environment in nationalist Takushoku University, plus the larger Japanese context of neo-nationalism since the 1990s. Leftist professors let me know that in 2008, they have admitted the first bunch of those high school-graduates, who are armed with the revisionist historical knowledge of Japan. These students have learnt the knowledge in the textbooks that are forged by the ultra-rightist Association to Write a New History Textbook (Atarashii Rekishi Kyōkasho o Tsukuru Kai). Established in 1996, the Association’s textbooks have been sporadically adopted by different schools throughout the country. A neonationalist cartoonist, Yoshinori Kobayashi, and other pop-cultural ideologues have mass-mediated similarly revised, neonationalist histories of the war and fascism for more than a decade. I have found that the JYMA students seem to read Kobayashi at least, if not more theoretical and older Yukio Mishima or Ikki Kita. I, then, tell Naitō what I have learnt among the leftist participants in the Korean project—the historical facts that I would never communicate to other participants in the shrine. Surely I do have a certain level of trust in her rose-cheeked naïveté.

130 The Association to Write a New History Textbook claims that the conventional historical textbooks that have been adopted in postwar Japanese schools are “masochistic” (jigyaku-teki) in that they describe the various war-crimes that were committed by the imperial Japanese military. Led by such neonationalist intellectuals as Kanji Nishio, Hidetsugu Yagi, or Nobukatsu Fujioka, the Association intends that their textbooks will be a “tale of the Japanese, through which [the pupils] can be excited about the actions of [their] ancestors, while taking a glance at the ancestors’ failures; [the pupils] are thus expected to re-experience the ancestors’ joys and predicaments.” In short, these neonationalists hope to “restore” the “pride and responsibility as the Japanese” among the students. See their homepage, http://www.tsukurukai.com/aboutus/syuisyo.html. See critique by Yōichi Komori and Tetsuya Takahashi eds., National History o Koete (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppan Kai, 1998). Marilyn Ivy also wrote about this issue in “Revenge and Recapitation in Recessionary Japan” The South Atlantic Quarterly, Vol.99, No.4 (Fall 2000); 819-840.
“From this perspective,” I continue then, carefully choosing my words, “the Japanese soldiers consecrated in Yasukuni might not be heroes. The Koreans might perceive these soldiers as invaders.” Then I ask, “Would you be still comfortable about considering your participation [in the Korean project]?”

“Oh, yes,” says she. Amazingly, her small, round eyes under dark brown bob have turned red with withheld tears.

“I’m sorry,” she hurriedly wipes them with a towel. In the nationwide trend of ecologism, the cafe across the shrine, where the two of us have been sitting over iced coffee, is only barely air-conditioned. The three-o’-clock sun is still sweltering even through the drawn blind. After hours of Yasukuni campaign, the polyester, black set of a suit, skirt, and vest, which she wears to show her “respect to the war-heroes’ spirits,” should have still trapped some heat—not only she, but also Kanno and other students similarly show up in dark suits and other formal attire. She sips her coffee with completely melted ice cubes and looks at me.

“Ever since my grandparents passed away, I just can’t stand the idea of anybody being left without being properly buried. I think we should help them [the Koreans].”

This is probably the reason that she has joined the JYMA, the organization that is dedicated to recovering the Japanese soldiers’ remains abroad. It seems that her logic is that the victims and perpetrators should be equally treated as sort of her extended “grandparents.” The admixture of humanitarianism and melancholia, her concept of grandparents-folk, therefore, effectively contributes to the shrine’s efforts to remain as a death-space of unresolved fascism. Fascism’s key characteristic is “equalization” and its function is the rendition of politically and ethically heterogeneous points into the nominally identical existence of the commodity. It is through the trans-generationally operative, psychological mechanism of melancholia that a youth like
Naitō is compelled to subscribe to the fascism of the folk today. The folk is a discursive representation of the petty bourgeois class; ultimately Naitō is expressing her own class-character by discovering the same folk in Yasukuni and among the Koreans.

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In this chapter, I have argued that the petty bourgeoisie throughout modern capitalist Japan has had special affinity with fascism, due to its historically assigned delay and difference within the country’s overall regime of mechanical reproduction. Their delay and difference have been materially created through their intimate interactions with the country’s reserve army of labor in a given period of time. These interactions have endowed the petty bourgeoisie with a sort of surrealistic aloofness as the producers of sermons, gardens, or crafts on the one hand and with a devouring acquisitiveness as the consumers of mass-reproduced, everyday products on the other hand. When fascism promotes the aesthetics of mechanical reproduction and contradictorily stirs the desires for the Subjective organization of such aesthetics, many petty bourgeois members are historically positioned to find in fascism an apt expression of their historical positionality and a perfect representation of their everyday desires.

One of the Japanese fascist theaters, the Yasukuni “Shinto” Shrine in Tokyo, has thus been maintained by the petty bourgeois participants, who have been magnetized by the shrine’s commoditization of the fallen Japanese soldiers and ideologization of the emperor as these soldiers’ sacrifier. For the postwar Japanese psychology of melancholia, the shrine’s attractive and repulsive force is even enhanced. While the term, fascism, is completely omitted in and around the shrine, the shrine adorns itself with the new ornament of the folk, becoming ever more enigmatic and grotesque than any other moments in the 140 years of its history. This chapter has examined the way in which the everyday ideologues of the postwar petty bourgeoisie have contrib-
uted to this melancholic formation of the “folk Yasukuni” in interaction with the second-level ideologies produced by the leftist and rightist bourgeoisie.

Recreated in the immediate postwar as the shock absorber of the lost empire, the Japanese petty bourgeoisie is far from vanishing even after sixty-three years since then. For, the class supplements the otherwise monolithic-looking, monopoly economy of postwar Japan. In the midst of the society’s democratic discourses, the petty bourgeoisie preconsciously embraces fascist ideologies and maintains imperialist memories of the war. With its class-specific technologies of delay and difference, the class group significantly facilitates the generation of even new violence, the violence of second fascism that threatens to efface the memories and history of the actual violence exercised in the past.
Chapter 3: Incorporating the Everyday: Or, the Corporatist Representation of War Machines

Differences are mainly imposed from outside; they are distinctions of rank, status and property. Men as individuals are always conscious of those distinctions; they weigh heavily on them and keep them firmly apart from one another. A man stands by himself on a secure and well defined spot, his every gesture asserting his right to keep others at a distance. He stands there, like a windmill on an enormous plain moving expressively; and there is nothing between him and the next mill. All life, so far as he knows it, is laid out in distance—the house in which he shuts himself and its property, the positions he holds, the rank he desires—all these serve to create distances, to confirm and extend them.

—Elias Canetti, *Crowds and Power*

Again, I am in a train at its full speed. Every little gap between the parts in the car and between the junctures in the rail makes vibrant noises, which are then absorbed in the vast expanse between stations. The car is sparse with only a couple of elderly females with hats and a young businessperson smilingly checking his cellphone. The early March’s cold yet relaxed sunshine adds a nimbus of pale euphoria. With its abundant space and flat monotony, the landscape outside the window makes one’s eyelids heavy. Mass-produced houses, a brand new city hall, and supermarkets around the station; and then, as soon as we pass the center of the town, we see the parallel highway again, along which are aligned neat factories in green lawns or under tall, rhododendron shadows. It is the existence of these factories that seem to differentiate one’s impression of the area from that of purely residential Musashino, Tokyo, for instance. The station of “South Toda,” Yokohama, is in the middle of this hauntingly new, industrial land, ten minutes train-ride to the south from bustling Yokohama Station and ten minutes to the north from “Minobe,” the hub that connects this formerly state-owned Japan Railway line with several others. On weekday afternoons like today (2007), the train arrives at South Toda only once every thirty minutes, startlingly differently from more populated and hectic, coastal Yokohama.
Making a good contrast to the dark empty platform, the sun is abundant in the South Toda concourse, warming people through the glass ceiling and making the dust visibly shiny, like quietly falling snow. Under the silver dust, outside the automatic wickets that talk (“beep, beep, beep, there is not enough money on your ticket. Please proceed to the manned wicket”), there is a buzzing crowd that is hastily passing one another. None of them comes through the wicket to take the train. They are apparently just passing from right to left, left to right, leaving a colorful whirl with their casual, daytime clothing. As it will turn out, there is a shopping complex, “Rainbow Garden” to the left (east), adjacent to the station. To the right (west), there is a bus terminal. The west of the railroad is all over dotted with multiple “project” buildings, inhabited by factory workers and others. Featuring the only department store in the area, the Rainbow Garden seems to attract customers from much further away than the project district. This part of Yokohama is far more accessible by motor vehicles than the walkable coast.

Being the only person who is standing by the wickets, “Mutsumi Machida” is easily distinguishable. About 5’1”, in her 50s, she wears a tad overgrown hair and a wrinkled gingham shirt of yellow, red, and pink. One end of the worn collar sticks out of the soft, quality-looking, black leather jacket, while the other is pushed somewhere inside. With no makeup and an obsolete vinyl bag, Machida, nonetheless, is adorned with an odd class-consciousness that sparkles in a big ruby ring in her left hand.

An “ordinary matron” (futsū no obasan), this retired banker’s wife likes to call herself, as I have noticed in our preliminary phone interviews. There is a derogatory connotation in the word, obasan (matron), in the capitalist culture in which a woman’s age, her role of reproduction, and the social definition of sexual attraction are intimately connected together. Machida is not

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1. Obasan is otherwise called babah, which is even more disparaging than obasan. In one of the most notorious instances, the then Tokyo Governor, Shintarō Ishihara, remarked that “I heard that the worst and most
the first woman who has let me glimpse at a certain, inverted violence inside her, with which she
denigrates herself with the self-appellation of *obasan*. My observation is that “housewives” (*shu-fu*) like Machida tend to show this type of violence, which indiscriminately reduces each of these
women’s unique life-histories, sexualities, hopes and despairs into the assigned role and image of
an “ordinary” middle-aged woman. The self-reducing violence then seems to sink into the plea-
sure of the bourgeois life—conformist moderation, far-from-moderate consumption to create con-
Yet, as a ruby glittering on the bourgeois finger carries wild memories of geological time, the
seemingly tamed life in the suburb still holds violence, the violence of reducing and “equalizing.”
At least the suburb that I studied was replete with hints and traces of such violence.

The violence at issue is that of fascism—as I have argued in the previous chapters,
the minimal definition of fascism is reduction of singularities into a single form. In the exceed-
ingly labor-divided society of suburban Japan, everyday fascism seems to be incessantly arising
from the relation between genders, capitalist production and consumption, and the all-leveling
pressure to be ordinary. In this chapter, I will ethnographically describe how male and female
residents in a suburb like “Toda Town” express everyday frustration, anxieties, and desires to be
mechanical copies of each other.

harmful thing that civilizations had ever created was *babah*”; and also that “I also heard that it was worthless and
sinful that those women who lost their reproductive abilities [due to their age] were still living” (Ishihara supposedly
“heard” these opinions from an astronomical physicist and emeritus professor at Tokyo University, Takafuli Matsui
—Matsui denies this allegation). Deficiency of the country’s criminal law is such that gender-related hate-crimes are
not legally punishable. Apparently Japan’s civil law does not recognize Ishihara’s offence as an offence
either—both the District and Appellate Courts of Tokyo dismissed 131 female plaintiffs’ suit against Ishihara in
1995. Insofar as this current chapter is concerned, it is important to note that Ishihara’s remarks were published as
“Dokusen Gekihaku: Ishihara Shintarō To-Chiji Hoeru!” (Exclusive Interview with Ishihara Shintarō: the [Tokyo]
the weekly targeting mostly middle-aged and elderly women publish Ishihara’s sexist remarks in uncritical ways?”
is one of the questions that this chapter addresses.
While proceeding along this theme, the second and third sections of this chapter will introduce the institutions and ideologies of corporatism, as they seek to organize the Toda everyday. Briefly, corporatism aspires to be the device that “organically” separates, categorizes, and hierarchizes people, who might otherwise be inclined to be a mutually equalized mass. In postwar Japan, corporatism has developed as the recycled prewar ideology and practices of the “body of the nation-state” (kokutai). In the second section of this chapter, I will examine how the prewar kokutai was imagined to be gendered and hierarchized according to the concepts of the public/private dichotomy and of the patriarchal nation. The third section will explore the postwar advancement of these concepts into the new kokutai, the body of the hierarchical nation. Among various corporatist institutions, I will focus on the so-called “neighborhood association” (chōnai kai or chōkai). I will examine the process through which this transwar apparatus of the neighborhood association in its postwar phase sublimates the mass desires for fascist equivalence into the discourses of the “religious” hierarchy. The sacred association in these discourses is the nexus between its representation of the neighborhood women and the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)’s representation of the neighborhood. As in the prewar, the gender relation is the key to understand the ideological configuration of the postwar kokutai, perhaps to the degree that the excess of massification is supposedly embodied by women—their historically assigned roles of the consumer and reproducer. I will locate the women’s position in the prewar and postwar kokutai in an attempt to understand the way in which the bourgeois desires for hierarchy and order intervene in everyday fascism.

Mutsumi Machida, the main informant of this chapter, hints at the violent desires for everyday fascism not just in her self-appellation of obasan. She has also sued her own town in an effort to ensure the principle of church-state separation regarding the half-state institution, the
neighborhood association. Put in the context of the overall commodification of the suburban everyday, her suit has the aspect of critically fortifying the corporatist order of the town by opposing it or of unintentionally substantiating such a supposedly sacred order by even acknowledging its existence. Conformism thus seems to be the last instance of the bourgeois mentality. And it is this conformism that bears the violent, fascist moment in the everyday. This chapter intends to differentiate the moments of violent conformism and fascism-as-conformism, for a better understanding of the everyday genesis of fascism.

The Classed Space, Gendered Time: The Everyday Genesis of Suburban Fascism

The women with hats and male businessperson that I saw in the train make a snapshot of the suburban time that is gendered. Perhaps on the way home from Kamakura, a favorite day-trip destination among mature women, these seeming girlfriends might be representatives of women having a lot of free time in daytime. Meanwhile, the businessman in a suit and tie could be a sales representative for the daytime female customers at home or could have visited some local offices near railroad stations around here. In either case, these women’s and men’s attires represent the gendered division of labor between bourgeois production and reproduction. This division directly translates into the dual configuration of the contemporary Japanese space, especially in its bourgeois segment, viz. the office areas where mainly male workers operate and the residential areas where mainly females stay to consume and reproduce.

The suburban town of Toda in daytime is accordingly the female sphere. By tracing the tour of the town that Machida gave me on my first day there, I will be able to show the way in which the women’s space-time is so structured by the corporate needs to reach women as the consumers and the women’s attraction to the commodities that corporations promote. The corpo-
rations also cast the classed net over daytime Toda. For one thing, not all the class-groups can afford to keep solely consumerist females. For another, the corporations interpellate the women as bourgeois consumers. Even if one economically falls short of the class’s standard, she is expected to consume as a bourgeois member; or rather, she comes to look to be bourgeois through her bourgeois-like consumption.

Let us go back to the South Toda wickets to see the classed and gendered chronotope of Toda. A couple of steps to the left (east) and you will already be in the Rainbow Garden, a commercial-residential complex. Comprised of several sky-scraping residential buildings, a department store, and a supermarket, the complex is etched with the leftover “bubble” sensibility of the developer. Constructed in the 1980s, the luxurious apartments in the “Rainbow Towers” were called “million-dollar mansions” (oku shon). Their catch phrase was that “from every window you can see Mt. Fuji.” According to Mutsumi Machida, “only elites, such as Asahi Newspaper journalists,” live there. These apartment buildings stand in the middle of the corridors that connect the station with the department store. The idea is probably that both the commuters and consumers in the buildings need only a couple of seconds to reach either the station or the store. The tacit assumption behind the idea would be that the westward route to the station and the eastward route to the store are almost exclusively used by males and females respectively.

The department store physically maps out the gendered frequency with which the residents seem to be expected to use the store. Men’s clothing and others are compactly put together

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on the fifth floor, where one has to change the escalator a couple of times in order to reach. Other floors are apparently occupied by women’s casual wear, formal wear, office clothing, in addition to the labyrinthine arrangements of accessory- and cosmetic showcases. These showcases on the first floor are still an island in the middle of even more women’s paraphernalia—shoes, handbags, hats, and perfume. On top of that, girls have a relatively big section of their own on the fourth floor.

At the end of the outdoor upper-level corridor that leads from the station, the entrance to the store is a theatrical space that gapes open for females in Toda and the vicinities. The space is a grandiose stairwell, lush with gigantic pots of monumental palm trees and weeping tropical plants. Under the high glass ceiling, an escalator theatrically climbs up through the spacially arranged alabaster podia, on which the plants elegantly rest. The day after a spring storm, wild winds constantly blow into the open stairwell this afternoon. The air is still heavy with humidity, yet pungent with mysterious fragrance of rare jungle flowers. Dull, thick leaves of taro wave and chatter. They even play taped sounds of exotic birds and animals. The approximately one minute of escalator-riding is probably long enough to raise the customer’s class-consciousness. The bourgeois culture of laid-back comfort and playful squander is well-expressed in this mini-theater. Whether one is actually bourgeois or not, she is apparently expected to join the bourgeois expression of consumerism by spending money upstairs.

The escalator brings Machida and me to the third floor, where neatly packaged handkerchiefs, silk scarves, or brand-name umbrellas allure even us, who enter the store only as part of the “short-cut” to Toda Town. As we march through the commodities, I have not even noticed that we have already been in the adjacent supermarket. As big as any suburban supermarket in the United States, the “Rainbow Mart” is congested. On the second floor, to which we have de-
scended with the electrically moving slope, the buzz and movements are ceaselessly made, perhaps due to the vast array of choices of food given—yaki tori the skewered and roasted chicken pieces that are neatly piled up on trays, individually packed sandwiches, spring and summer rolls, salad, cakes, wine and sake—you name it. The fishmongers are shouting “hai ’rasshaaaaiii’” (c’mon, take a look customers, c’mon) in their thick husky voices. Competing with them is the taped music that repeats “fish, fish, fish, fish you eat, smart, smart, smart, smart you become” (sakana, sakana, sakana, sakana wo taberu to, atama, atama, atama, atama ga yoku-naru). As we pass the isles, a man at the counter of deep fried meat and vegetables (age mono) would say, “Hey Mrs., what about croquettes for dinner tonight?” The supermarket’s difference from the department store might be that the croquette-seller is not approaching Machida and me as members of any particular class-group but as general females of the age to be “Mrs.” (oku-san). If the department store demands its female customers be bourgeois by keeping up with the bourgeois appearance, then the supermarket’s direction seems to be that women across the class-boundary fulfill their families’ gastronomical and other domestic needs. Many working females in Japan seem to be suffering from the social and familial expectation that they perform both the productive and reproductive roles.

Out of the supermarket, and we are out of the whole complex of the Rainbow Garden. We cross a bridge over busy “Route 40.” Suddenly a serene residential area starts. This is Toda Town. The whole area looks inviting with the dark green shades that old camellia trees make. Immediately I recognize the aroma of plum flowers. The “ridge road,” as Machida simply calls it, runs through spacious houses, sporadic farms of cabbages and leeks, and miniature orchards of apples and plums. Parallel to Route 40 and also to the railroad, the straight road will eventually bring us to the area where Machida lives. Through the one-lane road, we would occasionally
pass a car or scooter. The main part of the town occupies the good-sized, southeast lowland of the road, while the houses and farms on the road also belong to the town. As we walk to the south, thus diagonally away from the station and the Rainbow Garden, we command a good view of the lowland on our left hand side. In the middle of the relatively congested lowland with mass-produced houses and condos, there is a little hill, on which stand “Toda Primary and Middle Schools.” Machida’s two daughters went there.

In contrast to these purely functional condos and townhouses, the houses along the ridge road please one’s eyes. Many of them are handsomely modernist with abundant glass and rectangular motifs. They could be called sumptuous by any standard, registering unique traces of the architects’ custom-made efforts. Multiple numbers of Mercedes Benz, Audi, or Jaguar are parked in their neatly pebbled parkways; new soil is placed among aesthetically arranged rocks and stone statues, waiting for the gardening season to come. According to Machida, the residents around here were formerly “farmers” (hyakushō), who climbed up the class ladder by selling or renting out their lands to the railroad company and the Rainbow Garden-developer among others. They are landlords also of the condos in the lowland as well as the offices and clinics around the station.

After fifteen minutes or so of walking from the Rainbow Garden, the straight ridge road ends at a cell phone-tower. Two narrow back roads branch out from there, going down the ridge into the right (western) and left (eastern) directions. The right path eventually hits Route 40. The state road then makes a curve around the end of the ridge to the southeast. There is a small hill that lies between the end of the ridge and Route 40 after the road makes the southeast curve; that is the hill on which “Yawata Shrine” stands. The left path is a long, concrete staircase, which leads to a whole separate residential area, which Machida calls “Kōwa Collective Residence”
(Kōwa Danchi). Although the residence comes under the Toda Town’s jurisdiction, this is Machida’s home that she would like to think of as modernized new residents’ versus the old, “farmers’” area of the town.

In this chess board-square land, on which spacious blocks of houses are elevated from the asphalt road, whatever image that one might have with the naming, collective residence (danchi), might fail him/her. Besides the fact that they share the same sources of utilities, the more than sixty houses in this formerly farm-land are all differently designed and shielded by neatly trimmed spindle trees or azalea bushes. In the early 1980s, when the major conglomerates in the country, “Kōwa,” developed the area, these houses were immediately sold out as “luxurious” properties. Of course this luxury shrivels in front of the custom-made aura of the ridge-road grand-bourgeoisie’s. Like the banker Machidas, the Kōwa residents are all employed “salary men” and their families, albeit elite ones. As they moved here in the 1980s, they were interpellated by such a mass-entertainment as TV shows. Everyone whom I have talked to mentions “To the Wives on Fridays” (Kinyōbi no Tsuma-tachi e) in particular, a popular drama series in the 1980s on the comfortable everyday of suburbs—home parties, big dogs, and extra-marital affairs among bankers, business owners, physicians and their “housewives.” According to “Mrs. Kotaki,” Machida’s backdoor neighbor, the female residents of this collective residence still enjoy what she calls “celebrity competition” (celeb kyōsō), that is, flauntty fashions and lifestyles for mutual recognition. Perhaps reminiscent of the time when bridge was still an aristocratic pastime, these females would invite each other for bridge parties over home-baked coffee-cakes on Wedgwood plates. They would also go to tennis or Italian restaurants together “in all frills and jewelries,” Kotaki frowns.
On an early summer day, when I visit her house, Kotaki herself puts on worn-out cotton pants and jean shirt, with the sleeves casually rolled up. With no makeup and short-cut, grayish dark hair, this small woman in her 50s looks boyish. Consciously then, Machida’s neighborhood best-friend, Kotaki is different from other female neighbors.

Kotaki accompanied her elite businessman husband to live in Düsseldorf for five years. When he was then dispatched to Singapore, she remained in Toda with their high-school-age children, in order to prepare them for the college entrance examinations. The family then flew back and forth between Singapore and Yokohama for three years. Now, after retirement, her husband is “out there” in China, “doing whatever volunteer works he likes,” according to Mrs. Kotaki.

The celebrity competition among Japanese wives was everywhere, she says—in Düsseldorf and Singapore, in addition to Yokohama. Upon leaving Germany, every one of her friend wives of elite Japanese businessmen bought Missen tableware. She knows somebody who renovated her home back in Japan, so that the expensive furniture that she and her husband bought in Germany would fit. Proudly, Kotaki refused to join the competition of snobbery.

“Heck! They are useless for tea over rice!” said she then, according to her, dismissing expensive Missen bowls. Tea over rice or ochazuke is a supposedly “Japanese” dish with the nuance of folkish simplicity and care-free masculinity. Instead of “frills and jewelries,” Kotaki would

4 Some of the most impressive tea over rice or rather tea-flavored gruel in literature might be consumed by those elder “untouchable” (burakumin) women in Kenji Nakagami’s Nichirin no Tsubasa (Tokyo: Shincho Sha, 1984), who I guess are assigned the job of representing not only the untouchable class’s lives but also some generalized “folk” culture of local Japan. At this point in his career, Nakagami seems to be obsessed with a pseudo-structuralist map of Japan, constituted of the peripheries that are supposed to be lower-statused and/or folkish and the center that is supposed to be inhabited by the emperor, the summit of the status-system and the essence of the folkish-national culture of Japan. Nonetheless, in this particular text, the routinized making of the morning o-kai-san (the dialect for gruel) and the rough aroma of its not-so-sophisticated bancha tea are “alive”—thus impressive at least to me. Perhaps Nakagami’s introduction of the olfactory sense contributes to his seeming strategy to forge a certain unity with the reader. “Music,” Alan Tansman would say, which “inextricably links being and meaning. Music speaks directly, without the interference of ideas. Music’s ‘general state of arousal and its simultaneity’ in Anthony Storr’s words, triggers Freud’s oceanic moment, when the boundaries between self and world collapse…”


“arm [herself] with Goethe and Nietzsche” and discuss with German intellectuals, according to her.

She says that it was also the time when she learned that it was difficult to explain the “Japanese thing” (nihon no koto) to her German friends, since “the Japanese culture is negative.” “Look at the tatami-matted room” (nihon zashiki), she says. “We [the Japanese] don’t have a bed; we don’t have drawers. There is no table; there is no chair. The Japanese culture is ‘minus.’ You have to keep subtracting.” As we sip her perfectly brewed green tea on her living room tatami mattress that afternoon, surely do I see no object in the about 30 square foot room but a good-sized pot of bamboo. Shooting almost to the ceiling and rustling its dry leaves in the refreshing breeze coming through the open window, the bamboo tree is beautifully and unusually presented. Perhaps it is the “Germans’” or “westerners’” eyes that Kotaki adopts here, in order to produce “Japan” or generic “Asia” with its orientalist symbol, bamboo. It might be that Kotaki thinks that the adopted eyes of the orientalists let her reconsider the consumerist culture, in which she has been embedded. The thought of tea over rice, for instance, made her resistant to the attraction of Missen, according to her. The concept of the “Japanese room” seems to be similarly effective against the idea of acquiring more furniture and interior goods, since the concept of such a room requires her to “keep subtracting.” Ultimately though, the loan idea of the west’s Japan cannot make her transcend the snobbery competition among her shopping-addicted female friends. Such an idea has long been appropriated by the country’s mass-cultural industries. Bamboo, cherry blossoms, the color red, and other “Asian” motifs are eagerly consumed in contemporary Japan, the misrecognized subject of the “western” culture. Even Kotaki’s decision not to purchase according to the supposedly subtracting tradition of Japan will be promoted by the

According to Tansman, Nakagami’s fascism should be found in the oceanic moment of music that Nakagami seems to try to establish in his texts. See Tansman, “Filament of Fascism in Postwar Times,” The Aesthetics of Japanese Fascism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009); p.270.
2010s Japanese industries as the “eastern” thought of *dan sha ri* (to decline new acquisition of, to give up possession of, and to cut off attachment to things). Related books are well sold; the recycling business is booming.\(^5\) One of my female friends in her 50s set a goal one day to throw away 1,000 objects hers within a year, the kind of goal that is not so unusual in these days. Running out of the objects to throw away toward the end of the year, she apparently got rid of at least some of her family albums. Given this level of determination, the boom cannot be explained solely by orientalist nationalism. The determination probably reflects the desperation of the materially slashed and deprived economy of the post-1990s. The whole country seems truly desperate—many people literally cannot afford for luxuries anymore, while industries have to survive, holding on to the simple fact that one obviously cannot keep subtracting; one has to start purchasing again in order to fill the lack that the subtraction has made (of course one cannot purchase new family albums though). There is still pleasure, in other words, of replacing old belonging, of pretending *seihin* or purity in poverty, of losing oneself in excess, the excess of discarding the massive number of belonging to purchase massively again.\(^6\)

In addition to the orientalist Japan, Kotaki seems to use inverted gender-signs of the bourgeoisie in order to refuse consumption—with no make-up, no frills, she is a black-belt *kendo* (a martial art) instructor. Since she is self-consciously a “tomboy,” she does not have to be competitively consuming with her bourgeois girlfriends, she would say. Or rather, her reluctance to consume might be a tactic for gender-inversion.

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\(^6\) *Seihin* was the term invented by the writer and German literature scholar Kōji Nakano in 1995 in his best-selling *Seihin no Shisō* (Tokyo: Bungei Shunjū Sha, 1995). Its obvious morality aside, the book hints at neonationalism in idealizing the all-out war poverty of ordinary Japanese as one of the prime examples of the *seihin*. 
Mutsumi Machida shows similar traces of having reflected on the relation between consumption and gender. In the backdoor of the Kotakis’, the Machida household is rather dark and stuffy—there are no plants, no hangings, no cupboards, no other decorations that ordinary bourgeois homemakers in contemporary Japan seem to be eager to purchase and introduce into their houses. Her place impresses me with her (intentional) neglect of the interior—the curtains are always left drawn, while the somewhat worn-out carpet in the living room is a congested mosaic of piled documents and open books.

As we sit together in one of the formless couches in the afternoon when I first visit her, Machida’s husband serves us flavorful coffee in cups and saucers. Tall and handsome, in his mid-50s, this former banker was forced to resign, after “Keizō Hirata,” the vice president of the “Toda Neighborhood Association,” threatened his bank that he would withdraw all the 100 million yen (1 million dollars) that he had deposited there; the condition was that the wife Machida withdraw her trial against the association. As I will describe later, the lawsuit is a highly political one, based on Mrs. Machida’s accusation that the association violates the Japanese Constitutional principle of the church-state separation. Mr. Machida quit the job instead, in order to save both the bank’s business and his wife’s politics.

“You know, we housewives are bored...,” says Mrs. Machida, casually sipping the coffee that her husband made. Mr. Machida politely sits next to her as usual—like a bureaucratic assistant to an appointed politician, he sits there to support his wife’s speech with adequate papers and other evidence. Before a dozen of her supporters and on other occasions, when Mrs. Machida is expected to make a speech, I have seen this couple inverting gender relations this way (the wife as the subject and the husband as her supporter). But perhaps not completely. The scattered books on the floor and other symptoms of the interior-neglect seem to show that the
wife’s political masculinization does not accompany the husband’s feminization. Consumption and reproduction seem to be simply abandoned in this household, except at least for the husband’s service of coffee.

“We housewives are bored,” Mrs. Machida still says, “bored enough to start tedious lawsuits like mine.” Rebelliousness and obedience sound so deeply convoluted in her expression “housewives” that I cannot help but glimpse at her face. The corners of her lips are pulled down, as I will be seeing them often from now on. As I look back now, I do not ever remember her smiling. Obviously, cynicism is the way for her to socially solve the amazing contradiction between the implied will to refuse assigned roles and the expressed willingness to comply (by calling herself a housewife and obasan). The abandoned bourgeois interior or the coffee-serving husband must be another way—the nominal way—to solve the same contradiction. Both the nominal inversion and everyday cynicism may ultimately serve the gender relations of the society by “giving a break” to the rebellion-minded Machida. After all, she “has never worked outside,” as she says with a class-conscious mixture of pride and condescension. As it is usually the bureaucrat’s knowledge that has real, manipulative power over the elected politician, it is the financial power of the bourgeois husband that generally determines the terms of his relation with his wife. The ruby ring is thus worn, the congealment of the husband’s financial power and the wife’s compliance, comfort, security—and nonetheless, resentment.

In the case of Kotaki, she explains that her ultimate submission to the bourgeois norm of gender is to “let a long thing wind itself around [her]” (nagai mono niwa makarero), that is, to let herself be incorporated by the system. While martial arts, for instance, are usually practiced by and associated with males and she seems to be conscious about the aesthetics of her black-belt reversal of gender, she says she has never doubted her job as a homemaker. “Ha ha, impressed
that my house is neat and clean?” she laughs, “I’m usually pretty focused on chores throughout the morning. And then in the afternoon, I sit back and read or go see a movie. [Chores are] important, you know—Nietzsche is important, but things of the house (ie no koto) are also important.”

So, these two friends are not so different from their female neighbors from whom they seem to try to separate themselves. Even though they refuse to join these neighbors’ competitive consumption-practices, Machida and Kotaki are consciously housewives. The neighbors competitively consume, in order to fulfill their role as bourgeois housewives. Within the same role of housewives, these two groups of women seem to emphasize their respective attitudes toward consumption as the point of their difference. Particularly Kotaki expresses her desires to negate consumption, at least the “celebrity” type of competitive consumption, whereas she states that she performs other chores with as much “focus” (shūchū) as other females in her position would have. It seems that it is the excess of the celebrity consumption that Kotaki is refusing—otherwise, she is a willing consumer of “Japan,” for instance, its image sold in the forms of bamboo, subtracted tatami rooms, and tea over rice. Neither does Machida seem to reject the act of consumption per se (e.g. the ruby ring)—she just seems to be selective in terms of the areas in her life in which she spends money. As for the celeb-type of females, they appear to know neither selection nor subtraction. They seem to consume blindly as their industry-molded instincts dictate. Their molded instincts seem to augment and proliferate, as soon as they meet each other at the intersection between the Kwakiutl potlatch-excess of showiness and the mass-reproductive mechanicity of mutual commodification.7

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7 According to Marcel Mauss, “In a certain number of cases, it is not even a question of giving and returning gifts, but of destroying, so as not to give the slightest hint of desiring your gift to be reciprocated. Whole boxes of olachen (candlefish) oil or whale oil are burnt, as are houses and thousands of blankets. The most valuable copper objects are broken and thrown into the water, in order to put down and to ‘flatten’ one’s rival. In this way one not
The excess and mechanicity of these females’ consumption reflect the underlining mode of mechanical reproduction, in which the larger society operates, and particularly the mechanically efficient division of gendered labor. Among highly specialized, gendered consumers (or producers), the pressure to be the same, to be competitive, with others in the same gendered category of consumers (or producers) will be more intense than among cross-categorized people. Deprived of any better occupational chance than staying at home with “three meals a day and afternoon naps” (sanshoku hirune tsuki) or relieved from household chores to be totally expendable “corporate worriers” (kigyō senshi), bourgeois women and men in postwar Japan have been made to be lifeless copies of each other within their own gender group. Freud says organisms in general are equipped with what he calls the “death instinct” (thanatos), which makes the organism eternally repeat some acts unto its death. Unless it is “repressed,” “sublimated,” or distracted by the “life instinct” (eros) of sexuality, the death instinct dominates the organism and contains it in the primordial pleasure of sameness sans evolution, sans diversity.8 While sublimation or di-

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8 Freud, Beyond the Pleasure Principle, trans. and ed. by James Strachey, intro. by Gregory Zilboorg, with a biographical intro. by Peter Gay (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 1989(1920)); see esp. pp.40-51. “But how is the predicate of being ‘instinctual’ related to the compulsion to repeat?” Freud starts his discussion (p.43). “It seems...that an instinct is an urge inherent in organic life to restore an earlier state of things which the living entity has been obliged to abandon under the pressure of external disturbing forces; that is, it is a kind of organic elasticity, or, to put it another way, the expression of the inertia inherent in organic life” (p.43; italics original). The “earlier state of things” that Freud talks about here turns out to be “inanimate” conditions of death—“we shall be compelled to say that ‘the aim of all life is death’ and, looking backwards, that ‘inanimate things existed before living ones’” (p.46; italics original). He continues, “For a long time, perhaps, living substance was thus being constantly created afresh and easily dying, till decisive external influences altered in such a way as to oblige the still surviving substance to diverge ever more widely from its original course of life and to make ever more complicated détours before reaching its aim of death” (p.46; italics original). He seems to imagine organisms’ ideal state, death, as a simple state, from which “diver[sion],” “complicat[ion]” and “détours” have gradually occurred; the death instinct is the instinct to remove diversion, render complication, and cut detours. To me, Freud seems to have been unconsciously thinking about the issue of the commodity and inchoately envisioning the problem of fascism.
versification could produce something truly transcendental or heterogeneous, these kinds of products are not what are demanded in the age of mechanical reproduction. Mono-categorical labor among only men or women in such an age seems to be dangerously death-oriented in the Freudian sense, but efficiently fitting the age and its demands.

Kotaki’s Japan or Machida’s gender-inversion might be meant to trim the excess and halt the mecanicity of their neighboring consumer-robots. One can probably call Kotaki and Machida’s strategies self-protective—protective from the mechanizing power of everyday fascism. It is not that Machida and Kotaki do not know the dangerous attraction of that power; it is the attraction of disguising their sexuality in the normative obasan appearance. It is only that Machida and Kotaki seem to try to slow the velocity with which other females seem to jump at one new image of the housewife after another and exchange these images among themselves. Machida and Kotaki’s goal is the same self-molding, albeit into one particular housewife-image. The image of their selection, that of obasan, seem to make a difference in speed, when the obasan is supposed to be an asexual, i.e. non-exchangeable, existence (Although an obasan can be substituted for another obasan, her image would not circulate easily in the market of sexuality). I am not sure if the celeb-type of married females are willing to call themselves anything but housewives, the generic term for home-makers that are open to sexuality (as in the “Wives on Fridays”).

Compare his idea of death with that discussed by Jean-Luc Nancy in his Inoperative Community, ed. by Peter Connor, trans. by Peter Connor, Lisa Garbus, Michael Holland, and Simona Sawhney, forward by Christopher Fynsk (Minneapolis and Oxford; University of Minnesota Press, 1991).

Artistically, the oba-san dynamic between the desire to be commoditized like others and determination not to be substituted for others is played out in such films as Barber Yoshino (Dir. by Naoko Ogigami; Tokyo: Euro Space, 2003), Cha no Aji (Dir. by Katsuhito Ishii; Tokyo: Clockworks and Rentrack Japan, 2004), and Kamome Shokudō (Dir. by Naoko Ogigami; Tokyo: Media Suits, 2006). A mature Banana Yoshimoto, a novelist, is also good at describing this dynamic with nuances—see, for instance, “Ashi Tebichi” in her Nankuru Naku Nai (Tokyo: Shinchō Sha, 2007), pp.53-77.
It seems that Machida’s lawsuit is another solution with which a conservative mind in a suburb might attempt to tame the excessive force of everyday fascism. To tame the fascist force, which seems to inevitably emerge in the vacuum made by the super-accelerated production and consumption of mechanically reproduced products among different gender groups, the state of Japan has prepared the ideology and institution of the neighborhood association. Opposing the association’s “religiosity,” Machida’s lawsuit joins the state’s project, albeit from the critical standpoint, the project to articulate the mass-reproduced unconsciousness of the suburban everyday. Such articulation is to be made in terms of the consecrated nation and moralized genders. Through the association’s discourses and practices, as well as their criticism by Machida, the smooth surface of the commodity’s circulation is symbolically demarcated into parts of the national body (kokutai). The neighborhood associations throughout the country are supposed to be such parts, the locally-anchored “cells” of the kokutai body. The ideological organization of the everyday by the neighborhood association is not concerning localization only. The association intends also to correct a certain ambiguity that is built in the capitalist division of gender. That is, commodity logic, on which modern capitalism is predicated, cannot provide an answer to the question, “why does the production/reproduction have to be divided primarily along the gender line and not according to other socio-cultural distinctions?” Capital surely divides, while it “equalizes,” humans and things. Yet, in order for a certain line of labor division to be stabilized, one needs the power of extra-economic principles. It might be tempting to see sex as one of such principles, as Friedrich Engels famously does, but perhaps the biological reasoning cannot explain more than conception and labor—other reproductive jobs could be shouldered by males as well, biologically speaking.10 If it is not biology, one might further wonder, then would it be the

10 Engels, The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1972(1884)). Henrietta L. Moore summarily introduces other criticisms of Engels made by various feminists—see
symbolic extension of the biological facts of female conception and labor, which is inevitable and responsible for gendered commodification? The idea of symbolism seems to me to indicate an intervention by the society—this kind of argument might be showing the arbitrariness, rather than inevitability, of the gendered division of labor. The aporia of the market, which is then conventionalized by history—this is how I conceptualize the gendered division of labor in a capitalist society or rather its conventionalized stability and duration. This is the view that sees a built-in contradiction in a capitalist relation of gender, the contradiction that the more some historical factors in a given society try to fix and stabilize the gender division, the more efficient the production and reproduction processes become, augmenting the death-instinctual automaticity in each process and threatening to abstract and erase the historically made gender distinction, the possible abstraction into the general mass condition. In the modern to contemporary Japanese case, it is the ideology of the neighborhood association that has tried to fortify and ended up in endangering the capitalist division of gender by explaining that genders are divided and hierarchized according to the organic national order of the kokutai. Division and hierarchization according to organicism is the working of corporatism. I will show how corporatist endeavors by the Toda neighborhood association has collaborated with Machida’s oppositional activism to ideologically organize and effectively cause everyday desires of fascism.

In the completely modern capitalist everyday of suburban Toda, the morality claimed by the neighborhood association or the religiosity of which Machida accuses must sound abrupt. As the kokutai body of the nation-state was one of the official ideologies of prewar Japan, the whole affair of the neighborhood association might seem to be anachronistic and irrelevant. Per-

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haps the shock of abruptness and the anachronistic appearance of tradition are the conservatives’ strategies to halt the flow and mold the desires in and of the everyday. Before showing how the (probably) intentionally irrelevant institution of the neighborhood association works in re-organizing the everyday rhythm of Toda Town, I will introduce a brief history of the institution in its relation with the prewar kokutai ideology.

**Incorporating the Everyday: The Neighborhood Association**

Anachronism and supplementality have characterized the neighborhood association since its birth in the 1920s. When the country’s cultural industry was fledgling and masses started to appear in cities, prototypical associations emerged everywhere with the reactionary will to voluntarism and nostalgic yearning for communitarianism. It is common among scholars to locate the association’s root in the mutual surveillance system of the Group of Five (Go-nin Gumi) in the Edo era (1600-1868). The association should rather be compared with its coeval, the consumer co-op, for instance, advocated by the French solidarity movement. Like the solidarity

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12 The view that traces the neighborhood association back to the Group of Five tends to be connected to the view that sees cultural continuity between these two institutions. Sociologists seem to be particularly drawn to the idea of finding the “cultural pattern” of Japan supposedly shown by the neighborhood association—see e.g. Tetsuo Ōmi, “Toshi no Chiiki Shūdan” in Shakai Kagaku Tōkyō, Vol.3, No.1, 1958: 225-6. More specifically, these sociologists say that the association is the lens through which to see “collectivism of the Japanese society,” which is the “remnant of [Japan’s] feudalism.” These quotes are respectively from Susumu Kurasawa, “Chōnai-kai Kenkyū no Igi to Kadai: Takagi Shōsaku Shi no Taisaku wo Yomu” in Shōsaku Takagi, Chōnai-kai Haishi to “Shin Seikatsu Kyōdō-tai no Kessei” (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppan Kai, 2005), pp.1047-62; p.1049 and Hidefumi Tanaka in Hiroyuki Torigoe, Chi’iki Jichi-kai no Kenkyū (Kyoto: Minerva Shobō, 1994); p.34; note 14.

What these theories cannot explain is the neighborhood association as a global, modern phenomenon. According to a friend of mine, as soon as he moves into a middle-class Connecticut suburb, “Kensington,” the “Kensington Association” left a welcome basket in front of his door—popcorns, pens and notepads, local business guides, and little towels. According to the “2013 KA Membership Dues,” “The Kensington Association celebrates its 66th year, 1947-2013, one of the oldest neighborhood associations in the country. We address all ‘quality of life’ issues including flooding, traffic, road conditions, commercial development at our borders, planning & zoning, historic preservation, area beautification, school donations, scholarships for Kensington students and many other programs/issues. / Become actively involved in the preservation of Kensington, by becoming an active and dues-paying member of your Association” (unpublished). Many activities by the U.S. association seem to overlap with its counterpart in Japan, except for the planning and zoning and scholarship programs, perhaps.

13 “Solidarity was a theme—indeed an ‘idée-force,’” in the expression of Alfred Fouliée,” says Dominick LaCapra. See his *Emile Durkheim: Sociologist and Philosopher* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press,
movement, the association at the start was characterized by its rivalry with the dispersing masses of the urban proletariat or the modernizing force in rural villages. In villages, well-to-do farmers mobilized voluntary power of the villagers to extend electric lines; in cities, suburban farmers or downtown merchants got together to build locally-based occupational groups.\textsuperscript{14}

The communitarianism of these movements had to wait for the state’s appropriation in order to totalize themselves into the picture of the nation-state’s body. A manifestation of the will to integrate the post-Great Depression masses, the state’s appropriation of these moral communities accompanied the ideology of their organic totality. Called \textit{kokutai}, or literally the body of the nation-state, this totality was allegorically the body of the then sovereign of Japan, the emperor. The allegorical body of the emperor was ideologized to overlap with the actual geographical totality of the Japanese territory. The \textit{kokutai} body was supposed to consist of the neighborhood associations as the smallest moral geographical units, and then villages and towns as the associations’ congregates, and then cities, prefectures, etc. The bodily allegory was used to naturalize the centralizing domination by the corporatist state. This centralization succeeded, carrying people’s longing for organicism, solidarity, and sacredness all the more after these had been disappearing from the everyday.\textsuperscript{15}


\textsuperscript{15} The thesis of the monolithic state and the idea of the neighborhood association as a functioning part of the state-monolith have been developed by political scientists in particular. Ritsuo Akimoto, for instance, argues that the association was an administrative “net” that the “all-out war” state cast over local Japan. See his \textit{Sensō to Minshū:...
Although gender is usually overlooked by conventional studies of the neighborhood association, I would argue that corporatism that involves the association cannot be fully understood without taking into account its deeply gendered structure. Gender is one of the elements that make the corporatism of locality not just total but also hierarchical. This corporatism tried to crisscross the imagined totality of geographical/symbolic Japan with clearly demarcated and hierarchized male/female spaces. If each community was supposed to be an organic part of the half-symbolic, half-geographical body of the kokutai, the community as such a part was also ideologized to be aesthetically and politically representing the female sphere of reproduction. Here in this structure in which the hierarchical idea of gender was meant to base not only everyday lives but also the nation-state, one is seeing what was most pleasurable and anxious to the Taisho (1912-1925) Japanese—the blurring of the gender distinction, in addition to people’s geographical mobility, both of which the maturing economy had enabled. It is true that people in this period were not just massified—they were massified as the male and female masses. Just like today when capital interpellates Todan females as consumers and reproducers, Taisho females’ mass-

Taiheiyō Sensō-ka no Toshi Seikatsu (Tokyo: Gakuyō Shobō, 1974); p.54. According to Akira Okada, such a net should be considered in the context of the overall history of the modern Japanese state, which has struggled to “grasp residents” through census registration (koseki) and other institutions. See his “Jichitai Gyōsei Shi: Shiryō wo shite Katara-shimeru” in Takagi, Ibid., pp.1063-75; p.1070.

Certainly, these political scientific studies of the neighborhood association in modern Japan lack the view of the subject. Ezra Vogel is one of the pioneers in this regard—see his Japan’s New Middle Class: The Salary Man and His Family in a Tokyo Suburb (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963). According to him, at least in the early postwar period the association was not an effective vehicle of people’s political participation, since the middle-class Japanese focused on economic activities instead. Theodore Bestor in his Neighborhood Tokyo (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1989) inherits Vogel’s thesis and argues that the postwar association has been meaningful (in the Geertian sense) not so much to the bourgeois participants as to the petty bourgeois members. In his Molding Japanese Minds: The State in Everyday Life (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997), Sheldon Garon similarly sees the association in terms of the dialectic between the moralizing state and the anti-communist society. Mary Alice Haddad revisits the association from the perspective of the civil society, in which volunteering and other types of civil participation are the key to understand local lives in Japan. See her Politics and Volunteering in Japan: A Global Perspective (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

The political scientists’ focus on the state power should surely be supplemented by these studies of how such power is subjectified and practiced by individual participants. My study recasts these previous works by introducing the category of the everyday and the idea of fantasy that emerges from the everyday—the state and its subjects are corroborative at the fantastic as well as practical level in imagining such a thing as the body of the nation-state, of which the neighborhood association is supposed to be a part.
ness was expressed as that of female consumers, while female workers in the period were employed based on their capital-assigned role as reproducers (e.g. as nurses versus physicians). Yet an observer has to notice here that the gender difference was less accentuated, the more one descended the class ladder; in mines, construction sites, or factories, the proletariat women worked as hard as their male colleagues.\(^{16}\) Even among the bourgeois members of the society, their desires for and fears of the power of the commodity’s appearance were expressed in the form of the Takarazuka Theater, for example, in which the all-female troupe played both male and female roles.\(^{17}\) The gendered masses were perceived to be that ambiguous. Therefore, the state’s corporatism did not merely trace over the capitalist division of gender; I have said corporatism also hierarchized the genders. In addition to the organicist division of gender based on sex, this is probably a significant feature of corporatism, which is likely derived from the potentiality that the male and female masses can lose their gender at any time, like the tuxedo-clad “male” (otoko yaku) on the Takarazuka stage. Corporatists are perhaps those who fear that the gendered distinction made during the commodification process is not enough to mitigate the indiscriminate power that is also inherent in commodification, the power that is indiscriminate due to its emphasis on things’ appearance and not their substance. Extra-economical orders, such as a moral statist hierarchy, to corporatists might look to be a reliable stabilizer of gender in addition to the gender-differentiating dynamic of commodification.


\(^{17}\) See Jennifer Robertson, *Takarazuka: Sexual Politics and Popular Culture in Modern Japan* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998). Takarazuka has a predecessor, an all-male, theatrical genre of kabuki. While Robertson attaches a certain, sexist connotation to the Japanese evaluation of kabuki higher than Takarazuka (pp.53-5), I would add that their discourse of kabuki authenticity might have something to do with these two forms of play’s timing—on the one hand, the newly produced Takarazuka represents the sensibility of mechanical reproduction. On the other hand, older kabuki in modern times stirs a nostalgia of the pre-mechanical reproductive order of the genders.
Therefore, there was more to neighborhood corporatism than being a demarcator of neighborhoods as the female sphere. Corporatism in the neighborhood also endeavored to maintain the females’ neighborhood by letting the male leaders of the town represent females’ reproductive/consumerist practices. The logic of the commodity per se cannot build such a representational hierarchy between males and females. In addition to the patriarchal ideology of the “family nation” (kazoku kokka) that I have analyzed in Chapter 1, the corporatists resorted to the statist category of the public (kō)/private (shi).\textsuperscript{18} About the family nation ideology, recall that it tried to organize people according to their gender, status, age, or ethnicity. The allegory of a patriarchal family was employed to hierarchically order these categories; the high-statused, elder male Japanese were meant to prevail in such an order. Using the female hands to distribute rations, making women clean the neighborhood, and letting them hold peer learning sessions of cooking, childbearing and -rearing, and so forth, the neighborhood association facilitated the process through which the imagined patriarchy of the nation was practiced in such a visceral space-time as the household or the neighborhood. Represented by elder male executives, the association replicated the national patriarchy as its monad, the second smallest after the household. The nation in turn was a kind of macrocosm, to which the patriarchal essence of the household or neighborhood was extended, the nation as a large family. So, the idea of the family nation ideologically sufficed to secure the gender distinction and hierarchy among the masses. Corporatists still introduced the public/private ideology additionally, in order to formerly check the female participa-

\textsuperscript{18} Of course, the statist subjugation of the female sphere was simultaneous with the nationalist valorization of the same sphere. According to Partha Chatterjee in his \textit{The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories} (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), in postcolonial Indian nationalism “The home was the principal site for expressing the spiritual quality of the national culture, and women must take the main responsibility for protecting and nurturing this quality” (p.126). A similar ideology of women as the “repository of national culture” was observable in prewar Japan, according to Tamanoi, Ibid. But different from the postcolonial Indian state, which Chatterjee says defined itself according to “the ideology of the modern liberal-democratic state” (p.10), the Japanese state at least since the 1920s might try to derive its self-definition from the newly advocated state-form of corporatism. Women in such a state were not used to juxtapose the concept of the cultural nation vis-à-vis the modern state but were the symbolic basis of the public state itself.
tion in politics. The masses had to be gendered not only in terms of their socio-culturally assigned gender roles in a symbolic family of the nation, but also in terms of the politically assigned statuses of the male citizens and female subjects, the subjects without the right to participate in the state-centered politics.

Reading the Meiji Enlightenment thinker Yukichi Fukuzawa and Fukuzawa’s postwar inheritor Masao Maruyama, Victor Koschmann suggests that the public/private distinction throughout modern Japan be considered in light of

the effect of a particular liberal tradition, perhaps founded in part by John Locke but contributed to importantly by Kant, Hegel, and others, in which freedom is sought through a process of self-discipline, or self-legislation, focused on the nation-state. In this tradition, the exercise of self-discipline differentiates the private world of desire from the public world of reason; family and civil society from the state; and also, significantly, the realm of the female from that of the male. Politics, moreover, tends to be limited to a narrow sphere of activity centered on the state.¹⁹

In the first chapter of the current dissertation, I have discussed the subjected freedom of Kant. By “self-discipline,” Koschmann means this type of subjectification, on which Michel Foucault also elaborates.²⁰ The argument that the modern ideology of the public/private erroneously and self-contradictorily makes is that only men are able to self-discipline and that only men are thus qualified for freedom. As for women, it is interesting that Koschmann uses the term, fetishism, in an effort to explain the “desire” that Fukuzawa and Maruyama think accompanies women and subsequently depoliticizes women.²¹ The usage is made when Koschmann mentions the related concept of wakudeki or literally “drowned attachment” that both Fukuzawa and Maruyama present. Neither Fukuzawa/Maruyama nor Koschmann is here mentioning the commodity. However, inspired by this terminology of fetishism, one might be tempted to think that in modern Japan, the

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¹⁹ See his Revolution and Subjectivity in Postwar Japan (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996); p.181.
conservatives such as Fukuzawa try to contain the irrational attraction to and fear of the commodity in the supposedly female sphere, the sphere of consumption and reproduction, without the realization that such irrationality must accompany the supposedly male sphere of production as well.\(^{22}\) If one would like to push this thought a little further, then the term of prewar citizenship, the right to participate in the state-centered politics, could be defined in terms of the self-disciplined distance that one (or a man) is supposed to be able to take from the drowned fetishism among consumers (or women). In the same vein, one might be able to reconsider political representation as an act of the disciplinary taming of others (women), the controlled abstracting of others’ attachment. Although the all-out war paucity has to be taken into consideration, the control of the women’s consuming behaviors was indeed one of the biggest goals among the neighborhood associations at least during the Asia-Pacific War. As an important institution in the state corporatist Imperial Rule Association between 1940 and 1945, the association promoted the slogan “Luxury Is Our Enemy” (Zeitaku wa Teki da) in an attempt to cut the consumerist excess and the excessive fetishization of the commodity. When the fetishism of the commodity, or at least generic desires as Koschmann terms it, was thus assigned to women and the citizen’s freedom of political participation was exclusively assigned to men, the association was the vanguard of this gender categorization and representation. The association aspired to be the foundation of the state-corporatist hierarchy as the first public sphere to represent the private desires. From the association’s male leaders’ representation of neighborhood females, this representational hierarchy of the sublimated private started to build up—from the association to the town, from the town to the city, the private element was supposed to be attenuated. So was women’s participa-

\(^{22}\) In previous chapters, I have discussed my view that commodity fetishism motivates both the producer and consumer in modern capitalism.
tion in politics. Still the hierarchy of public representation was based on the private—consumption, reproduction, and females—and thus looked organic.\textsuperscript{23}

Thus, starting as relatively straightforward, communitarian reactions to modernization and its displacement, the neighborhood association toward and during the war grew to be the foundation of a dynamic socio-political system of gender, the state, the nation, and their corporatism. Again, this system was allegorized to be the emperor’s body. Reflecting corporatism’s totalizing and grading nature, the emperor as an allegory was the most original patriarch of all and also the supremely public figure, signifying not just the possibility of national unification but also the location of the apex in the unified nation-state’s political representational realm. The ordinary Japanese accepted such an allegory and even attempted to climb up the imperial hierarchy through symbolical self-masculinization, status-raising marriages, and others.\textsuperscript{24} At the same time, they competed with the hierarchizing momentum of corporatism by appropriating the emperor’s sign for their death-communal movement that aimed at “equalizing” men and women (see Chapter 1). The gendering and localizing grid of corporatism, the neighborhood association, everywhere stood in front of such a movement, representing the bourgeois interest in lands, houses, and good neighborhoods for education. Patriarchy and the public/private distinction promoted the bourgeois property formation, since the types of gendered division of labor, which these ideologies effected, fit and accentuated what capitalism promoted—the labor-divided efficiency

\textsuperscript{23} Of course, the statist subjugation of the female sphere was simultaneous with the nationalist valorization of the same sphere. According to Partha Chatterjee in his \textit{The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories} (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), in postcolonial Indian nationalism “The home was the principal site for expressing the spiritual quality of the national culture, and women must take the main responsibility for protecting and nurturing this quality” (p.126). A similar ideology of women as the “repository of national culture” was observable in prewar Japan, according to Tamanoi, Ibid. But different from the postcolonial Indian state, which Chatterjee says defined itself according to “the ideology of the modern liberal-democratic state” (p.10), the Japanese state at least since the 1920s might try to derive its self-definition from the newly advocated state-form of corporatism. Women in such a state were not used to juxtapose the concept of the cultural nation vis-à-vis the modern state but were the symbolic basis of the public state itself.

\textsuperscript{24} The question that women with upward mobility asked was whether and how they could contribute to the public. More discussion to follow.
based on gendered appearances. The death-communal gender-equivalence was of course similarly based on commodity logic, yet there was something extra-capitalist in its fundamentalism. Though it might have started as the farmers’ or petty bourgeois movement of nostalgia, the neighborhood association toward the end of the war had been fully subsumed under bourgeois statist auspices.

The neighborhood association perished in 1947 according to the Allied Forces’ General Headquarters (GHQ)’s theory that the association as a member apparatus of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association was responsible for “militarizing” the ordinary Japanese. In the 1950s, as soon as the GHQ withdrew and the country regained its sovereignty, the association started to be re-established all over the country. The resurrected association might seem to have lost its fundamental significance in the new nation-state of Japan. This nation-state was that of democratic nationalism, in which the idea of the public and the patriarch no longer integrated men and women. The neighborhood association might seem just an irrelevant remnant of the past in the booming economy. Or, the association might look to be the “other” space, in which economic “losers” gathered for status- (versus class-) construction.

Nevertheless, the association to me appears to have continuously been the center of the everyday national formation, especially to the degree that this nation is desired to be hierarchical. When the new nation is supposed to be democratic, of course the prewar neighborhood techniques of the public/private dichotomy and patriarchal hierarchization of men and women are not explicitly mentioned by the postwar association of the neighborhood. The postwar conservatives who gather in the neighborhood association rather imply these prewar systems in their new and old “religious” discourses of the nation. As I will discuss below, religion, or

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25 See Vogel, Ibid.
26 See Bestor, Ibid.
Shinto in this case, is the nexus of different imaginations of the postwar nation. The conservatives seem to participate in this competition by adopting the idea of Shinto as a tool to consecrate the concept of national authorities, as a momentum to hierarchize the space-time of the nation. The prewar patriarchy and public/private duality seem to be absorbed and developed by this discourse of the religiously sacred nation under the divine or at least central emperor, which the neighborhood association and other conservative actors advocate for.

Observing a similarly hierarchical momentum in the turn-of-the-last-century milieu of Indonesian nationalism, James Siegel remarks that “the wish for nationalist hierarchy is the wish that language and the world coincide.” Nationalism, according to him, is based on what he calls the “power of communication”—the power of signs, appearance versus content, or exchange-value versus use-value, which renders everyone equivalent at least on the printed surface of the imagined nation, as in Benedict Anderson’s nation imagined through the newspaper metonymy (see Chapter 2). Simultaneously an “impulse to hierarchy…occurs within the development of nationalism,” the impulse to domesticate the excessive production and circulation of signs that can disguise, lie, leak, and proliferate. Remember from my examples that not all the women who shop in the Rainbow Garden are actually bourgeois; even those working women in the “project” housing become bourgeois by purchasing the bourgeois signs of comfort. The neighborhood association in postwar Japan represents the hierarchical nationalist impulse to remove these disguises and limit other excesses that their nationalism has caused. The mold into which such an impulse might like to contain the nationalist excesses is corporatism—the new corporatism of the gendered and communitarian nation.

The Shinto Neighborhood of the Neo-Corporatist Nation-State

The thesis of hierarchical nationalism pursues the contradiction between the equivalence-oriented movement to realize the people’s nation and the order-seeking impetus to grade the people. While the postwar neighborhood association aspires to be the basic and original unit of the people’s nation, the association also intends to be the conservative and reactionary advocate for the emperor’s nation. Different ideas of Shinto are the key to understand the postwar association as the arena in which equivalence-oriented nationalism competes with the nationalists’ contradictory promotion of hierarchies.

Let us examine these relations in what is called the “jade fence” (tama gaki) that the “Toda Ward United Associations of Neighborhood” (Toda-Ku Rengō Chōnai Kai), including the Toda association, constructed in the Yawata Shrine in the town of Toda. The united associations donated the supposedly symbolically precious piece of slate, the jade fence, in 1990 upon the death of the emperor Showa (1925-1989) and the enthronement of his son, Heisei (whose personal name is Akihito; Heisei is Akihito’s reign’s name). The etched surface of the dark green-gray slate, approximately 2 yards square, reads as follows—

It is awe-inspiring that in November of the second year of Heisei, the one hundred twenty fifth [emperor of Heisei] held the enthronement ritual and the ritual to present his reign’s first rice to the gods. Coincidentally, this was the year of two thousand six hundred fifty in the imperial calendar. As an embodiment of the people’s insurmountable joy, we humbly build and donate this jade fence.

Heisei is mentioned here also as a temporal unit, gengō, which counts each emperor’s reign as a meaningful period of time. The “second year of Heisei” is the gengō way to denote the year 1990 A.D., since Akihito was enthroned as Heisei in 1989 A.D. Whereas the gengō is ordinarily used in contemporary Japan side by side with the Gregorian Calendar, another temporal system men-
tioned in the slate, the “imperial calendar” (kōki), is not. Probably due to the kōki’s clearly imperial origin (1872), as compared to the gengō system that has longer history beyond the modern times, the kōki was abolished upon the collapse of the empire in 1945. A designated rival of the Gregorian Calendar, the kōki sets its origin in the mythical figure, Jimmu, the “first” emperor from some three thousand years ago. The kōki aggregates the gengō periods into a unitary flow of time, perhaps to create the impression that the country has continuously been under the current royal family’s reign. The “donors,” as they sign so on the slate, say that they built the slate relief in the “year of two thousand six hundred fifty” in this currently repressed calendar of imperial Japan. By referring to the imperial calendar, these donors who are the united associations of the Toda Ward neighborhoods, seem to show their willingness to subject themselves to the prewar imperial order. This order is narrated in terms of neither the private/public dichotomy nor the patriarchal familial hierarchy, but by the religious category of the sacred/profane—the “ritual to present his [Heisei’s] reign’s first rice to [Shinto] gods” (ōname sai). The religioized emperor is consistent with an aspect of the kōki temporality; Jimmu the original emperor and many others that appear in the collection of myths that the kōki refers to (Kojiki) are supposed to be divine. As a supposedly remote descendant of these emperor-gods, Heisei could claim his divinity, according to the kōki ideology. Besides the kōki calendar and the ōname ritual, the religious idioms are abundant in the slate. Take a look at the inscription of the relief, its Rococo embellishment made from “humble” and “honorary” suffixes and postfixes (kenjōgo and keigo respectively).³⁰ The writing that is so humble and respectful that it eschews mentioning the emperor or his reign by name is etched with the so-called “Shinto character” (Shinto tai), suggesting that its deference is of the religious nature. The Shinto character is a form of writing that combines old Chinese and

³⁰ About the relation between the kenjōgo and keigo system and the postwar emperor’s socio-cultural status, see Carol Gluck, “Tennō Sei to Babel no Tō” in Sekai, January 2000, pp.129-133.
Japanese *katakana*, a system of phonetic writing. To ordinary Japanese, the Shinto character might be the reminder of the long-abandoned, prewar Japanese writing, which similarly used old Chinese and *katakana* Japanese (*kyūji*). But to Shinto practitioner, the Shinto character is different from the *kyūji* Chinese-*katakana* system in its supposedly religious meaningfulness. The use of Shinto characters implicitly show the users’ deference to the emperor as the supposedly highest priest and god of Shinto.  

How should one think of the religiosity of the slate? Why does the neighborhood seem to try to produce religiosity in the midst of the otherwise completely commodified everyday? What is the nature of this “religion” anyway, when it is laced with anti-westernism (e.g. the *kōki* system as an intended alternative to the Gregorian Calendar) and traditionalism? Is Shinto here a religion or the source of a certain cultural authenticity? Prior to 1945, religious logic and rhetoric were indeed used to create and represent people’s desires for the patriarchal authority and the sanctioned idea of the public. Could the Todan slate be considered as a case of the “return of the repressed,” with repression here being the establishment of democracy in 1945? Is the sacredness of the prewar and postwar instances of religion the same thing? And again, why do the Toda associations lend themselves as one of the sites in which these questions are raised and contemplated?  

During the period it was constructed, the slate was not alone in representing the potentially uncanny religiosity of the emperor. Heisei would legitimize his new reign with the so-called three sacred treasures (*sanshu no jingi*) of red agate, mirror, and sword, which were supposed to have been bequeathed to him from the god-emperors of the mythical era. In addition to the above-mentioned ōname rice ritual, Heisei’s vow at the imperial spirit’s palace (*kōrei den*)
similarly impressed 1990s Japan with the emperorship’s religious nature. Perhaps it was a sheer coincidence that those heavily mass-mediated items and rites of emperorship (though their images were prohibited) created the impression of a sudden burst of the religious in 1989 and 1990, upon such an occasion as funeral at least, the usually religion-required occasion. If one pays closer attention to what the media, and through the media, the people meant by religion, one could see that the seemingly new discursive field of religion was not that new or opportunistic. These discourses’ consistency with democratic principles would be seen in the fact that the religious parts of the funerary and enthroning rituals were conducted and represented as the royal family’s private affairs. This is where the theory of the uncanny does not quite fit; the state, while having regulated and facilitated these rituals, was not meant to be the signified sacred of these rituals, unlike the prewar case. Shinto as the emperor’s private affair took on a more profound significance to the people than saving the state and emperor from any accusation of the church-state violation, due to the postwar logic of the emperor as the national cultural symbol of Japan. Thus the people through media discussed the “imperial spirit” (kōrei) together with the assumed spirit of the nation; what the emperor wore, ate, enunciated in the series of those rituals were connected to the supposed tradition of the larger society. As the whole nation watched and various ideologies interpreted, Shinto’s religiosity was displaced into Japan’s nationality, nationality that was partially overlapped yet not quite identical with the patriarchy of the prewar nation. One can probably say that postwar Japan’s overall discourse of the popular nation (i.e. the nation as people’s, as compared to either the patriarch emperor’s nation or the state’s nation) found a renewed, religious way to express and consecrate its force upon the emperor’s death and enthronement. In this Durkheimean understanding of religion, or rather of the sacred society, the concept of the nation contains such force as to fit even the religious discourse of the sacred.\footnote{Emile Durkheim, \textit{The Elementary Forms of Religious Life}, trans. and w/ and intro. by Karen E. Fields}
this interpretation, the Toda associations can be thought of as contributing yet another discourse of the sacred nation as its member. I will reconsider this interpretation that certain Japanese leftists and rightists present regarding religion’s position in postwar Japanese society. When these scholars and Durkheim himself seem to assume that the force of the society is self-evident, this assumption should be questioned in terms of the commodity, or more specifically, commodity fetishism.  

To further explore the relation between the nation and religion, let us examine how the term “people” (kokumin) enters the Todan relief, intervening into and interacting with its otherwise religious rhetoric and logic. Usually, the kokumin almost exclusively indicates all Japanese nationals. It can be either the legal term that designates the sovereign of the Japanese nation-state, as in the 1947 Constitution, or the socio-cultural term that refers to the imagination of the Japanese nation. There is another term that exclusively indicates the former connotation of the kokumin people, i.e. shimin, the Japanese equivalent to the English citizen. When the shimin is usually used to indicate people’s political rights and their participation in the civil society, probably it is safe that this term should be withdrawn from the discussion of the slate. In the meantime, kokumin people became the sovereign of Japan only in 1947; prior to this, the kokumin was synonymous to the shinmin, the emperor’s subjects and servants. When the slate’s  

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34 This criticism of Durkheim is inspired by Michael Taussig, “Maleficium: State Fetishism” in his The Nervous System (New York: Routledge, 1992), pp.111-140. “It is fascinating,” Taussig says, “that what we might call (with some perplexity) the image itself should be granted such a power—not the signified, the sacred totemic species, animal, vegetable, and so forth, but the signifier is itself prized apart from its signification so as to create a quite different architecture of the sign—an architecture in which the signified is erased…Which force, for Marx, in the form of commodity fetishism, would exist and be effective precisely on account of erasure—of the erasure locked into the commodity in its exchange-value phase ensuring its dislocation, its being prized apart from the social and particularist context of its production. Which force, for Durkheim, is ‘society’” (p.128; parentheses and emphases original).
donors say, probably pretending to represent the people, that they are “awe-inspir[ed]” by the emperor’s enthronement, people here could be interpreted as something similar to the shinmin subject/servant. At the same time, when the word kokumin actually appears in the slate in the last sentence, it does so as the designator of the holders of the supposedly “insurmountable joy” toward the enthroned emperor. This designation is contradictory to the rest of the slate—its reference to (people’s) awe, its religious rhetoric, and self-subjection to the sacred temporality kōki. This is because the insurmountable joy of the emperor’s enthronement requires one’s sympathetic faculty, i.e. the capacity to feel for the emperor. People, the owners of this faculty, are the subjective kokumin nationals and not the subjected shinmin subjects, due to the equivalent relation between the subject and object that this faculty enables.

Sympathy, as thus seems to be evoked by the Toda slate, needs more discussion here, due to the important role that this affect has performed in the postwar formation of the Japanese nation in general. According to Emmanuel Levinas, sympathy should be differentiated from the kind of relation with other that respects other’s alterity. Levinas says:

To be sure, the other (l’Autre) that is announced does not possess this existing as the subject possesses it; its hold over my existing is mysterious. It is not unknown but unknowable, refractory to all light. But this precisely indicates that the other is in no way another myself, participating with me in a common existence. The relationship with the other is not an idyllic and harmonious relationship of communion, or a sympathy through which we put ourselves in the other’s place; we recognize the other as resembling us, but exterior to us; the relationship with the other is a relationship with a Mystery. The other’s entire being is constituted by its exteriority, or rather its alterity, for exteriority is a property of space and leads the subject back to itself through light.35

Comparable with communion, the relation that sympathy allows one to forge with other does not treat other as a “Mystery,” Levinas suggests, as the “unknowable, refractory to all light.” To the contrary, sympathy’s gesture to “put ourselves in the other’s place” is usually meant to treat oth-

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35 The Levinas Reader, ed. by Seán Hand (Oxford and Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1989); p.43; emphasis original.
ers just like “us.” In contrast to this leveling mechanism of sympathy, religious emotions such as awe, as the Toda associations and the rest of the country would like to mention, more likely involve the hierarchizing momentum. The religious minds would try to detect the ultimate alterity, the noumenon, in other and submit themselves to such alterity. The sympathetic minds are those which try to discover irreducible similarity in other and equalize themselves with others based on this similarity. In anthropology, sympathy is the faculty that anti-racist researchers, such as Bronislaw Malinowski, introduced in order to understand, instead of analyze, natives as the same human beings. In his words, one of the goals of ethnographers, of which they “should never lose sight,” is “briefly, to grasp the native’s point of view, his relation to life, to realise his vision of his world.”

Kōjin Karatani helps one push this insight further and reconsider the affect of sympathy in terms of commodification. According to him, in modern times, sympathy became the moral philosophical buzzword with Adam Smith’s elaboration. Karatani argues that the principle of

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37 Clifford Geertz’s critique of what Malinowski values as “empathy,” one of the most important ethnographical tools according to him, hinges on this point—“But at least some conception of what a human individual is, as opposed to a rock, an animal, a rainstorm, or a god, is, so far as I can see, universal. Yet, at the same time, as these offhand examples suggest, the actual conceptions involved vary from one group to the next, and often quite sharply. The Western conception of the person as a bounded, unique, more or less integrated motivational and cognitive universe, a dynamic center of awareness, emotion, judgment, and action organized into a distinctive whole and set contrastively both against other such wholes and against its social and natural background, is, however incorrigible it may seem to us, a rather peculiar idea within the context of the world’s cultures. Rather than attempting to place the experience of others within the framework of such a conception, which is what the extolled ‘empathy’ in fact usually comes down to, understanding them demands setting that conception aside and seeing their experiences within the framework of their own idea of what selfhood is.” See “‘From the Native’s Point of View’: On the Nature of Anthropological Understanding” in his *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), pp.55-70; p.59. And the result is ironically the extremely “Western” technique of “textual analysis,” with which Geertz would read Balinese cockfight as a native version of the Flaubertian “sentimental education,” for instance—see his “Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight” in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), pp.412-453; p.444.
laissez-faire, with which Smith’s thoughts are usually associated, is not particularly contradictory to the Smithian moral philosophy of sympathy. Karatani suggests that Smith believed that modern sympathy should rather complement capitalist interactions as a sort of the moral affective liaison among the mutually independent, differently interested subjects. This argument might remind one of Marx in the first chapter of this dissertation, where he says that the modern capitalist subjects are motivated to produce only on the assumption that others are as moral in the market as s/he is. Likewise, Kant might not have been even interested in studying modern morality, if he was not facing the possibility of the capitalist outliers, viz. “free riders.” To the degree that the free rider is exceptional, the modern capitalist actors are always already subjected to the law of morality, Kant and Marx would say, and to the affect of sympathy, Smith would say. The relation of sympathy to morality might be that of supplementality—the moral law that everyone should be mutually affinitive and harmonious is construed to be imaginatively assumed and affectively felt by the subjects with their faculty of sympathy, so that the law could be “alive” and effective in the subjects’ minds. Mediating the capitalist subject and moral law this way, sympathy is also estimated to be instrumental in constructing a moral community, realizing it at the imaginative and affective levels prior to and apart from the actual construction of such a community. The imagined community of the modern capitalist nation could be thought of as being imagined specifically with people’s sympathetic faculty. The community of sympathy of course ex-

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39 According to Ross Poole, Morality and Modernity (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), pp.17-21, the problem of free riders, as Kant entertains, is the problem of instrumental reason that considers only the causality of one’s relation to other, as the means to end. Kant’s moral philosophy can be thought of as an attempt to explore why such a haphazard relation based on self-interest only rarely occurs and how the universal institution of moral duties usually prevails in everyday transactions.
40 About a contemporary Philippine case, in which the nation is imagined through people’s sympathy with the death of an overseas Philippina worker, Flor Contemplacion, who was executed in 1995 in Singapore for murder, see Vicente L. Rafael, “‘Your Grief Is Our Gossip’: Overseas Filipinos and Other Spectral Presences” in his White Love: And Other Events in Filipino History (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), pp.204-
cludes Levinasian alterity. The sympathetic community is that among the subjects; by definition, it emerges only where the concept of alterity is put aside.

Now, what the Toda associations implicitly claim to represent in their slate oscillates between the nature of the awe-inspired shinmin of the apotheosized emperor and that of the sympathetic subject of the commoditized nation. At the same time, when one looks at the object of the awe and sympathy respectively, the oscillation might seem to be settled one way or another. Let us go back to Adam Smith and others’ concepts of sympathy. In these thinkers’ discussion of the relation between sympathy and subjectification, the existence of any authority is lacking; the process in which the mutually sympathetic community of the subjects is constructed is suggested to be autonomous. In contrast, one should notice once more in the Todan slate the fact that the kokumin as the sympathetic nation emerge only in front of the emperor. If the Smithian community enjoys a certain level of solidarity due to its members’ sympathy with each other, the Japanese people, as they appear in the slate, seem to be united due to their sympathy with the same object, the emperor. One can argue here again that the emperor is the objectified expression of people’s mutual sympathy. If so, it is interesting that the emperor as the supposed expression is so spotlighted as to appear he had the power to cause people’s mutual sympathy. The emperor in the slate may not be the authority to demand people’s moral behaviors toward each other, but he seems to be the central figure to collect their sympathetic affect.

And the slate is not alone in presenting this extra-Smithian formation of the sympathetic nation of postwar Japan. In the 1950-60s, Akihito (Heisei) commanded the democratic Japanese sympathy as he fell in love with the “commoner” Michiko and together constructed an American-looking family on the palace’s lawn.41 Here, Akihito and Michiko were sympathized not so much for their exceptional statuses or qualities, if there were, as for their common sensi-

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41 See Keiichi Matsushita, “Taishū Tennō Ron” in Chūō Kōron, April, 1959, 30-47.
bility of democracy that they ironically seemed to share with the people. The couple was none-
theless the center of people’s sympathetic attention and subjectifying efforts; and as such, the
couple integrated the nation as a centralized community. This formation revealed itself once
more in an even more intense form, when Akihito’s father, Hirohito (Showa), passed away in
1989. At that time, the lugubrious sympathy toward Hirohito was expressed through closed of-
fices and shattered shops, TV programs that excluded the word *genki* (health or wellness), and
the cancellation of various festivals and other events. The “totalitarianism of self-restraint”
(*jishuku no zentaishugi*), as the country’s intellectuals called it, was restrained in order to respect
others’ assumed feeling of mournfulness. Unlike the Smithian community, the Japanese sympa-
thy at the time was expressed primarily toward the emperor as the central figure, and by exten-
sion, with others’ supposed sympathy toward the emperor. The sympathetic totalitarianism was a
peculiarly postwar phenomenon, which had not been observable when Hirohito’s father, Yoshi-
hito (Taisho), had died in 1925, according to Masao Maruyama’s observation. Given the com-
plexity of the emperor’s sign in prewar Japan, where it had stood at the juncture between the stat-
ist distinction of the private/public and the fascist idea of the death-communal equality, in addi-
tion to the nationalist imagination of the family-nation, the non-totalitarian mourning of Yoshihi-
to’s death that Maruyama said he had observed might mean this very state of competition be-
tween the differently interpellating forces of different ideologies. In postwar Japan, the national
affect of sympathy seems to overwhelm the everyday, due to the nationalism’s conceptual preva-

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lence over other possible momentums for Japan’s ideological integration. In the wake of the national aura created by the sympathetic Japanese upon Showa’s death, the Toda neighborhood associations in 1990 should surely have been able to easily assume and effect that all the Japanese beyond Toda were the same nationals in their common insurmountable joy toward Heisei’s enthronement.

In the first chapter of this dissertation, I have examined the concept of reincorporation in the light of its relations to the automatic process of commodification and to the co-emergent desires for the origin or center of the commodification process. In order to compare the Smithian and postwar Japanese communities of sympathy, one needs to revisit the concept of reincorporation—of course, only if one admits postwar Japan’s modernity and its commoditized everyday. Sympathy toward the dying or familial emperor to me seems to represent people’s anxiety about their own autonomous morality that does not require any authoritative models or guidance. This autonomy of the Smithian community is further dramatized by Rousseau, whose reference to the emotion of passion erases any trace of the object, which Smith still explores—sympathy necessarily takes the object, reincorporated or not. According to Jacques Derrida’s reading of Rousseau:

All passion is to some degree passion inutile, made gratuitous by the non-existence of an object or a cause. The possibility of passion distinguishes man from the animal: “The need for subsistence forces man apart from other men, but the passions draw them together. The first speech was not caused by hunger or thirst, but by love, hatred, pity an danger.”

Paul de Man also cites this portion of Derrida and argues that contrary to Derrida’s interpretation, Rousseau is in fact theoretically aligned with Derrida. De Man highlights that to Rousseau, it is passion, and not need, which makes society. “Made gratuitous by non-existence of an object or a

cause,” as Derrida interprets Rousseau, the speech of passion that bears sociality is that of figu-
rality, de Man says. Resembling what the psychoanalysts Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok
call the “community of empty mouths” (see my Chapter 2), Rousseau’s society, then, is commu-
nicative due to its fundamental lack. As I have discussed, in the postwar Japanese nation, the
lack in the mouth does not seem to have been filled with figurative language, figuratively speak-
ing. Rather, the lack made by the defeated war and lost fascism seems to have been filled with
the new, re-incorporated object of sympathy, the postwar nation’s emperor. Instead of starting to
discuss among empty mouths the politics and ethics of Japan’s invasions and fascist violence,
instead of critically debating these matters to effect a truly democratic and civil society, the Jap-
anese in the postwar have tried to imagine and fantasize a powerful enough object to collect peo-
ple’s sympathy into a community of affective subjects. The sympathy with the emperor could
have been replaced with the passion regarding the other Asian and Pacific victims of Japan’s past
violence, with the ability to be acted upon by these victims’ sorrow, desperation, and justice-
seeking indignation. The fantastic nation of the sympathetic subjects is constructed instead of the
civil society of passionate mourners.

Let us further examine the reincorporated emperor, focusing on the force that this
emperor seems to contain. Earlier, I have stated that the emperor is narrated in the religious terms,
at least during the 1989-90 period. I have mentioned the possibility that this religiosity of the
emperor might be derived from the sacred nation, which extends its sacredness to the emperor. If
this is the case, then the nation and its sacredness has to somehow precede the emperor and his
religiosity. The emperor in this scenario is the instrument with which people express their al-
ready existent nationality. The emperor here is comparable with, say, bamboo branches or tea

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45 De Man, Blindness and Insight: Essays in the Rhetoric of Contemporary Criticism. intro. by Wlad Godzich
(Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983); pp.102-141.
over rice, as the same semiotic vessel of national significance; his own unique materiality does not seem to be so significant in this case. Nevertheless, when one looks at the actual processes through which these signs, including the emperor’s, unify people into the Japanese nation, these seemingly arbitrary emblems of Japan re-appear as respectively forceful agents of national unification. I am not arguing that this force is of properly religious nature. Yet the object of national sympathy, such as the postwar emperor, might likely contain another kind of sacredness, due to the collected power of people’s moral aspirations and modern desires. It is true that the emperor as the sympathetic national object collects these desires and aspirations precisely because he is common—he allows other Japanese to put themselves in his place. But when each Japanese is identified with other Japanese due to the assumption that others are sympathetically identified with the common emperor, the emperor’s commonness comes to be distinguished as his generality. The generality of the emperor as the national objet of people’s sympathy easily acquires the sacredness of the fetish object, especially in the historical context in which the prewar sign of the emperor was circulated as the figurative and actual money fetish.

Past the 1920-30s, after the country was saturated with the mode of mechanical reproduction, the emperor as the sign of the nation-state had come to overwhelm the signified. Stamps, postcards, films and other forms of imperial signs were sold in the market, attracting an enormous amount of popular fascination, desires, and fears. The money-generality that the emperor’s sign came to acquire was embodied by actual coins minted with his images.\textsuperscript{46} By 1945, the sign of the emperor had become as potent as even atomic bombs—they shared at least the power to end the war.\textsuperscript{47} When the emperor’s sign was so powerful, it is assumed to have been with the help of the force of this sign that conservative Japanese, such as the moral philosopher

\textsuperscript{47} See Yoshikuni Igarashi, \textit{Ibid.}
Tetsurō Watsuji, could imagine the nation-state of Japan once more out of the ashes of the defeated war. In Watsuji’s immediately postwar works, Naoki Sakai reads, “the relationship between the emperor and the totality of the [postwar] nation [of which the emperor is supposed to be the signifier] is in a reverse order,” according to Sakai.\textsuperscript{48} That is, in Watsuji, “the totality of the nation is not anterior to the emperor and... [the totality of the nation] does not express the emperor; the figure of the emperor in a sense creates its [the nation’s] totality.”\textsuperscript{49} This relation between the emperor and nation is “reverse,” since the emperor is inherently equipped with neither the money-fetish power of national integration nor general attraction as the sympathetic center. Money would lose its supposedly generalizing power as soon as its users stopped believing in such power.\textsuperscript{50} Likewise, the emperor would not exist as the object of Japanese sympathy (and its opposite, hatred) without their sympathy (or hatred). Yet in Watsuji’s and other conservatives’ fantasies, the emperor does not exist because of people’s love and belief; people exist as the postwar kokumin (the nationals) because of the lovable and/or generalizing emperor. The emperor’s supposed religiosity, as the Todan slate and the 1989-1990 Japanese media so emphasized it, might overlap with his sacredness as the fetishized currency of national integration. In this analysis, the emperor’s religiosity is not just an expression of national sacredness. The idea of the emperor in Watsuji-types of beliefs also emanates the supersensible force of national unification in itself. This is another dimension of the relation between the nation and religion that one has to take into account in interpreting the Todan slate, and more generally, in considering the postwar national formation of Japan.

\textsuperscript{48} See Sakai, Ibid.; p.110.
\textsuperscript{49} Sakai, Ibid.; p.110.
When one imagines the nation around the fantasized medium of integration, the central figure for sympathy, the nation becomes centralized. Or, perhaps it is one’s conservatism that unintentionally summons the centralizing momentum of money into the national formation. Religion, in this insight, is a misplaced, albeit effective, category with which to elaborate on the imagined center and related hierarchies of the nation. Shinto, as mentioned in the Toda slate, is no exception; it seems to be equipped with the idea of divinity, the vocabulary of humbleness and respectfulness, and the historical view based on these orders. The kokumin of postwar Japan, as the slate represents, now seems to be in the position of pious “believers,” the equivalent of the prewar shinmin, the subjects and servants of the fetish-sacred emperor. To the extent that money fetishism involves automatic, uncontrollable moments, the rhetoric of religion might be employed to exhibit the actor’s will to make fetishism’s subjectification process conscious, articulate, and thus tamable. As Marx suggests, religion provides the language with which the actors could express their attraction to and awe of such an untamable process, the otherness of the process.  

The nation in the Todan slate might cause attraction and anxiety in the beholder, since the order that Shinto is thought to introduce in the linguistic, political, social, and historical relations of the nation is not that stable. This instability points to the fact that the postwar discourse of Shinto is woven with another warp, which insists its existence to compete with the conservatives’ desires for centralized and hierarchical orders. In the previous chapter, I have mentioned the discourse of the “folk” (minzoku) and its connection to a certain idea of Shinto. The chapter has discussed a little known writer, Yōzaburō Satō, representing Shinto as “ordinary people’s” (shomin no), an emphatically anti-status remark. Recall how the writer has associated his idea of Shinto with the generic yet personal memories of his childhood, such as top-spinning or cherry-

picking, adding the folk flavor to this idea of ordinary people. Despite the Todan slate’s effort, the emperor as the central or consummate figure seems to be irrelevant to this folkish understanding of Shinto. The religious rhetoric of humbleness and respectfulness that the Toda associations use are similarly unable to represent folk Shinto, since folk Shinto is supposedly featured by the bodily outside language. Note that the folk Shinto discourse also lends itself to the idea of the nation. Allegedly ordinary people’s, the idea of folk Shinto merely provides another imagination of the same nation as Toda nationalism’s hierarchical one. What I am suggesting, though, is not that the kokumin, as the Todan slate mentions it, is a hierarchical notion that stands opposite to the minzoku folk. The kokumin is rather an overarching concept that is supplemented by and encompassing the mythological-populist discourse of the minzoku folk as well as the religious-royalist discourse of the shinmin servants. By explicitly referring to the Japanese as the kokumin and not the shinmin, the Todan slate might try to appeal to as many people as possible without losing its position as royalists. The imagined kokumin’s ambiguity allows this maneuver; this ambiguity is ideologically attributable to Shinto, its religio-folkish duality.

Mutsumi Machida’s and countless other lawsuits against different neighborhood associations contribute to this dialectic. Observing the Todan slate and other religious artifacts and practices presented and conducted by the publicly-funded associations throughout local Japan, the plaintiffs in these lawsuits have accused these associations of violating the constitutional principle of church-state separation. These Christian, Buddhist, and other plaintiffs (Machida is not religious) complain that their freedom of religion has been violated by their respective neighborhood association’s practices and support of Shinto. Obviously, these plaintiffs stand on the same ground with these associations in their definition of Shinto as a religion. In the Todan case, the jade fence seems to prove the association’s reference to Shinto as a religion. Machida’s suit
that was filed on March 4th, 2004 in the Yokohama District Court and dismissed on July 11th, 2005 reveals that the fence is just a part of the whole story. In her expression, the Toda association and the local shrine, Yawata, are “organizationally merged” in sharing the same board, personnel, properties, and utilities. According to her, it is in such a merged situation that the Toda neighborhood association has urged its sub-leaders (kumi chō) to attend the shrine’s New Year divination ritual, the “pot of boiled water” (yu gama shinji). For the shrine’s annual festival, the sub-leaders are also told to collect 1,000 yen (10 dollars) from each member-household and donate the money to the shrine. In place of the receipt, each household receives what are called “divine candies” (shin sen), i.e. rice flour and sugar molded in the form of the shrine’s crest.

The courts do not deny these facts. Yet they allege that Shinto is not a religion but a system of “socially prevalent ideas” (shakai tsūnen) or “customs” (shūzoku). Since Shinto is not a religion, the half-official associations’ Shintoist practices are not unconstitutional. These practices, according to the courts, represent people’s common sense; the courts are practically saying that townsfolk are predominantly Shintoist and they are so in terms of their habits. In the court’s logic, the association is representing and catering to the neighborhood habits. While ruling favorably for the half-official association, the courts ideologically oppose the association’s claim of Shinto’s religiosity.

52 See Heisei 16-nen (Gyō U) Dai-12-gō: Baishō Meirei Tō Seikyū Jiken (“Mutsumi Machida” versus the mayor of Yokohama City). Her appeal filed at the Tokyo Appellate Court was also dismissed in November 29th, 2006 (Heisei 18-nen (Gyō Kō) Dai-100-gō: Baishō Meirei Tō Seikyū Kōso Jiken (“Mutsumi Machida” versus the mayor of Yokohama City).

53 Ordinarily, they are called rakugan.

54 The Toda association receives 1.4 million yen (14,000 dollars) annually from Yokohama City as of 2004.

55 The Toda association, Machida, and the Yokohama District Court seem to have followed a pattern from their respective positions. One of the first cases that made the pattern was the 1974 Hamamatsu case, Shizuoka Prefecture, whereby a Christian, Tadashi Mizoguchi, sued the Hagi Association for its automatic counting of its members as the local shinto parish. Following the suit is the Towa case, Kōchi Prefecture in Shikoku Island, where the local association used the provided subsidies to repair the village shrine building (1994-8). In Saga in Saga Prefecture, Kyūshū Island, a lawsuit has revealed that the association collected the village shrine membership fees (1999-). Similarly, Karachita Shrine in Sunagawa, Hokkaido Island, is found to have been constructed in the property of the association. Many of these and other similar lawsuits have ended up in these rulings that decided that
In a non-“western” country like Japan, an indigenous religion can be and has been defined as a system of “mere customs,” indeed, which theory the courts seem to abuse. According to Talal Asad, the idea of behavioral religion (versus dogmatic religion) is generally assigned to others of the “west.” Strictly, behavior-based religion is not religion at all—religion in the post-Enlightenment west is defined as the opposite to behavior and practice, viz. as belief, dogmatism, spirituality, etc. According to Asad’s Foucaultian understanding, moralization of the post-Enlightenment state, production, and exchange demanded religion put weight “more and more onto the moods and motivations of the individual believer. Discipline (intellectual and social) would, in this period, gradually abandon religious space, letting ‘belief,’ ‘conscience,’ and ‘sensibility’ take its place.” Religions’ specialization in belief occurred, when the larger society had become behaviorally religious, that is, disciplined in the moral subjective ways. Christian missionaries’ or western anthropologists’ pictures of others’ ritual-based “cults,” for instance, were the post-Enlightenment western society in caricature. Ironically, Machida lends the court the opportunity to officially pronounce that this caricature is right and legally binding. Ever after, the neighborhood in the state’s recognition will be behaviorally Shintoist, while the association will be its socio-cultural representative.

Facing Machida and other leftists, the courts took the position of the folk Shinto discourse. This might be the result of each court’s local strategy to protect the neighborhood association, which is partially funded by each local government. Intentionally or unintentionally, these local strategies by the courts seem to be well-coordinated with the larger movement made by the

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56 See Asad, Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993); p.39; parentheses original.

57 A variation of this caricature could be found in Ruth Benedict, who says that the Japanese act according to a “map of duties” versus “abstract ethical principles.” See her The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture (Cleveland and New York: Meridian Books, 1967(1946)); p.71.
Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), the Yasukuni Shinto Shrine, and the Association to Respond to the War Heroes’ Spirits to folkize the Yasukuni Shrine (Chapter 2). This is a relatively new movement for these conservatives, who previously struggled to officialize Yasukuni as a religious facility, despite the church-state principle. As for Machida and leftists, their complaints based on the theory of Shinto as a religion are already defeated by the court’s logic of folk Shinto, since these leftists simultaneously exhibit their nationalist desires for the same folk Shinto (see below). Every actor—the LDP, neighborhood association, court, and leftists—seems to move back and forth between the religious and “cultural” views of Shinto, depending on the instrumentality of each view at any given moment in their respective struggle.

In their culturalist moment, the leftists thus contradict their litigious strategy and place Shinto in a small-sized community in the immemorial past of Japan. There, the leftists say, the “ethnic religion” (minzoku shūkyō) of Shinto was already practiced as both the cultural fabric and moral principle of the community, if not believed as a dogmatic system of the worldview.58 The prototypical emperor reigned people’s lives in the form of the sun goddess, Amaterasu, and other agrarian deities, according to the leftists. When they assume this type of nation and the nation’s emperor, it is not surprising that they come up with the idea of appropriation. In this idea, the Shinto nation was appropriated by what they call the “modern emperor system” (kindai tennō sei), which to them was roughly a modern state-system fortified by the emperor’s religious, cultural, and moral power.59 According to the leftists, the effectivity of the emperor-system’s enforcing power was the endurance of the shinto-practicing, emperor-believing nation of the theoretically folkized Japanese. According to this theory, the modern state’s “political and non-

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59 Although his term is “ultra statism” (chō kokka shugi), Masao Maruyama best theorizes the spirit of the chimera, the modern emperor system. See his “Chō-kokka Shugi no Ronri to Shinri,” Gendai Seiji no Shisō to Kōdō (Tokyo: Mirai-sha, 1965(1964)), pp.11-28.
political” ways to integrate the nation worked, not just because the monolithic state was forceful, but also because people had already been shintoist and as such believed in the state’s sovereignty, the emperor, in the ethnic way. The leftists argued that upon modernizing the country’s space, for instance, all the state had to do was to recognize shinto parishes (ujiko ken) as its minimal administrative unit (mura or machi). Even before the neighborhood association was institutionalized as part of the state’s Imperial Rule Assistance Association, the association had already been there in the prototypical form of the shinto-national community, according to the leftists.

In this leftist view of the Shinto nation, Tetsurō Watsuji’s type of fetishism of the emperor’s integrative power seems to be tempered. In the leftist theories, it is the concept of the nation, not the emperor, that seems to have acquired the mysterious power to transhistorically integrate itself. According to these theories, it is ultimately the folkishly naïve, primitively callous nation of Shinto that had the power and agency to even start and sustain the Asia Pacific War. In my view, while the most accountable agents of Japan’s fascism and war were indeed the people, their power and agency should be instead attributed to the historically specific context of mechanical reproduction. The people were not the folk but the masses; and as the masses, they were interpellated to support the fascist images of equivalence. Without historically specific materiality, the nation that the leftists theorize resembles Durkheim’s “society” in its abstractness.

Mutsumi Machida exposes the discrepancy between her belief and knowledge, when she says that the Yawata Shrine represents what she idiosyncratically calls “the cult of Ama-

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60 The quote is from Ōe, Ibid.; p.81.
61 This is part of the theory that Ōe (Ibid.) calls that of the “shakaku seido.” According to him, the shakaku seido or the system of shrines’ ranks “constructed a neat hierarchy descending from the Ise Shrine [the family shrine of the royal family] to village shrines (son sha), the basis of ‘home villages’ (kyōtō shakai)” (p.81). With quotation marks though, Ōe here uncritically borrows the term, “home villages,” from a Meiji oligarch, Hirobumi Itō. Accordingly, Ōe seems to inherit Itō’s concept that a home village as a communal unit was naturally delineated by the religious orbit of its corresponding village-shrine. Likewise, in the space of the Ise Shrine, the emperor as the embodiment of the nation-state was supposed to correspond to the emperor as a god of shinto. The system of shrines’ ranks supposedly mediated between the shintoist nation, communitarian nation, and the modern state, physically spreading these relations over the actual geography of Japan, according to Ōe.
terasu (the sun goddess),” among the “farmers around here.” This contradicts her legal complaint that the shrine represents the religion Shinto regarding the emperor. Now, she says that the farmers around here (kokoirahen no hyakushō) made their original fortunes not by selling their land to developers in the 1980s, as she has informed me in another moment, but by murdering and robbing those Edo (1600-1868) travelers who used to walk nearby on the Tōkaidō Post Road, the current Route 40. There is a landmark in Toda called “Throwaway Mound” (Nagekomi Zuka), which she says was the place in which the farmers hid the travelers’ bodies. Adding to Bunzō Hashikawa’s motif of the cruel folk (see Chapter 2), Machida cruelly says “that’s why the farmers around here have so many maimed family members—we all say that’s the travellers’ curses.”

The cult of the sun goddess in this context contains the nuance of not so much an organized religion as a folk superstition or custom among those farmers whose lives are supposed to depend on the elements—by implication, even now. On another occasion, Machida stated that those farmers-cum-large landlords still kept small patches of their land as farms, taking advantage of a legal loophole to gain tax exemptions. Yet Machida seems to simultaneously believe that her litigation counts as one of the enlightening crusades that many other leftists engage in. In this line of discourse, she implies she is trying to correct these farmers/landlords’ non-democratic, extra-modern control (“gyūjiru” in her expression) over the town’s politics.

Religion here is rendered to Machida’s excuses for her suit. Otherwise, she says to me and the court that the primitive Japan, as in the Toda association, in whose board the landlords sit, ought to be enlightened, since otherwise the state would appropriate it specifically for its warring efforts. Asked about the motivation for her activism, Machida says, “I’d like to do my best, when I can still do it—one can’t oppose the local shrine and the neighborhood association, once they’re mobilized for a war. I just don’t like to find myself in a war again.” Referring to the
popular leftist term, “in-town Yasukuni” (machi no Yasukuni), Machida explains that during the war each community shrine was reconfigured as an affiliate of the state-run shrine, Yasukuni. In Yasukuni, according to her, the Japanese were taught “how to die for the emperor.” As the local branch of Yasukuni, each village-shrine inculcated the residents on the Yasukuni ideology of the death community, she tells me. She lets me know that the school children were made to clean the shrine ground (cleanliness has a certain shintoist significance); draftees also came to the village-shrine to pray for their “long lasting military luck” (buun chōkyū). The neighborhood association came into the picture as the lender of state-endorsed community services to the shrine, according to her. Ideologically supported by the shrine, the association in turn enjoyed broad political power in the neighborhood, she says. Certainly, the supposedly ethnic tie between Shinto and the neighborhood was practically severed by the GHQ’s so-called “Shinto order” in 1947, she reminds me. However, hers and others’ lawsuits are supposed to show that the neighborhood associations with Shinto inclinations were spontaneously revived again in the 1950s and then officially endorsed throughout the country. To the degree that the shinto-neighbor tie is deep-rooted in the national fabric, as these leftists see, the tie will never be completely severed. A war-hungry state can surely depend on the existence of this tie, they say, to convert it into the state’s war-machine for “another” war.

“Look at my late parents,” Machida says. “they passed away not in the war, but because of the war.” According to her, her parents were the victims of the atomic bomb that the United States dropped over Hiroshima in 1945. Gradually developing different kinds of cancer after the war, her father passed away in 1957. Her mother did not suffer from cancer, but from an unidentifiable weakness, which the daughter Machida thinks was related to the bomb. Machida herself is a recent survivor of breast cancer. Ironically embodying the emperor’s nation with her
given name, Mutsumi, which was likely taken after the emperor Meiji (1868-1912)’s personal name, Mutsuhito, Machida seems to have personal reasons to oppose such a nation. In addition to the irony of the emperor-named leftist, another twist is that her opposition seems to have ended up in substantiating the imaginary nation of Shinto theoretically and legally.

Despite the leftists’ pacifist apprehension, I would like to return to the impression of the postwar neighborhood-association’s anachronism and irrelevance. In contemporary Japan, one might wonder, to what extent is Shinto alive as either a religious or cultural category? Even if the Japanese state was truly as war-hungry as Machida and other leftists claim, would Shinto be the point of the state’s mobilization of people? How much grasping power would the neighborhood association’s Shintoist representation of the nation hold in the otherwise completely commoditized everyday? Does not the nation arise rather from marketized Japan—from the scarlet container of Shiseido shampoo, TSUBAKI (camellia), which carries the catch-copy, “the Japanese women are—beautiful” or from the computer-generated cherry-blossoms in the commercial films for cell-phone companies, au, NTT Docomo, etc. or from these “Japans”’ supposed opposites, Goethe or Nietzsche? If the emperor is fantasized to be able to integrate the national ephemera emerging from and disappearing into the capitalist everyday, should not this be due to his completely commoditized power of money? Is it not his generality among the mass that enables him to regularly occupy a certain duration of time in the celebrity gossip shows on TV or page after page in the above-mentioned “Weekly Woman,” “Woman 7,” and other magazines? Is not the emperor’s supposed power of national integration derived from people themselves, who eagerly consume his family saga, rumors, and fashion to provide points of small talks in the household, neighborhood, or workplace? How should one think about the ornamental excess of the totalizing force that the leftists discursively attribute to Shinto?
The leftists’ solution to these questions is to introduce the category of unconsciousness. In previous chapters, I have discussed the leftist-nationalistic theories of the emperor system that is supposed to be contained in “a bit of grass, a single tree” (ichimoku issō) grown in the Japanese soil, as Yoshimi Takeuchi says—by implication, without any consciousness on the grass’ or tree’s part. In more sophisticated versions than Takeuchi, the emperor system and the nation, which bases this system as the trans-historical substance, are said to represent the ethnic Japanese “habitus” in Pierre Bourdieu’s sense of the bodily and the pre-linguistic. In the structuralist branch of Japan’s leftism, the emperor system has been analyzed in terms of the deep structures of the center/periphery, order/anarchy, or sacredness/profanity, which are at once Japanese-specific and universal, according to them. If one follows these theories, the emperor system and its supporting nation could or rather should be unnoticeable and irrelevant, since it is deep-rooted in the Japanese unconscious. As compared to Freudian unconsciousness, which dynamically transforms its contour and structure, going through multiple cycles of repression, the return of

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64 Akira Kurihara, “Gendai Tennō Sei Ron: Nichijō Ishiki no Naka no Tennō Sei” in Amino Yoshihiko et al. eds., Ibid., pp.129-161; 155-6. According to Bourdieu, “[t]he conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produce habitus, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generates and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adopted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. Objectively ‘regulated’ and ‘regular’ without being in any way the product of obedience to rules, they can be collectively orchestrated without being the product of the organizing action of a conductor.” Themes of unconsciousness, body, collectivity and reproduction, must be unmistakable in this passage. See his The Logic of Practice, trans. by Richard Nice (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990); p.53.
65 Masao Yamaguchi, Tennō-sei no Bunka Jinru Gaku (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2000). “If, as we believe to be the case,” Lévi-Strauss says, “the unconscious activity of the mind consists in imposing forms upon content, and if these forms are fundamentally the same for all minds—ancient and modern, primitive and civilized (as the study of the symbolic function, expressed in language, so strikingly indicates)—it is necessary and sufficient to grasp the unconscious structure underlying each institution and each custom, in order to obtain a principle of interpretation valid for other institutions and other customs, provided of course that the analysis is carried for enough.” See his Structural Anthropology, trans. by Claire Jacobson and Brooke G. Schoepf (New York and London: Basic Books, 1963); p.21. If one reduces the deep structure of the “emperor system” to such a generic and abstract contrast as the essential center and phenomenal peripheries, for instance, of course such a structure could be observable in ancient or present Japan, even in (a-historical) “Africa,” as Yamaguchi insists. See Roland Barthes for the fantasy that the emperor is the empty center of the Orientalist Japan—Empire of Signs, trans. by Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989).
the repress, the working through and acting out of the repressed, the national unconsciousness, as
these leftist Japanese present, seems to be characterized by identity and stasis.\(^{66}\) In the end, what
these leftists say is contained in either the deep structure or constant habitus actually appears
closer to such an existence as the essence of the nation. It is unlikely these leftists would say that
the ideas of the nation are multiple, historically created and competing with each other. There are
the historically specific material causes for each of the family-nation of the emperor-father, the
subjective nation of the emperor-currency, and the Subjective nation with the autonomous origin
in the folk. Instead of asking, “when did the Japanese become able to fantasize the nation as au-
tonomously generated through people’s unconsciousness, habitus, and other categories that re-
quire neither the authority nor center?,” these theorists start from the fetishized nation of the folk
outside any historical context and narrate the whole span of the country’s history in terms of that
fetish.

In the rightist theories as well, Shinto as the code of Japanese behaviors has to be found
in the unconsciousness of the nation, the “everyday/constant folk,” jōmin, in the deep mountain
out there (see Chapter 2). This idea by Kunio Yanagita is different from Yukio Mishima’s, since
Mishima tends to valorize the country’s high cultural forms as the repository of what he regards
as the Japanese cultural essence. If Mishima is obsessed with the idea of the emperor, his obses-
sion is not with the folk’s emperor but with the aristocrats’ emperor, the emperor who is sup-
possed to embody the “poetics” and “erotics” of the formerly aristocratic waka poem, kemari ball
play, and other items of high culture. The essence of high culture, which he theoretically extends
to be that of “the Japanese culture” as a whole, is similar to Yanagita’s and the leftists’ essence

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Mental Lives of Savages and Neurotics*, trans. by James Strachey (New York: W. W. Norton, 1950) might be an
abuse of his own theory, essentializing and culturalizing unconsciousness.
of Japan in its dissimulated nature. According to Mishima, the cultural essence has to be discovered and then consciously/conscientiously conserved in the middle of the modern capitalist everyday. Unlike the leftists and Yanagita, Mishima’s reasoning for culture’s dissimulation is related to his espousal of Romantic philosophy. In regards to the cultural essence’s supposed embodiment, the emperor, Mishima thus says “the inherent and current beings of the object [i.e. the emperor] who should be conserved, do not necessarily coincide with each other.”

The always displaced emperor or rather his “inherent…being” as the totality of the Japanese culture tends to be “appropriated” by “politics,” without or before fully manifesting its being, according to Mishima. To him, politics has always tamed the emperor’s or Japanese culture’s poetics and eroticism; politics has rather objectified these qualities into something “instrumental” for politics. What could be taken as the anachronism and irrelevance of the supposed essence of Japan is to Mishima the emperor’s or the inherent nation’s heterogeneity and transcendence—it might look irrelevant presently, but its relevance has to be recognized as the yet-to-be-attained truth of the Japanese ethnicity.

When these leftists and rightists essentialize their respective Shinto-folkish nation (in Mishima’s case, the yūga aristocratic nation) by means of the abused concept and logic of unconsciousness, the question whether this nation exists in reality becomes unimportant. The actual national fragments scattered through the commoditized everyday and the gossip-laden emperor at the center of people’s everyday attention, to these theorists, are either inessential phenomena or the active hazards that threaten the national essence. The essential nation at the unconscious level should rather face the living Japanese as their fate, the fate that by definition belongs to another time—either the time in some past, from which the Japanese are supposed to have come, or

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68 Mishima, Ibid.; both terms, “appropriation” and “politics” appear in both p.106 and 117.
69 Mishima, Ibid.; p.96.
the time in some future, to which they are supposed to go, no matter how far ahead that destination lies. Conservatives rely on this entangling and intractable sense of fate as anchorage and stability. Without the ideology of the fateful nation of the folk (or aristocrats), the conservatives would think, society is a haphazard whirl of exchange, repetition, and dissemination. They would say that Toda females, for example, would totally expend their “souls” in their celebrity competition, if they were not provided their supposedly pre-determined identity as the Japanese folk. Without considering the irrelevance of these leftists and rightists’ folk-Shinto nation seriously, that is, without calibrating the stubbornly kept distance that this nation imaginatively takes from its everyday genesis, this nation’s designated function as the catcher-in-the-rye barrier against the capitalist dispersion would not be understood. What I am suggesting here is that the seeming anachronism of Shinto, the discourses of the bodily and unconscious that seem to try to sustain the Shinto concept’s distance from reality, might point to the alienating power of the commodity and the conservatives’ defense mechanism against such power.

The other kind of discourses that have surrounded Shinto in postwar Japan, viz. the religious discourses of Shinto, should be discussed again as another contributor to the determination of Shinto as the anti-commodity essence of the nation. As I have discussed, religion, as the Tôdan and other conservatives refer to, could be a displaced expression of either the fetishist belief in the emperor—“money” or the sympathetic structure surrounding the otherwise reincorporated

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70 “Tamashii” was the word that the late nativist psychologist Hayao Kawai used in developing his paternalistic diatribe against teenage consumerist-prostitutes, enjo kôsai girls, who in the 1990-00s shocked many moralist minds by selling their time, presence, bodies, and bodily traces for Louis Vuitton bags and other brand name commodities. According to him, those high school girls should stop such prostitution, since it is “‘bad for [their] souls’” (tamashii ni warui). See Kawai, “Nihon-jin no Kokoro no Yukue” in Nihon-jin to Nihon Shakai no Yukue (Kawai Hayao Chosaku Shû: Dai Ni Ki: 11) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2001). pp.3-183; p.126. This Jungian analyst, Kawai, says “we cannot help but introduce the word ‘soul’ [tamashii in hiragana] here [in discussing the girls’ prostitution]. ‘Soul,’ it is an important thing that eludes as soon as one divides up a human completely into the ‘body’ and ‘mind.’ I suggest [we] think that ‘soul’ is that which underlies [both] the body and mind to make a human alive as a ‘living being.’ We can neither see nor touch soul. But if soul is deprived, a human cannot live as a human” (p.125). Kawai’s “soul” here seems to be the concept that is connected to the idea of the “Japanese soul,” which seems to emerge in its simplistic juxtaposition with what he calls “Euro America” (ōbei) or “Christian cultural sphere” (Christ-kyô bunka ken), their supposedly “complete” separation of the mind/body.
emperor. This expression of religion in either case is distinct from the folk-Shinto discourses for its will to establish and to subject itself to the idea of the central or supreme figure. This distinction, however, might become diminutive in the face of modern alienation and capitalist dissemination—these two kinds of discourses might be different representations of people’s anxieties about these historical material factors. If the idea of the Shinto folk is supposed to work as the unconscious anchorage in the mechanical reproductive flows and dispersion, then the religion Shinto might be expected to function as the conscious order among the massified producers and consumers. In the nexus of these two aspects of the Shinto discourses, the neighborhood association provides people with the opportunity not only to discover the allegedly unchanging identity as the Shinto folk, but also to reorganize their already materially differentiated groupings (e.g. genders, generations, and ethnicities) in the religious terms.

Therefore in Toda Town, the association’s several executives are all elderly males of the grand bourgeois background, who are also the board members of the Yawata Shrine. In comparison, in each of more than sixty sub-units (kumi) of the association, the rotated position of leadership (kumi chō) is almost always assumed by women. It is these female sub-leaders who have to do all the tedious routines in the neighborhood—to clean up the collective dumpsters, to walk the town’s children to and from school, to circulate the plastic kairan ban bulletin board for official notices, to collect the 500-yen-a-month membership fee, or to cook for the association’s fall festival. In their relation to the shrine, these women are partly the customarily assumed ujiko followers and partly the secretaries to collect other resident-“followers’” donations for the shrine festivals. These sub-leaders’ designated roles to collect the shrine festival money and to participate in the otherwise unpopular ritual at the shrine, the boiling pot divination, are well-camouflaged as some of these habitual, neighborhood duties. At least Machida did not notice that
the sub-leaders’ half-forced participation in the divination qua the sub-leaders of the officially financed association was constitutionally problematic, until a sub-leader, who happened to be a member of Jehovah’s Witness, refused to participate. “Hmm, interesting, a great opportunity to learn the Japanese thing,” Machida says she had thought at first, seemingly unconsciously subscribing to the folk Shinto discourses of the Japanese nation. At the same time, these sub-leaders’ position behind the male elders, as these two groups lined up in front of the supposedly sacred pot for the divination, should be explained not just by the folk Shinto line of argument. In terms of folk Shinto, the sub-leaders’ symbolic subordination to the elders here would be explained either by Engels-type of imagination of biologically-caused female domination in ancient Japan or by the prewar type of ideology on patriarchally nationally justified domination of females.

According to a feminist scholar, Junko Minamoto, the religion Shinto discriminates against women due to its differentiation and hierarchization between the clean and dirty, symbolically speaking (jōe shisō). Women are lower than men in this Shinto hierarchy due to their “blood dirt” (ketsue)—menstruation. This kind of symbolic yet ultimately biological explanation of the current gender relation in Japan may not be exceedingly relevant, given the completely commodified everyday. Or, perhaps one can gather that it is due to this irrelevance that the ultimately biological concept of gender hierarchy in Shinto, as Minamoto surmises, performs a certain role against commodification, like the Shinto nation’s anachronism and its ideological salvation as the Japanese fate.

As for the religion Shinto’s supposed god, the emperor, Masako as the current crown princess has been criticized, since she refuses to walk behind her husband, Naruhito (Hironomiya), as other female members of the royal family do. That this former diplomat is rendered to be a vessel is apparent in the fact that she has to give birth to a boy; otherwise, the emperorship is
going to be eventually inherited by her nephew-in-law, Hisahito. According to a feminist historian, Yūko Suzuki, a series of late-Edo to Taishō emperors, viz. Ninkō, Kōmei, Meiji, and Taishō, were all born out of the patrilineal ideology—these four emperors were born into fathers’ “mistresses’ stomachs” (mekake bara), as the Japanese say. That is to say, if a wife does not bear a boy, other women’s wombs should be “borrowed” for the smooth inheritance pattern of patrilinearity. Ninkō to Taishō might be thought of as the model for the prewar patriarchy, according to which the ideology of family nation was practiced. Masako and Naruhito’s issue, or rather their bearing no sons being an issue, might show the degree to which the patriarchal nationalism is carried by postwar Japan. At the same time, one of the most important tenets of the religion Shinto, symbolic cleanliness, seems to underline the royal family’s ability to consider women as vessels. Of course there should be a plethora of other motives for the degradation of the female sex and sexuality in Japan like elsewhere, yet given the royal family’s embeddedness in the religion Shinto, there seems to be a certain, religiously explainable motive at work here, in addition to the nationalist cause of patrilineality. Again, these analyses are derived from Minamoto and other feminists’ theories of the Shinto essence of gender relations in Japan. Unlike Mishima, Yanagita, and other nationalists, these feminists suggest such an existence as an essence for critical purposes. The reader of these feminists would then like to refer to them as the providers of the Weberian ideal type, perhaps, the theoretical device to critically understand certain aspects of the contemporary Japanese gender relations.

72 Whether this rule, legislated as the Article 1 of the Imperial Household Law (Kōshitsu Tempan), should be rewriten to accommodate Masako and Naruhito’s only child (daughter), Aiko, has caused a nation-wide debate. According to the constitutional law scholar Kōichi Yokota, the academic and other supporters of the article “often times point out those reasons that are gender-discriminatory, such as that women are not meant for political duties or that women are under the strong influences of their husbands or that people have to devise how to deal with empresses’ husbands.” See Yokota, Kempō to Tennō Sei (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1990); p.232-4.


My observation of Toda is that the neighborhood association seems to exercise the patriarchal-gerontocratic governance over the female residents and that the association does so in the space of the local shrine and the time of the kōki calendar. The embodiment of the association’s organizational merge with the shrine, the building that the association uses as its official hall is registered also as the shrine’s office. The building is physically located in the shrine’s property, at the foot of the little hill on which a cluster of religiously significant buildings (such as the Hall of Prayer) is laid out. Similarly, the kōki is the calendar that the association refers to in its minutes and also at the court where they stood as Machida’s defendant. Given its interpretation of Shinto as a religion, as seen in the enthronement-commemorating slate, the association might be seen as struggling to legitimize or consecrate its gendered governance of neighbors by resorting to Shinto’s religious discourses. Revering the emperor with the honorary and humble rhetoric and relegating women according to the Shinto cosmology, or at least according to the royal (divine) patriarchy, the merged shrine-association in Toda is the magnetic field where the hierarchy-minded souls in the neighborhood gather together. These actors do not just dominate the neighborhood women, but dramatize the domination—a miniature theater for female domination, with which to act on the commoditized reality of the neighborhood. But when one looks at this theater’s structure, it paradoxically resembles what it is meant to criticize; with the exceeding stress on the appearance of religion and the immense force to function in reality as and in that appearance, the neighborhood association as a theater seems to have the structure of the commodity. The audience’s half-believing, half-disbelieving oscillation between the religious and folk views of Shinto, their indetermination between conformity and rebelliousness, is already taken into account in this theater, as another Kōwa Residence homemaker, “Kiyomi Shiraishi,” shows.75

75 I owe my idea of fetish theater to David Graeber, who imagines “a moment of profound historical change,”
Shiraishi describes the theatrical nature of the association’s monthly meeting, which is held in the association hall/shrine’s office. According to her, in such a meeting, the female sub-leaders are “made to sit in front of the horizontally lined executives on the stage, just like students in a class-room.”

“When I moved here in 1990, I didn’t know the culture [of the association] so I’d raise my hand at the monthly meeting and ask about some stupid details of the festival. Everybody looked at me with certain expressions. All the executives then started to yell and sandbagged me into dropping my questions (boro kuso ni hangeki-suru). Ever since, I’ve never even coughed when the executives are around.”

On a sunny morning of the early summer 2007, Shiraishi treats me to a chilled glass of mugicha roasted wheat tea at the vinyl covered table in her small kitchen. She seems indifferent to the “celeb competition” that her neighbor Kotaki talks about. Her two children are at the Toda Primary School; her husband is working in his office. In the afternoon, she is riding a bike to the school for a PTA meeting and then to the Rainbow Mart to get some ground meat for supper. Hamburger is one of the favorite dishes of her younger kid. She invites me to the second floor, from which we see one of those grand bourgeois “farmers” working in the good-sized field adjacent to the Shiraishis’.

in which “no one involved could possibly know what the total system in question actually consists of.” He continues, “When it comes to establishing value, one common response to such confusing situations is to circle off a space as a kind of minimal, defacto ‘society,’ a kind of micrototality, as it were... The larger social reality does not yet exist. All that is real, in effect, is the actor’s capacity to create it. In situations like this objects really do, in a sense, bring into being what they represent. They become pivots, as it were, between imagination and reality.” See his Toward an Anthropological Theory of Value: The False Coin of Our Own Dreams (New York: Palgrave, 2001). Judith L. Goldstein presents a similar view in a Lebanese case—see her “An Innocent Abroad: How Mulla Daoud Was Lost and Found in Lebanon: Or the Politics of Ethnic Theater in a Nation at War” Richard G. Fox ed., Nationalist Ideologies and the Production of National Cultures (Washington D.C.: American Anthropological Association, 1990), pp.15-31.
“We came to see this property some 17 years ago, you know, having been told by the realtor that we had a good view here. We fell in love with it at the first glance—the moment I saw this farm from this window, I knew I was going to live here.”

No clouds today. A white butterfly crosses the farm. It is quiet, with the occasional brass band march of Anchors Aweigh, remotely delivered by the wind, probably from the school. With peace in the house and the love of her children, Shiraishi of course has no reason to “even [cough] when the [association’s] executives are around.” Mutsumi Machida, openly rebellious against the association, is truly an exception in this bourgeois suburb. Even though those women whom I have talked to during my fieldwork all express their dismay, frustration, and sometimes resentment concerning their respective association’s non-democratic governance, which includes the executives’ official appointment and the kind of gender hierarchy that I have discussed, they usually acquiesce, at least superficially. “It’s because our kids are sort of taken hostage” by the association, Shiraishi explains. According to her, it is the association that organizes those mothers who walk the kids to and from school. If Shiraishi rebelled against the association and its executives, would they tell other mothers not to walk her kids? Similarly, at the shrine’s and associations’ festivals, kids receive the assorted snacks that they look forward to. Since these snacks are purchased and distributed by the association, it has the right to select who should receive them, technically speaking. In the past, a rebellious mother’s kid was actually excluded, which Shiraishi would like to avoid for her own kids. “Kids don’t know anything—they are innocent. It’s too poor” that they might get excluded because of their parents’ political actions, she says. This mother in her 30s believes Machida might even think about suing the association, only after her two daughters left the town for college.
“I don’t really support her [Machida], like going to the court for her. If I did that, I’d be scapegoated [by the association]. But whenever I hear other mothers [in the neighborhood] talking ill of her behind her back, I say to them ‘no, that’s wrong, she’s not like that, she’s just trying to correct the wrong.’ That’s how I support her,” says Shiraishi.

And still, children taken hostage are not the only story here. Shiraishi cooked, cleaned, and took care of her children already in her household, long before she was told to do so as one of the sub-leaders of the association. While she would do these chores out of love and for the sense of security, she is also assigned to that role by the capitalist system. When the whole set of capitalist institutions and their subjectifying processes are based on the ideology that women are the reproducers and consumers, there are usually no economic, social, aesthetic, or personal reasons that a woman does not conform to that ideology. When the capitalist cult of production and productivity ranks male producers above female reproducers, Shiraishi already lives in the reality that the association merely hyperbolizes in its sacred theater.

Desires of hierarchies and other orders are also Mutsumi Machida’s. Anybody who talks with her for more than 30 minutes would realize that “levels” is her favorite term. “I’m not boasting,” she boastfully says, for example, “but my [intellectual] level is pretty high.” According to Machida, her high intellectual level is the product of her “studying” (benkyō-suru). The scattered and piled books on her living room floor are likely the traces of her studying—among those books, I see such titles as “Japanese Religion,” “What Is State Shinto,” “The World of Kunio Yanagita,” or “The Takamatsuzuka Mound: An Invitation to Ancient Japan.” A history major in her college, she explains that she studies in order not only to prepare herself for the lawsuit but also to raise her intellectual level. “Since I have a plenty of spare time, I do pretty intensive stud-
ies,” she says, making her usual, cynical-conformist reference to her “housewifely” situation.

Her neighbor friend Kotaki similarly says,

“There is actually another Machida family in the neighborhood. They’re also a banker’s family. I try not to associate with them though, as the wife is one of those celeb-types (celeb-kei). They were in the U.S. [as the other Mr. Machida’s bank dispatched him there]. So one day, I said to her [the other Mrs. Machida], ‘Cool. Let’s read Hemingway together in English.’ I don’t know if she even speaks English—anyway, she’s apparently started to hate me since then.” Kotaki laughs. So, it seems she is better than the other Mrs. Machida, due to her suggested ability for English and intellectual appetite for Hemingway.

One context to frame Machida and Kotaki’s obsessions with intellect, or rather with a certain ranking system of different people’s supposedly different levels of intellect, is meritocracy. The principle of meritocracy has motivated the whole society, particularly its bourgeois members. At the same time, the way in which Machida and Kotaki talk about study, intellect, and the intellectual hierarchy would not be fully understood without the view of women’s commodification. Kotaki has already told me that she read Goethe and Nietzsche instead of adorning herself with frills and jewelry. Her reference to Hemingway also seems to be made in order to separate herself from the “celeb types” of female consumers. Machida similarly makes one wonder if boring hours and hours in which she studies might be saved by her not complying so much with the supposedly housewifely duties of chores. These female friends might deploy intellect as

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According to Anne Allison, “Producing Mothers,” ed. and w/ and intro. by Anne E. Imamura, Re-Imaging Japanese Women (Berkeley, Los Angels, London: University of California Press, 1996), pp.155-135, bourgeois children in contemporary Japan start to be immersed with the meritocratic culture already in kindergartens—if one focuses mothers’ roles in such a culture, one can also argue that competition starts from the children’s births or even conceptions. Allison’s earlier work, Nightwork: Sexuality, Pleasure and Corporate Masculinity in a Tokyo Hostess Club (University of Chicago Press, 1994), mentions Japan’s meritocracy today in a more comprehensive fashion.
another anti-consumption tool so that it presumably spares them from being super-massified consumers or reproducers, like other women.\textsuperscript{77}

The anti-massification tool of studying not only spares Machida and Kotaki but also ranks them high; in the hierarchy of intellect that they create, Kotaki suggests that she and Machida are about the same rank, of which she might judge I could be qualified, if I prove myself better. “I’m glad you visited me today,” she generously says anyway, “since around here, there’s nobody who actually reads—Matchii is probably the only other person [besides Kotaki, who reads].” In a somewhat professorial way, she similarly makes me feel honored, as she says, “Wow, that’s impressive that you’ve read [Nobukuni] Koyasu. Let’s discuss Norinaga [Motoori], then.” The supposed rank of intellect might therefore be meant to divide the otherwise massive group of female consumers. A wish for hierarchy seems to be unmistakably there among these neighborhood friends, the wishes that the other Mrs. Machida in Toda must surely share (hence the “hatred” of Kotaki), but apparently not so obsessively strongly as with Kotaki or Machida. Probably, the other Machida is too busy plunging into the pleasure of massification—Missen tableware, tennis, Italian restaurants, frilly blouses, and jewelry. Machida and Kotaki seem to claim that they are raising their intellectual levels in order to bulwark them from the inundating force of such pleasure.

\textsuperscript{77} Here, the above-footnoted work by Haruki Murakami, “Nemuri,” becomes relevant once more. More broadly, Kōjin Karatani argues that intellect, sensibility, emotionality, and other faculties that are supposed to constitute human “internality” (\textit{naimen sei}) were “discovered” in Japan by early modern writers, as these writers reacted to the accentuated externality of the commodity. See his \textit{Origins of Modern Japanese Literature}, trans. by Brett de Bary (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1993). The thus-invented contrast between the commodity and internality seems to be played out best in the figure of female consumers for some reasons—a material girl in contemporary Japan is likely told to “polish” (\textit{migake}) her internality instead of “looking into the mirror.” “Read more,” she will be further advised as an effective way to polish her internality. The obverse image to this would be that of an intellectual woman, who is supposed to have “unkempt hair” (\textit{kami wo furi-midasu}). “Coexistence of intellect and beauty” (\textit{sai shoku kenbi}) in one woman is said to be desirable yet rare. As for men, “one should not judge a man by his face/appearance” (\textit{otoko wa kao/mikake ja nai}). The irony is that of course it is men’s massification into the suit and tie-clad “corporate warrior,” which is responsible for the idea of their supposedly appearance-overwhelming smartness.
Of course, these two women’s Canetti-esque wishes to be the independent “windmill[s] in an enormous plain” are not equivalent to the Toda neighborhood association’s vision to organize the neighborhood according to the Shinto religious cosmology. Between these two groups of the (grand) bourgeois neighbors, one can probably say that there is a relation of appropriation, sophistication, or representation. For one conservative reason or another, these neighborhood women seem to willingly or unwillingly let the association aesthetically and politically represent their spontaneous, idiosyncratic wishes for independence and order in the religious discourse of the emperor’s nation. And yet, it is the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) that aspires to bring this representational relation onto another level. In this regard, the neighborhood association in general is called the “vote paddies” (hyōden) of the LDP, that is, a political field in which votes are organizationally guaranteed and readying themselves for the LDP’s “harvesting,” as it were. As discussed, the LDP vehemently promoted its policy that the fallen Japanese soldiers of the Asia-Pacific War be religiously memorialized as the divine emperor’s sacrificed, as the sacred spirits in themselves. Although the policy’s defeat in the 1973 Diet made them shift their position to adopt the folk Shinto ideology (Chapter 2), this does not seem to mean that they regard folk Shinto as non-religious. Folk Shinto to them might be the point to mobilize the mass and not the excuse to de-religioize Shinto and the Yasukuni Shrine, where the soldiers are apotheosized. For example, even after this policy shift, a former LDP prime minister, Yoshirō Mori (2000-2001) stated, “Japan is a divine nation centered around the emperor.” Similarly “theocratic” views have been presented again and again by other LDP members, particularly those who gather at the “Shinto Political Alliance Diet Members’ Roundtable” (Shintō Seijī Renmei Kokkai Giin Kondan Kai), which was established in 1969 to accommodate the non-partisan conservatism in

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78 For criticism, see Gavan McCormack, Client State: Japan in American Embrace (London and New York: Verso, 2007); p.11.
the Diet.\footnote{See critique by Children and Textbooks Japan Network 21, “The Abe Cabinet: An Ideological Breakdown,” trans. and explanations of Diet groups by Matthew Penney, The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus, 1/28/2013.} The LDP’s Shinto discourse represents Toda Town, according to Machida, while the LDP is supported by the association’s vice president, for instance, who is willing to lend his own property to the district’s LDP candidate, Kenzō Yoneda, during election campaigns. In a wooden, two-storied prefab, which is constructed for Yoneda in the corner of the vice president’s mansion, the association’s “Ladies’ Department” (Fujin Bu) is habitually mobilized to supply rice balls and miso soup to Yoneda’s staff. Machida further informs me that the monthly meeting of the association was once moved to another day so that Yoneda could deliver a speech one day before the election day in that year. Shiraishi similarly witnesses that in one year in the association’s fall festival, her elementary-school children were “forced” to line up with other children and Yoneda on the stage—a perfect photographic opportunity for any populist politician. As for Yoneda, one of his stressed policies is to solve Japan’s border dispute with Russia. It is not known if he believes that the geographical territory of Japan overlaps with the symbolic body of the emperor (kokutai), as many rightists do. According to Machida, on the wall of the association’s hall are posted pictures of Yoneda and the association executives, as they visited some of the disputed islands off Hokkaido. Machida tells me that the association executives call Yoneda “Ken-chan,” an informal and affectionate way to mention his first name, Kenzō. Likely carrying these executives’ political wishes, Yoneda will later serve as the secretary general of the “Association to Realize Prime Minister Koizumi’s Visit to the Yasukuni Shrine” (Koizumi Shushō no Yasukuni Sampai o Jitsugen-saseru Kai). According to Machida, an LDP politician, Eriko Yamatani, who served as the vice secretary of the above-mentioned Shinto Political Alliance Diet Members’ Roundtable and the chief secretary of the “Project Team to Investigate into the Facts of the Radical Sex Education and Gender Education” (Kageki-na Sei Kyōiku, Gender Kyōiku Jittai Chōsa
This chapter has discussed the way in which the gender-divided labor of contemporary Japan has accelerated the process of commodification and massification. As a result, the everyday possibility for fascism is exhibited as both women’s death-instinctual propensity toward excessive identification with each other, as well as men’s self-consuming tendency toward the so-called karōshi or death as a result of overworking. I have examined the trans-war institution of the neighborhood association in order to explore the trajectory through which people’s desires for and anxieties about this condition have been historically expressed via this institution.

While the prewar association struggled to organize the mass-reproduced excesses of the everyday according to the molds of the public/private dichotomy and the patriarchal nation, the post-war association synthesizes and advances these emperor-centered hierarchies into the new theme of a hierarchical nation centered on the divine (or sympathized) emperor. Because of its vacillation between the nature of the national habitus and that of the national religion, Shinto becomes the key to mediate the contradictory elements in the idea of the hierarchical nation, viz. the gen-

80 What is truly radical is of course Yamatani’s reactionary gender politics, which initially focused on the sex and gender education practiced in junior high schools under the banner of the “gender-free” education. In May 2002, she made a speech in the Education and Science Committee, Lower Diet, problematizing the idea of “women’s right to self-determination,” as it was mentioned together with abortion and birth-control pill in the junior high school sex education booklet, “Love & Body Book.” As a result, the booklet was recalled and gone out of print in the summer in the same year (Mieko Takenobu et. al. “Fumareta Skirt: Abe Seiken to Josei: Chū: Josei no Kettei Ken Yaridama,” Asahi Shinbun, 7/11/2007). In the background were the Japanese state’s continuing denial of its wartime involvement in the military institution of sex slavery: the above-mentioned controversy of teenage girls’ prostitution for brand name products: and the declining population due to women’s rejection to bear children. As the chief secretary of the Education Rebuilding Council (kyōiku saisei kaigi) established within the Cabinet Secretariat under the first Shinzō Abe administration (2006-7), Yamatani tried to promulgate the council’s proposal, “Reflection on Child-Bearing: To Guardians and Everyone,” asking the “guardians and everyone” who were responsible for childbearing “not to turn on TV while having meals [with children] or feeding [them with] milk,” “to look into the baby’s eyes” during nursing, or to set up filters in the children’s computers and cell phones, since “the Internet and cell phones could lead directly even to the evil of the world.” As a result of the nationwide criticism, the proposal was not published. See “Osekkai? Kosodate wo Shinan” in Asahi Shinbun, 5/2/2007.
der hierarchy and the democratic nation. The neighborhood women doubt, resent, and challenge
the ancient primitivism and sanctioned hierarchy that Shinto can simultaneously represent, but
their doubts, resentments, and challenges seem to effectively corroborate with the association in
the Shinto disguise. Sharing the same aspiration for nationalism and the same background of the
bourgeoisie, any fight between these women and the association seem to be subsumed under the
larger dialectic between the neighborhood corporatism for hierarchies and the death-communal
movement for equivalence, to which I will return in the next chapter.
Chapter 4. Internet Fascism and Resurgence of the Grassroots

The corporatist imagination of local Japan that I have discussed in the previous chapter is closely connected to technologies of distancing. The so-called “circulating board” (kairan ban), which I have mentioned, would be a good example of such a technology. The circulating board is a plastic board, to which hardcopies of official notices are supposed to be attached. Physically handed from neighbor to neighbor on a set route, the circulating board is meant to create a human-sized community within a certain distance between the office and residents, and between the residents.

If the circulating board is a remnant from prewar corporatism of local integration, television would be the postwar technology to advance such corporatism in even more sophisticated and totalitarian ways than the board. Television is a technology that is meant to keep its object in its “location,” which is by definition somewhere else and by implication far away. The viewer of TV is established as an “us,” who did not have to experience that accident, murder case, or war, which is on the screen in a given moment. “We” are always collective, e.g. middle-classed, “ordinary” citizens in a safe metropolis. At the same time, the TV collectivity is a false multiplicity, whereby the viewers are interpellated as the gendered, ethnicized, or localized existence. TV attempts to create these categories (e.g. gender) and keep distance between the groups within a category (e.g. men and women).¹ TV thus divides masses, yet the divided groups are always already assembled as “us the nation,” the subjects, etc. In the postwar days, the neighborhood association-type of corporatist endeavors could rely on the TV technology of making and maintaining a national totality of Japan and its organic-looking parts.

¹ About the contemporary Indian case, see Purima Mankekar, Screening Culture, Viewing Politics: An Ethnography of Television, Womanhood, and Nation in Postcolonial India (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1999).
It is not coincidental that the televised field of corporatist Japan seems to have been going through its demise in the neoliberal period. The ur-mass of neoliberalism, that is, the mass that is brought to the highest possible level of reification, demands a new technology. The spatial model, on which TV or the circulating board depends, cannot accommodate the new temporal urgency of “nowness” that neoliberal dislocation and super-mobility have generated. TV’s replacement by the Internet is inevitable, when the newly “equalized” (that is, mutually exchangeable) mass opts for the concept of simultaneity, participation, and interaction, which the Internet enables. The Internet’s hyper-sensibility of time, though, sacrifices any consciousness of history. The Internet process of constant renewal and the resultant erasure of history/historicity are perhaps summoned by the neoliberal workers’ survival strategy—they have to be always kept technically up-to-date, while politically tuning out.

Velocity without history or politics, where temporality collapses into spatiality—this is one image of what I have called the death community. Death communal fascism assumes total repression of history; the result is accelerated exchangeability between the members, who are rendered to be mutually identical. Advocates for fascist equality would thus find the Internet-field presenting an easy opportunity for its usage.

Still, even at the current point (2013), this seems to remain a mere opportunity. As opposed to corporatist advocates, who have enjoyed seeing their vision firmly institutionalized as the neighborhood association among others, the Internet mass of neoliberalism seems to see the aestheticized equality of simultaneity only as an inchoate image. The same image seems to provide inspirations also to such democracy-minded practitioners as the anti-nuclear activists after the Fukushima earthquake in 2011. This chapter analyzes Japan between 2006 and 2008, when it was vacillating between different potentialities and suggestions that the Internet had indicated.
How could mere potentialities, suggestions, and inchoation—Charles Sanders Peirce’s “first-ness”—be logged and analyzed? I will adopt multiple methods so that the Internet futures would be presented as an image.

First, I would like to start with the overall framework of neoliberal violence, based on my conviction that the quality of the Internet masses in pre-Fukushima Japan would not be adequately described without mentioning the violence that they seemed to contain. The then prime minister, Junichirō Koizumi (2001-2006), adopted the fascistic technique of appearance-orientation in order to cover the neoliberal disruption of the country’s class-structure. The Internet masses of the period seemed to be more or less organized by the appearance of the nation that Koizumi newly provided, while unconsciously registering the material violence of neoliberalism. Before I move on to an ethnography of such masses, who gathered in Yasukuni Shrine, Tokyo, in 2006, I will turn my attention to Christian peace activists against the shrine. By examining the effects of the violence that these Japanese activists had sustained, I will be able to illuminate the way in which the technology of the Internet was connected with the fascist-inclined masses. Then, I will proceed to the ethnography of the masses at the Yasukuni Shrine, so that I can negatively describe the atmospheric existence of the death-communal violence that the masses seemed to take on. I will describe and analyze the corporatist devices that the shrine and the state used in order to tame the violent atmosphere of the masses. Through these descriptions and analyses, the violent possibilities of the Internet masses will textually emerge as the dialectical other of state corporatism. The final section of the chapter will be dedicated to a historiographical exercise to ex-

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2 According to Peirce, “It seems, then, the true categories of consciousness are, 1st, Feeling, the consciousness of quality, without recognition or analysis; 2nd, Consciousness of an interruption into the field of consciousness, sense of resistance, of an external fact, or another something; 3rd, synthetic consciousness binding time together, sense of learning, thought.” See his “One, Two, Three: Fundamental Categories of Thought and of Nature” in James Hoopes ed., Peirce on Signs: Writing on Semiotic by Charles Sanders Peirce (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), pp.180-185; p.185.
plore the relation between different media technologies and fascist possibilities throughout modern Japan.

In retrospect, it might be the interaction between the corporatist state and the death-communal inclination of the Internet masses that might be responsible for the prevented future of participatory democracy in 2006 Japan. The socio-political geography of the country at this time did not seem to point to this future of new democracy, which the post-earthquake Internet may be promising today. In 2006, the masses seemed to be attaining participation and equality in another way, the way that had been inherited from the country’s fascist past.

Still, it is too early to decide that history of the Internet in Japan has moved from the fascist to democratic. The Internet seems to be always ready to offer itself to violent and conservative usages by death-communal aspirations. This chapter will be the reminder of this aspect of the Internet in the days of participatory movements.

“Koizumi Theater”: The Fascistic in the Neo-Liberal Crisis

On the morning of August 15th 2006, I wake up at 4:20 a.m. Today is the sixty-first anniversary of the end of the Asia-Pacific War. In the country, where its warring past has yet to be resolved, there will be numerous demonstrations and gatherings staged by the whole political spectrum. I am planning to attend them, starting with Japanese Christians’ memorial meeting held in Chidorigafuchi (anonymous soldiers’) Cemetery (Chidorigafuchi Senbotsu-sha Boen) in Tokyo from 7 to 8 o’clock. The train that leaves a nearby, coastal Yokohama station at 5:30 a.m. lacks the usual pack of commuters. It is Tuesday, but many Japanese take advantage of the obon holiday and take summer vacations during this time. The car, though, is clamorous because all the walls are covered with black, red, and other colored letters, advertising for sensational tab-
loids and weeklies. Photogenic females, who show their bikini-clad forms mainly to the young male readers of comic magazines (called “gravure” idols or gra dol), provocatively pose and smile in the magazines’ ads that hang from the ceiling. Apparently, the advertisers assume gendered commuters. Today, however, the ads are misdelivered, as the only other passenger in the car besides me is another female. She looks to be in her 30s. She is already perfectly protected from the still-rising sun with a hat, scarf, and gloves. The recent Japanese females’ overprotection from not only the sun but other natural environments—“free radicals,” germs, virus, etc.—could reflect these females’ symptomatic accusation of their socio-culturally damaging environments.

I am glad that railroads in neoliberal Japan became mostly privatized just for the reason that the trains are cooler because they do not abide by the new nation-wide rules of staying at 78 degrees or above. Though non-binding, the rules have resulted in warming up most of the public facilities in the country. This is because it is the prime minister, Junichirō Koizumi, who has advocated for the rules. These rules are part of the eco-campaign that he calls “Cool Business,” in his sense of English. In addition to the reduced A/C usage, the PM recommends half-sleeved suits and no tie for male office workers. All the public offices from libraries to ministries are apparently compelled to follow the PM’s initiative. Many private companies have started to introduce “casual Fridays” at least, where bosses and customers are asked to forgive their otherwise formally clothed subordinates and business partners in polo shirts and chino pants. “Cool Biz,” as it is widely called in this country, is also meant to grow the country’s eco-business by creating a new market for eco-suits and Okinawan kariyushi shirts, for instance. I have also seen mini-booms of those nostalgic commodities that are reminiscent of pre-A/C days, such as folding fans, handkerchiefs, shaved ice to eat, or wind chimes to help us notice the breeze. People have also
eagerly purchased such inventions as a sweat-drying textile, sold at “Uniqlo” for example, which is a burgeoning clothing chain catering to neoliberal thrift.

In many ways, Cool Biz represents the essence of the influential administration of Koizumi. To begin with, there is a certain perverted sense of nationalism always involved in post-recessionary ecologism in Japan. As the future PM, Tarō Asō (2008-9) will vociferously argue, the expression, *mottainai* or wasteful, is supposed to carry a Japan-specific eco-consciousness that should be spread through the world. The fact that the Kyoto Protocol for climate change was adopted in Japan in 1997 is a point of nationalist pride. Japan’s anxieties about its decreasing technological and economic leadership in the world seem to be expressed by claims that the country should teach China (of course) and other “developing” countries with Japan’s technologies and consciousness of environmentalism. The irony of Minamata and other instances of environmental pollution that Japanese industries have caused, especially in the 1950-60s, are positively narrated as the lessons that other countries can learn.³

Second, Koizumi in rough *kariyushi* shirts, the idea of half-sleeved suits, and other visions presented in the Cool Biz campaign might show the PM’s orientation toward theatricality. The country’s journalism has indeed called his administration “Koizumi theater” (*Koizumi gekijō*). The term seems to represent a certain nature of the administration, in which one extremely radical political change is accomplished after another, while people are being mesmerized by its ostentatious presentation. Coinciding with the Bush administration in the United States and Tony Blair in Britain, the Koizumi theater is meant for the people, their desires for

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³ According to the Asahi Newspaper, “Wasting or trashin... the oil shock; [they] worked as the chairman of the Kyoto [environmental] Conference [of 1997]. The whole world recognizes these accomplishments [made by the Japanese].” Since the “developing countries such as China and India” would be “interested” in the “technologies of energy conservation and natural energy sources, at which Japan is good,” Japan should sell these technologies to these countries and promote global ecologism, according to Asahi. The quotes are from their 5/3/2007 editorials, “Soft Power: Hottoke-nai, Mottai-nai, Hekotare-nai” and “Kikō no Anzen Hoshō: ‘Kyoto’ wo Chikyū Hozen no Genten ni suru” respectively.
catharsis at least aesthetically. The feeling of violence that I might have toward the case of the half-sleeved suits for instance might be shared when one thinks about such suits together with the popular resentment of the business world’s corruption and bureaucracy’s privilege. Big corporations and central ministries are otherwise the world of dark suits and ties, as well as heavily air-conditioned offices. Like Bush or Blair, Koizumi apparently prefers to look like he brings about catharsis as the “ordinary,” yet strong-willed leader. He is supposed to be a Robespierre reformer of the otherwise corrupt “ancient regime” of postwar Japan, as he and the rest of the country call. He calls his political opponents “resisting forces” (teikō seiryoku), as if they were merely old and stubborn. He would release “assassins” (shikaku) to those resisting politicians’ electoral districts—he selects and supports actresses, newscasters, and other known, new faces to electorally beat the resisting politicians. People love Koizumi’s revolutionary image—I guess this is how the long-lasting recession has made them feel to be vulnerable and desire charisma.

Being a grandson and son of Yokosuka politicians, Kanagawa Prefecture, and the biological father of a popular actor, Kōzaburō Koizumi, and a burgeoning politician, Shinjirō Koizumi, Koizumi the prime minister is surely part of corporate Japan and its political interests of conservatism. However, he acts as if he represented the recessionary Japanese desires for change. There is a certain truth in his appearance, since he actually changes the system. Yet the changes that he pursues cannot be real changes, since he changes in order to make the system even more systematic than before. The setting of the A/C at the higher temperature than before is not meant to change the dominance of big corporations and bureaucracy over people’s lives. On the contrary,

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4 In the neoliberal discourses of a “small government” and people’s “self-sufficiency” (jiko sekinin), one of the most heated national debates in the period is whether the nation should allow welfare-families to have A/Cs. The haves ask if A/Cs are an additional luxury to the “healthy and cultural, lowest-possible standard of life” that is guaranteed in the Constitution and whether public monies should cover A/Cs. As welfare-families have started to bear the moral connotation of these discourses of A/C usages, elder or diseased members of these families have started to pass away in the heated natural environment of global warming. About neoliberalism and poverty in general, see Osamu Aoki and Hiroshi Sugimura eds., Gendai no Hinkon to Fubyōdō: Nihon, America no Genjitsu to Han Hinkon Senryaku (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 2006).
the new A/C rule is meant to benefit the corporations and bureaucracy by promoting eco-
business and increasing points of governmental control over ordinary people.

Similarly, as a PM candidate in 2001, his slogan was “wreck the LDP” (Jimin Tō o Buk-
kowase), with the LDP being the Liberal Democratic Party the almost sole ruler of postwar Japan. The irony is that Koizumi himself is an LDP member. Moreover, the new Japan that he has pro-
moted since then would alternate between two conservative parties, the LDP and the Democratic Party (DP), which gathers former LDP fractions and others. Beneath the theatrical exchanges of political arguments and personal enmities between the new LDP and DP members, conservatism is thus meant to become even more monolithic a principle to rule over Japan than even before. What is excluded from this new monolith of political conservatism are social democrats and other progressive parties. In the “small electoral district system” (shōsenkyokusei), which was launched in 1996 and has been advanced by Koizumi, oppositional candidates in each district are destined to lose. When only one Diet member is supposed to represent a miniatualized district, the relatively smaller amount of votes that socialists or Minsha laborers’ candidates could usually attract in each district as compared to those that are cast for the LDP or DP will be disregarded. Many oppositional party-members are compelled to join the DP. Although it is true that the DP has the appearance of the other party of the LDP, the matter of fact is that the Japanese are left only with a false choice, the choice between slightly different kinds of conservatism.5

The radical conservatism of Koizumi, which does not allow even the existence of oppo-
tion (c.f. the metaphor of assassins), matches the neoliberal totalitarianism that he endeavors to construct. With the recession as a subterfuge, an ultimately smooth surface for exchange has

5 The small electoral district system is a system of “distorted representation (min’i ga yugamu),” the communist party of Japan criticizes. See “Jimin Asshō no Karakuri Shō Senkyo Ku Seido,” Shinbun Akahata, 9/25/2005. See also Gavan McCormack’s criticism in his Client State: Japan in the American Embrace (London and New York: Verso, 2007); pp.34-9.
been constructed. Possibly discriminatory, yet surely protective laws for women are abrogated.⁶ Theoretically all the jobs there are in the country are standardized and assignable to any worker beyond gendered, ethnic, or regional differences.⁷ The capital market boasts infinitesimal interest-rates, while the commodity market is freshly rid of various “non-numerical barriers” and supposedly totally porous to any domestic or international players. Although the neoliberal momentum is bequeathed from the preceding administrations, Koizumi has promoted the momentum exceedingly. In the resulting totalitarianism of the commodity-logic, both workers and goods have become dislocated from their socio-cultural surroundings. Geographically based mobilization of voters has come to be dysfunctional—local post-offices or the neighborhood associations can no longer adequately work to represent the neoliberal movements. Supposedly policy-versus interest-led politics of the new LDP and DP are meant to accommodate the dispersed fabric of the post-1990s society. The monolithic similarity of these parties’ policies reflect the almost unanimously conservative mood of the public, but more fundamentally, the newly emphasized totalitarianism of the commodity’s massifying power.

In summarizing the Koizumi administration, what strikes me is its relevance to Walter Benjamin’s concept of fascism, which might be simplified as the covering of politics with the aesthetics of the mechanical reproductive mode, to which neoliberalism is subsumed as its currently most advanced stage. This is another way to say my thesis that the fascist subjects miscon- cognize the fascist representation of the mechanically reproduced equivalence as the presentation of political equality. According to Benjamin’s observation of 1936 Germany, the society-wide issue of the masses was about to be solved by aesthetically organizing them in cinema. The

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⁶ See Yasuko Shimamoto, “Kaiko: Kaisha no naka de Nani ga Okonawarete-iru no ka” in Sekai, No.710 (February 2003): 85-90. Again, these abrogated laws were protective—the question is whether both male and female workers should become as protected as women under these laws used to be. Women’s emancipation seems to be abused as an excuse to deprive male workers of the chance to be protected.

⁷ Shimamoto (Ibid.) provides a concise chronology of how neoliberal labor laws have developed.
masses emerged then as the producers and consumers of mechanically reproduced products, including cinema. The real problem that the masses were facing, though, was their increasing impoverishment. “The growing proletarianization of modern man and the increasing formation of masses are two aspects of the same process,” Benjamin wrote.

Fascism attempts to organize the newly created proletarian masses without affecting the property structure which the masses strive to eliminate. Fascism sees its salvation in giving these masses not their right, but instead a chance to express themselves. The masses have a right to change property relations; Fascism seeks to give them an expression while preserving property. The logical result of Fascism is the introduction of aesthetics into political life.⁸

While they had a “right” to realize politico-economic equality with the elites, the masses were made to be content with the artistic “expression” of equivalence in film and other mechanically reproduced technologies.⁹ Recall the example of such an expression that I have provided in the first chapter, viz. the CG image of the imperial Japanese soldiers mutually equalized in their deaths. Benjamin similarly mentions the cinematic, photographic, and other mechanical reproductive representations of the masses “in big parades and monster rallies, in sports events, and in war” and remarks that “mass movements, including war, constitute a form of human behavior which particularly favors mechanical equipment.”¹⁰ In the Benjaminian understanding of history that focuses on the materiality of human behavior, the “mass movements” that he mentions here turn out to be the result of what he calls “mechanical equipment,” actually, or rather the economic mode which facilitates and adopts such an equipment. The utmost degree of human reification or massification is in the base of people’s favoritism of their aesthetic representation over their

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⁹ See also Frederic Jameson
political emancipation. If fascism is the name for this movement of replacement, the replacement of political rights with the aesthetic appearance of their realization (note that in the artistic expression of equality, equality looks to have already been there in reality, whose representation the artistic expression is supposed to be), then people in the mode of mass reproduction are always already conditioned to be the subjects of such a fascistic replacement; they are habituated to be apolitical. 11 Therefore, although he does not depend on cinematic media like German fascists did more than sixty years ago, Koizumi uses theatrical performance to be more than well received by the contemporary Japanese masses. Koizumi’s shock-inflicting performances accommodate people’s desires to avert their attention from the fact that he is politically impoverishing people by depriving them of real choices—that is, by promoting the miniaturized electoral district. Economically, his neoliberalist policies have been taking away full employment and decent benefits from the working Japanese. Instead of staging political oppositions to such political and economic policies of impoverishment, people contradictorily turn to the policy maker, viz. Koizumi, and clap their hands as he covers these poor policies with his excellent theatricality. The potentially oppositional masses are thus converted into the image of the new nation that Koizumi promotes.

Ideologically, Koizumi thus depends on neo-nationalism, with whose force he has tried to integrate the Japanese, the Japanese that his neoliberal policies have atomized and strewn. Provocation of the country’s new rival, China, beyond the hitherto observed protocols of the bilateral

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11 Among other critics of fascism, Sontag focuses her attention on the aspect of temporal inversion, which, according to her, is an abuse of modern capitalist temporality in general. Analyzing Leni Riefenstahl’s 1935 film, Triumph of the Will, Sontag says the film “represents an already achieved and radical transformation of reality: history become theater.” The film on the above-mentioned Nuremberg Rally was accordingly “planned not only as a spectacular mass meeting—but as a spectacular propaganda film...The event, instead of being an end in itself, served as the set of a film which was then to assume the character of an authentic documentary... In Triumph of the Will, the document (the image) is no longer simply the record of reality; ‘reality’ has been constructed to serve the image.” In addition to the 700,000 supporters that I have mentioned, 30,000 extras were employed for film production. See Sontag, Ibid.; parentheses original.
diplomacy and the violent dismissal of the resident Korean or dissident Japanese human rights—these taboo-breaking behaviors of Koizumi have made only a few in Japan frown. One of the arenas on which Koizumi has staged his neonational plays is Yasukuni Shrine. Every year since his taking the office in 2001, Koizumi has visited this controversially “religious” facility, which consecrates the fallen Japanese soldiers of the Asia-Pacific and other imperial wars that Japan forged. As I have discussed in Chapter 2, the shrine’s tenet that the soldiers were not invaders of other Asian and Pacific countries, but war-heroes of the Japanese nation, has met strong opposition from the victims. By visiting the shrine as the prime minister, Koizumi has apparently attempted to build up the impression that the shrine is backed by Japanese national support. This will eventually “normalize” the shrine as a national war-memorial, according to the neonationalist logic—currently the shrine is a private religious organization. But the fact that is covered by this logic is that the Japanese are ethically and politically impoverished by the existence of the shrine.

The first PM who visited the shrine in his capacity as the PM was Takeo Miki, in 1975. Miki was followed by Mikio Fukuda in 1978, Zenkō Suzuki in 1980, Yasuhiro Nakasone in 1985, and Ryūtarō Hashimoto in 1996. Whether the date of visit should coincide with August 12 Koizumi’s anti-Chinese and -Korean policies, which have been inherited and exacerbated by his successor, Shinzō Abe (2006-7 and 2012-), have another aspect besides neonationalism—anti-communism. This is the reason that not all the Korean residents in Japan have been persecuted, but only those who publicly espouse the North Korean identity (the difference between the North and South Koreans in contemporary Japan among the ethnic Korean residents are not determined by these residents’ geographical origins, but by their public identification with either of the two governments in the Korean Peninsula). The Japanese state persecutions include the cancellation of the North Korean defacto embassy, sōren’s tax exemption status and new, strict rules for North Korean residents’ reentry into Japan—see Zai Nihon Chōsen-jin Jinken Kyōkai, Shinsō Report: Keishi-chō Kōan-bu no Chōsen Sōren Tokyo-to Honbu nado to Zainichi Chōsen-jin Josei ni taisuru Kyōsei Sōsa no Futō-sei ni tsuite (unpublished pamphlet, 2006). Particularly after one of the first missile tests conducted by the North Korean state on 7/5/2006, the Japanese state should be accused of being neglectful of saving the North Korean residents’ (esp. students’) lives from being physically harassed by the Japanese. According to the above-mentioned pamphlet, until 7/31 of that year, there were 121 cases of such harassment, ranging from being slapped on the face (a six-year-old boy in an Osakan street, 7/6) to being yelled at over the phone, “I’ll kill you,” “Get out (of Japan),” “I’ll demolish the school to the ground,” and so on (a North Korean residents’ school in Yamaguchi, 7/7). About Koizumi’s radical provocation of China, see below on his Yasukuni policies.
15th has been a sensitive issue, when the date is memorialized variously as that of liberation in other Asian and Pacific countries that Japan occupied. Some PMs (Miki, Fukuda, Suzuki, and Nakasone) dared to do so. Koizumi’s previous visits avoided the date, which the neonationalists have criticized as wimpy acquiescence to the “Chinese” opposition. Still, the PM’s visit to the shrine (on any date) has supplied the (neo)nationalists with a certain level of triumph, as if the act had redeemed the nation, which they seem to perceive as being besieged by foreign “intrusion in the internal affairs” of Japan. Koizumi in past years in Yasukuni has thus steadily accumulated his popularity, whereas his popularity has always been simultaneously eroded by the criticism that he should choose August 15 as the day of this visit. Today, on 8/15/2006, after five long years of mediocre satisfaction, the neonationalist frustration seems to have reached the tipping point, trying the true nature of Koizumi’s populism.

**Opposition Groups in New Surveillance Systems**

When I get off the train in Ichigaya Station, which is about a 10-15 minute walk from Yasukuni Shrine, the road in front of the station, Yasukuni Boulevard, is unusually empty under a drizzle of rain. Is it because it is still early in the morning (6:50)?, I wonder. On the same date of last year, the late morning boulevard was lined with two incessant rows of rightists’ vans on both sides. Called “armored cars” (sōkōsha), these black vans usually gather together from all over the country around Yasukuni on August 15. The dormant violence of the everyday is dragged into broad daylight by these black vans, which carry white or red inked slogans, such as “Return Us Our Northern Territories” or “Heavenly Wrath on X” (with X being whomever they regard as unforgivable for whatever reasons at any given time). Self-acclaimed agents of such heavenly wrath (tenchū), the “rightwingers” (uyoku) are known to have truly attacked and mur-
dered leftists and others in the past. The rightists around Yasukuni usually shout heavenly wrath and other terms and slogans with full-volumed microphones. The surrealistic silence and emptiness of the boulevard on this morning is then ripped by the siren of a couple of official armored cars (ACs) run at full speed from behind, that is, from the west. There, the three Self-Defense Forces are stationed side by side. Yelling something along the lines of “vacate the road” as they go, the ACs speed off the shrine’s direction (to the east).

Overwhelming even the ACs’ siren is the deafening noise from up above. I ask a woman for directions to the Chidorigafuchi Cemetery, but the noise completely erases my voice. Looking up, I locate a white, enormous helicopter hovering in midair. From now on, every three minutes or so, I will be hearing one helicopter after another, which makes me think of war. But more realistically, it should be the sign of Koizumi’s arrival, I think in my mind. In that case, the helicopter would be functioning as a mobile surveillance-camera of the state. Surveillance cameras in general have surrounded citizens’ lives for some time now, facilitated by the anti-criminal and anti-terrorist rhetoric. Particularly Christian and other anti-war activists, whom I am seeing now, are said to be on the black list of the state’s renewed efforts for surveillance. Although to

There are dozens of such instances, the most notorious of which might be what is called “Shimanaka Incident (jiken)” of 1961. The incident involves a writer, Shichirō Fukazawa, and his novel, “Fūryū Mutan,” published in Chōō Kōron, December 1960. One of the scenes in the novel that infuriated the rightists of 1960s Japan featured the Japanese prince and princess being decapitated by riotous people—the 1960s was the period of students’ and other citizens’ movements and riots. A seventeen-year-old male rightist visited the publisher, Chōō Kōron’s CEO’s house in Tokyo, ending up in stabbing and killing the housekeeper and severely injuring the CEO’s wife. See John Treat, “Beheaded Emperors and the Absent Figure in Contemporary Japanese Literature,” PMLA (January 1994): 100-15; Marilyn Ivy, “Revenge and Recapitation in Recessionary Japan” The South Atlantic Quarterly, Vol.99, No.4 (Fall 2000); 819-840.

One of the post-recessionary instances of similar violence would be the “Incident of Gunning Down Nagasaki Mayor Motoshima” of 1990, in which Mayor Hitoshi Motoshima of Nagasaki City was hit by a rightist gunman. A couple of years earlier, the mayor had remarked that he had thought the emperor Shōwa (Hirohito) had been accountable for the war, that is, for the war-crimes committed by the Japanese during the Asia-Pacific War. Motoshima survived the attack. Norma Field’s analyze the crime in her In the Realm of a Dying Emperor (New York: Pantheon Books, 1991).


Supposedly, the Ground, Air, and Maritime SDFs’ “Investigatory Teams (Chōsa Tai)” were restructured and fortified in 2003 to be “Information Security Corps (Jōhō Hozen Tai)” with 927 personnel in total (as of the end
witness Koizumi’s possible arrival at Yasukuni Shrine is tempting for an ethnographer, I follow a narrow back-road off the Yasukuni Blvd, to go see Christians at the Cemetery. Not that I am heroic enough to share the dissidents’ fate; rather, I promised that I would meet Seiji Suga, the chairman of the Committee on the Yasukuni Problem in Nihon [Japan] Christian Conference (NCC) (Nihon Kirist Kyō Kyōgi Kai Yasukuni Jinja Mondai Iinkai).

Pastor Suga says that ever since 1989, when the emperor Shōwa’s death “steered the country rightward,” Christianity in Japan has been suffering from decreasing membership. In a country where atheists are the majority, Christians are not particularly treated unfairly as members of certain “new religious” organizations might be, but regarded as different. According to Suga, the remaining and aging population of the Japanese Christians is becoming more conservative every day. “Particularly those big churches in cities,” he sighs. Shigenori Nishikawa, a member of the Yotsuya Reformed (Kaikaku-ha) Church, Tokyo, and one of the leaders of the National Liaison among Peace Families Associations (Heiwa Izoku-kai Zenkoku Renraku-kai), stresses what he regards as the inheritance of the churches’ co-opted past, in order to explain Christian conservatism in Japan. In 1940, according to him, 34 Protestant denominations in Japan gave in to state pressure and declared themselves as one united group to be subsumed by corporatist Japan as a group. The united group of Protestants formed the United Church of Christ in Japan (Nihon Kirist Kyōdan). Together with Catholics and other Christians, these corporatist Protestants prayed in Shinto shrines and morally supported the idea of the sacred emperor until the end of the war in 1945.16 The Calvinist-led United Church still remains a functioning organization, to which Suga’s NCC Yasukuni Committee belongs; Nishikawa is also a member. In

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1967, the United Church formerly admitted the role that it performed during the war; yet it had to overcome much conservative opposition inside the Church, according to Suga.

The several progressive Christian leaders who gather at the NCC Yasukuni Committee focus their oppositional efforts on the Yasukuni Shrine. The shrine is the place where “the state controls one’s worldview and one’s philosophy of life and death,” in Suga’s word. Arguing that this ideological control by the state is “against the freedom of belief,” Suga and other NCC Christians have demonstrated, lobbied, and supported relevant lawsuits by civil activists. “Christians don’t believe in spirits (rei), as in the soldiers’ spirits which are allegedly resting in Yasukuni,” Suga lets me know. Christian funerals, according to him, express the powerlessness of humans and their gratitude to God, to whose care the dead are now fully entrusted. He says that funerary rituals among Christians are literally memorials, where the dead are remembered and enlivened again in participants’ talks and songs.

Those 300 or so Christians who gather in the Chidorigafuchi Cemetery this morning are woven by the woof of counter-cultural love and peace rather than religious gratitude and submission. Young and old participants in rough T-shirts and shorts sing hymns to the accompaniment of the acoustic guitar. Flowers are shared. One of the several preachers prays, “Let Christ’s peace spread to every corner of the globe.” Sounding as orthodoxy banal as it could be, the phrase, though, might strike the participants with refreshingly new potency in the otherwise particularist context of the larger society. At the same time, the hidden warp that entangles this emancipating counter-culturalism is a thick and dark kind, which a middle-aged female participant, who stands next to me, represents as the Japanese “Christians’ sense of war-guilt” (Kirishisha no sensō
Every participant today is well-aware of the church’s collaborationist history. Today’s prayer, then, is partly their collective ritual for atonement.\(^{17}\)

In the lush 4.1 acres crisscrossed by flower-adorned promenades, the cemetery houses an approximately 35 square-foot, hexagon reliquary for “representative” bones of the Japanese soldiers.\(^{18}\) This morning, at the crossing to the path to the cemetery, I have seen about twenty police officers; only about 30 feet away through the path, at the front gate of the cemetery, twenty more. Even during the current, open-air meeting among the Christians in front of the reliquary, the preachers’ amplified speeches are at times erased by the still patrolling helicopters in the air. The police are known for their willingness to arrest peace activists. Father Kenzō Kimura once told me that some time before, the police had hit him with batons and fractured his ribs in Yasukuni. This man who looks about 70 years old was peacefully demonstrating there then. The dominant feeling that at least I have in this morning is we are being watched by the police instead of protected by them from possible rightist attacks.

Just before the meeting ends at about eight, Suga announces that Koizumi is reported to have visited Yasukuni at 7:47. The crowd instantly breaks into a buzz. Yet fresh excitement is lacking in the buzz, as everyone apparently has given up the hope that Koizumi would have second thoughts about his visit. “\(\text{Yappari} (\text{I knew that})\ldots\),” everybody murmurs. Soon, people start to talk about the details of his visit, such as whether he signed as the PM, offered flowers, vowed in the Shinto way, and so on, each of which has political significance.

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\(^{17}\) It is for a religious reason that a pastor, Hisashi Wakimoto, for instance, confesses in his book that he followed the Religious Teacher Mobilization Act (\(\text{Shūkyō Kyōshi Kinrō Dōin Rei}\)) of 1944 and worked as a moral teacher among Korean laborers in the Kawasaki factory of Showa Electric Industry. See his \(\text{Chōsen-jin Kyōsei Renkō to Watashi: Kawasaki Shōwa Denkō Chōsen-jin Shukusha Shakan no Kiroku}\) (Kōbe: Zaidan Hōnin Kōbe Gakusei Seinen Center Shuppan Bu, 1994).

\(^{18}\) The cemetery is not a cemetery in the strict sense of the word; it contains some remains “sampled” from each of the six major fronts of the Asia-Pacific War, which are China, Manchuria, the Philippines, the Southeast Asia, the Japanese Islands, and the former Soviet Union and the Pacific combined. See the first chapter of this dissertation for details.
In front of the reliquary, which we are facing at a distance of about fifty feet, a more authoritative and bigger-sized ritual than the Christians’ has been initiated by the Nichiren denomination of Buddhism. Formally dressed in black and pearls, the attendants sit in the perfectly aligned folding chairs. Through the long rows, apparently high-ranked monks in their silk kesa costumes and hoods with gold embroidery walk about. Incense and a branch of white chrysanthemum are offered to the dead by one attendant after another. Chants are heard; the mokugyo, a wooden percussion instrument, is played. According to a bereaved participant who is about 70 years old, the cemetery is more appropriate as a place for Buddhist prayer than Yasukuni, since “there are no bones (okotsu) in Yasukuni,” but only the supposed spirits of the soldiers. As a Buddhist, he believes in the religious efficacy of the deceased remains, he tells me. While the majority of the Japanese today seems to prefer Buddhist funerals, the rightist insistence that the Shintoist Yasukuni shrine be a national memorial has to have an extra religio-cultural reason. It is perhaps for the extra-religio-cultural reason that this Buddhist male that I am talking now says he is “not particularly opposed to Yasukuni.”

Since about 8:15, we have not heard any more helicopters. Since the Christians left, I have been hanging out a little more in the pleasantly gardened promenades of the cemetery. On the side of the rest house, I find a big chunk of limestone, to which is attached a sign, sazare ishi. The sign must refer to the “small” (sazare) “stone” (ishi) that is sung about in the controversial national anthem, “Our Lord’s Reign” (Kimi ga Yo). In the song, the current royal family’s reign over Japan is wished to last for the duration it takes for a small stone to become sedimented, growing to be a full-scale rock and hosting a carpet of moss. Several bus-tour groups of families arrive from Fukuoka Prefecture in the south and Hokkaido in the north; they start to gather around the embodied wish for the eternal nation of the emperor, the sazare ishi stone. One of
these families informs me that they will go to the nearby Hall of National Martial Arts (Nihon Budō-kan) to attend the National Memorial Ceremony for the War-Dead (Zenkoku Senbotsu-sha Tsuitō Shiki). Every year, the emperor and empress attend the ceremony and lead a one-minute prayer for the dead. The beginning of the prayer is timed to be at noon sharp. TV and radio broadcast the moment of the silent prayer live, in order to restart the capitalist time of the everyday according to the national cadence.

I leave the cemetery before 10:00 to attend the peace families’ annual meeting, which is held in the Japan Hall of Education (Nihon Kyōiku Kaikan) in a walking distance. On the both sides of the road that leads back to the Yasukuni Blvd, the rightists’ black vans have apparently been allowed to park again, though under the police’s watchful eyes. In front of the Education Hall, three police ACs are parked and about ten police officers are standing. Before the audience of about 500, one of the leaders of the peace families Shigenori Nishikawa states, “Beware that we will be surrounded by the rightwingers as soon as we’re out” for a demonstrative walk to the national Diet after the meeting. “Some of us could get in trouble and be arrested,” Nishikawa further says. “We’ve prepared lawyers. Until they show up, don’t tell anything to the police.” A defiant-looking, middle-aged woman in an Indian silk blouse, who sits next to me, scoffs, “Ha! The plain-clothed [police] (shifuku) and public safety [police] (kōan) are already among us.” She then warns me, “Watch out those who take our pictures and not the speakers’.”

Tall, thin, gray-haired Nishikawa, who lost his elder brother in the war, actually has a similar idea about surveillance from within. Some time ago, when we sat together in the Yotsuya Church, of which he is a member, he said, “The right-wingers nowadays immediately come [to get the leftists], as soon as we do something public, wherever it is—because of the Internet.” The last time when this somewhat known activist had appeared on TV, according to him, the rightists
apparently put his name in search engines and called him at his house no less than three minutes after the broadcast. The Christian chairman of the Yasukuni Committee, Seiji Suga, is not sure if it is the influence of the Internet, but he says the recent rightists dare to come inside oppositional meetings as part of the audience. According to him, this is a drastic change from their previous tactics to surround the meeting place with their “AC” vans. The Kanagawa Human Rights Center (Kanagawa Jinken Center) in Yokohama City knows this old tactic very well. According to the center’s worker, Reiko Waki, an example would be drawn from “about ten years ago,” when the center formerly complained that the city had asked Yoshiko Sakurai, a neonationalist, to make a speech in a half-municipal organization. “Immediately the right-wingers’ AC vans came,” Waki witnesses. They parked their vans outside the center, keeping taped nationalistic songs at full volume and making loud speeches with amplifiers. The center, which works for the “outcast” (burakumin), has been attacked in this fashion numerous times before and after this episode. But the rightists have always limited themselves to the parking lot—they would never even get out of their vans, according to Waki. The sight of the vans outside has eventually become “pretty banal” and “IGNOREable,” brave Waki laughs. What the Christians Nishikawa and Suga let us know about, therefore, was the newer, more invasive types of right-wing interventions than their AC days, which the new technologies of the Internet might have enabled and the idea of surveillance cameras might have inspired.

In today’s meeting among the peace families, which is entitled “Toward a Japan That Lives with [the Rest of] Asia (Asia to tomoni Ikiru Nihon o),” the keynote speech is made by an emeritus professor of constitutional law, Kōichi Yokota. “Yasukuni Shrine,” he says, “is the place that houses not so much those who died for the state as those who died for the emperor.”

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19 The literature on buraku min is vast; for a concise and comprehensive history of their discrimination, see e.g. Tomohiko Harada’s Hisabetsu Buraku no Rekishi (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbun Sha, 1975).
Such an abstract body as the state cannot function as the center of national integration, he argues, for everyone in the nation must have a different idea about what the state is. The emperor’s concrete body, in contrast, is useful in this sense, according to him.

The topic of the emperor does seem to work to engage the audience, at least on this particular occasion of the speech. Mentioning what is called the “Tomita memos,” that is, the memoranda that Asahiko Tomita, the former Grand Steward of the Imperial Household Agency (Kunai Chō Chōkan), made over the decade of 1977-88, Yokota the law professor makes a joke, “When I first heard about the memos, I thought ‘what a cold fish’” the emperor Showa was. According to the memos, Showa showed a strong gesture of dislike for the idea that Yasukuni Shrine consecrated in 1978 the seven Class-A war-criminals executed according to the ruling of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East.²⁰ Those war-criminals were executed in 1948, leaving their statements that their deaths were sacrifices for the Japanese nation-state, which to them was symbolically the emperor’s “jade” body (gyokutai) itself. Suggesting that he opposed the idea of the war-criminals’ Yasukuni consecration, the emperor practically denied their deaths’ symbolic significance as sacrifices for himself. “Cold fish” (tsumetai hito), Yokota describes the emperor and smiles. The audience breaks into laughter. Yokota continues,

“Even though the emperor might never veto what’s determined in the cabinet, he often made such comments like ‘I hate that guy.’ These comments were of course taken by ministers as the emperor’s unsaid opinions; and of course the ministers moved as the emperor seemed to wish. He wasn’t just saying, ‘Ah, so.’”

Everybody laughs again, hearing the clichéd mimicking of the emperor (i.e. “Ah, so,” which happens to be “Ah, so,” also in Japanese). The performative part that I sense in the meeting is the speaker’s and audience’s integration using the emperor’s jokes as the point of their in-

integration. It is ironic, since they must all be hardcore dissidents in the society, which upholds the emperor as the “cultural symbol of the nation.”

After raising more than 1,200 U.S. dollar-worth of donation (*kampa*), the participants walk out of the building. No rightists were waiting for us, but the police were. Some of the middle-aged and elder families and their young supporters wear hats, hold cloth banners, and start walking to the Diet in nearby Kasumigaseki. The banners read “Shame, Koizumi,” “No to Yasukuni: Japan Was an Invader,” or “Cohabitation with [the Rest of] Asia.” I see them off at the hall’s exit and leave for Yasukuni Shrine. As far as I know, there is no arrest made nor other violence done to the Christians during their demonstration this day.

**Yasukuni as a Corporatist Device**

It is already noon. The drizzle that let up at about 9:30 is still hinted at on the faintly wet asphalt. The leaden clouds that cover the sky foretell more rain to come. The gray air is soupy with humidity, stifling breaths and squeezing sweat. Soon I pass the deeply moss-green moat of the “palace” (*kōkyo*), which contains static water far below the street level. This Chidorigafuchi part of the moat runs parallel to Yasukuni Blvd. Across the boulevard, Yasukuni Shrine is a rectangular stretch along the boulevard over two traffic lights. The 97,000 square-foot shrine, however, accounts for just a portion of the whole scene of the state’s display of its military potential.

If you go down the sloped boulevard turning your back to the Ichigaya Station (i.e. to the east), then the Chidorigafuchi Cemetery is on the right hand side, through back-roads among residential houses. Keep walking the boulevard along the long stone wall of Yasukuni Shrine. Eventually, on the right side of the boulevard as the boulevard starts to make a downhill, you will see the palace moat and then the Shōwa-kan, a revisionist history museum for the “ordinary”
(shomin no) Japanese during the war. The Shōwa-kan was constructed in 1999 during the governorship of the ultra-nationalist, Shintarō Ishihara. And then, on the same side of the boulevard, you will be seeing the Kudan Hall, which used to be an army and navy facility for their veterans and reservists. The above-mentioned National Martial Arts Hall also adds to the scene; it is farther away to the right, beyond Chidorigafuchi. I have already mentioned the Self-Defense Force facilities behind the Ichigaya Station. The whole setting is lined with rows of thick, gnarled cherry trees, whose flowers have been said to fall as fascist soldiers fall *en masse*.

Today, sidewalks on both sides of the Yasukuni Blvd. are filled with people, who are streaming to and fro, fanning themselves and taking pictures in disarrayed intersections of chats and laughter. They appear and disappear from and into the Kudanshita Subway Station, whose entrances are two cool caves opening in the middle of the humid downhill of the boulevard. There are several entrances to Yasukuni Shrine, but the main one (the First Gate or *Dai-ichi Todori*) is only about 50 feet away from the subway station on the top of the hill. From the first gate, the boulevard starts to level off until it eventually hits the Ichigaya Station. In front of the gate, a Chinese man stands in the middle of the crowds, trying very hard to hand his anti-Yasukuni fliers to the mainly Japanese visitors. These visitors’ faces are flushed with cold excitement, which is laced with urban disinterest and irritated anticipation.

“Everyone in Japan,” the Chinese man shouts in his Sinicized Japanese, “the Class-A war-criminals should not be consecrated together with ordinary soldiers like yourselves!”

Facing Chinese, Korean, and others’ vehement opposition to the shrine, the prime minister Koizumi notoriously cited a saying, “hate the crime and not the criminal” (*tsumi o nikunde hito o nikumazu*). That is, the victims and leftists should not attack the shrine where the soldiers’ “spirits” are supposed to be, but the war crimes that they committed—as if the crimes just hap-
pened one day without human agency. According to a leftist Japanese activist, Yasushi Torii, “hate the crime...” is a phrase that is usually used by the victims to show their difficult will to forgiveness.21

Even before the Chinese man in front of the Yasukuni gate finishes his words, people come and go in-between the spaces that separate him and me, erasing his voice and cutting his flier’s reach toward me. There is an elder female in a light pink blouse with a small flower pattern, whose white, lacy parasol suddenly blocks my view. Even after she passes, I do not see the Chinese activist, as a middle-aged man in a pale blue shirt comes in my sight. From downhill, a young man in a red “Abercrombie and Fitch” shirt and small-framed glasses is almost running up to us, giving a fleeting, indifferent glance at a young couple carrying a stroller nearby. The baby is crying for some soft serve in a cone that somebody else in the crowd is working on. The yan-kee, that is, delinquent-looking, couple with dyed “blond” hair bend their bodies in over-sized T-shirts and “baggy” shorts, in order to talk to their kid. “Afterward,” the woman tells. “After we pray, you’ll get anything.” The kid still clamors and my attention fades out. The next time I notice, the Chinese man is completely lost in the confusing flow of people.

The flow, though, is momentarily halted by two junior high-school boys in their school uniforms, who look back at the crowds with their cell phones in their hands.

“I have never seen this many crowd,” one of them cries and takes a picture of moving people.

21 Although the Bible might have the phrase, “hate the sin, but not the sinner,” Koizumi must have referred to Kongzi’s word, “古之聴訟者、悪其意、不悪其人.” I have introduced Torii’s interpretation of Koizumi’s reference to show how the Japanese leftists critique the PM on this matter. Torii is the secretary general of Jinkotsu no Kai or the Association on Human Bones. The association has endeavored to excavate truths about those dozen sets of human remains that were buried until recently in an imperial army’s facility in Shinjuku Ward, Tokyo. Torii, Keiichi Tsuneishi, and other activists in the association suspect that the facility was related to the imperial army’s Unit 731 in Manchuria, which notoriously conducted vivisection and other criminal medical experiments on illegally captured Chinese, Manchu, and other bodies.
“Let’s send it to Y [another friend of his, I guess] as a picture mail (shashin mail or sha mé),” the other almost shouts with excitement.

Inspired, I take a couple of digital pictures as well. In the instantaneously available images, people are looking into all directions. One man in the foreground is gaping as he looks into the camera; another in the background intensely gazes at something else on the side, off the frame. Revealing their unconscious secrets between flashes of the moment, silent people in the pictures look inadvertently honest, and thus sad. The somber stillness of the truthful moments might be reflecting the cloudy day; without sunlight, people in the pictures do not look excited at all. The dissipated excitement, in another thought, might be mine and not theirs. For, my examining eye separates each individual in the pictures from the otherwise buzzing crowds, as a social-scientific specimen, perhaps, of neonationalism and fascism.

I look away from my camera and mingle with the crowds once again. Now I am facing a humongous concrete structure, which, as I look up, turns out to be the foundation of one of the two 27 yard-high steel pillars of the First Gate. The gate is the combination of these pillars and the two 37-yard horizontal poles, which are lifted and supported by the pillars, 2.7 yards in diameter each. Before the right pillar, I discover that there is a wooden post, on which is carved, Yasukuni Shrine (Yasukuni Jinja). Several visitors stop by and take pictures there. Blocked by the crowds, this is how my partial vision in Yasukuni today can perceive objects and events. Later through the eye of mass-media’s helicopters above, I will be learning that the straight Approach (Sandō) to the Hall of Prayer (Haiden) is quite spectacular. In the retrospectively provided images by TV or newspapers, I will get to know that the crowds have turned the Approach into a booming stretch, without leaving even a bit of space empty. Still, the situated eyes of mine can easily recognize that the rectangular Approach is marked first by the 40-foot high statue of
the “father of the army,” Masujirō Ōmura. Further away, I see the towering Second Gate (Dai-ni Torii), similarly designed to the First Gate. Then, even though the twenty-five square-foot, third and last gate, the Divine Gate (Shin Mon) is even more remote than the Second Gate, it still looms large over the crowds. In the media images, the crowds are compartmentalized by these gates and a statue into three almost equally-sized, lively blocks.

The sheer size of these monumental structures seems to provide some sense of organization even to the confused vision of the participant. According to Susan Stewart, the gigantic in the age of mechanical reproduction is characterized by its abstractness. The giants of this age are neither those mythological ones in the genesis of the world, who boasted their sublime “over-abundance of the natural” nor those Rabelaisian ones in markets and carnivals, who already represented the state’s abstractness but still carried “the underbelly of official life.”

In the mode of mass reproduction, the gigantic is the commodity itself, Stewart states, the spectacle, which stands before the subject as the hidden totality of the society’s productive relations, reproductive apparatuses, and class structure. Benjamin’s big parades and monster rallies are some examples of the mechanical reproductive giants, whose endlessness, seamlessness, and perfection put the viewers in their subjective and subjected position vis-à-vis capital and the state, which organize, and are signified by, these events. Time stays still in these spectacles, for any movement of individuals is trivialized in reference to the spectacles’ settings that are exceedingly larger than these individuals. The size difference should also have something to do with the false idea that the individuals in the spectacles must entertain, the idea that the mechanicity, repetitiveness, and other rules of the gigantic are naturally given and already justified. In the last instance, however, the individuals willingly submit their bodies to the gigantic, attracted to and fearful about its enig-

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22 Stewart, On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993); quotes are from p.73 and 81 respectively.
matic atmosphere, which in postwar Japan tends to be expressed as “religious” (see Chapter 3). The enigma is derived from the way in which the totality of the gigantic is hidden; the individuals are always given just partial views. Why do these individuals gather together in one place, why do they walk in the same direction without any order, why do they all look alike in this movement and probably even before that—that is, why have they become totalized as the same commodities? These questions incessantly arise in massive events, while their answers are never given. This is the reason that the individuals participate, charging the events with the collected power of the utmost degree of their commodity fetishism and thus attracting even more participants.

In the gigantic event, the state takes the opposite position to the individual’s; the state pretends to know the totality of the event and tries to organize the participants based on that pretention. The gigantic monuments here in Yasukuni seem to represent the state’s will to not just such totalitarian pretention, but also fake organicism. Corporatism is the ideology that I see underlying the architecture of the shrine—the ideas of genders, ethnicities, generations, and other organic-sounding groups and their integration into the whole, in this case, the whole of the emperor’s body, the kokutai. Look at the stone set of koma dog statues, for instance, which are placed before the main gate. Confiscated by one of the Meiji (1868-1912) oligarchs, Aritomo Yamagata, from China during the Sino-Japanese War (1894-5), the statues were “presented upwards” (kenjō-sareru) to the emperor Meiji by Yamagata. The shrine acquired the statues, as they were “given down” (kashi-sareru) as the emperor’s generous gift to his subject (shinmin). Even before entering the shrine property then, the visitors are expected to understand the imperial order as well as their own subjective position in it. Taiwan’s incorporation into that idiosyncratic order, to take another example, is similarly announced by the Divine (third) Gate, whose
magnificent cypress is supposed to have been presented upwards by the Taiwanese under Japanese colonialism.

In the overall culture of militarism and masculinity of the shrine, the female gender enters as “mothers” (haha). Maternal symbols are of course hidden deep inside either the thick shields of evergreen trees that are planted on both sides of the Approach or behind the last gate to the Hall of Prayer, viz. the Divine Gate. The first such symbol on the side of the Approach, which is usually not even noticed by the visitors, is the Spirit-Soothing Spring (Irei no Izumi). The spring is a man-made flow of water under the marquee that is abstractly composed of gray stone bricks. According to the placard on the side, the spring “abstractly represents a loving mother, who gives pure water” to the “many war-dead” who “passed away, remembering their mothers in their hometowns and craving for pure water.” Another motherly figure in the shrine is the stone Statue of Mother (Haha no Zō) behind the Divine Gate on the side of the Yūshū Kan Museum. This mother stands in kimono dress with two children in each of her hands. Carved is the following—“Mother, who was strong, strict, and gentle. Mother, thank you. [I swear to you I] won’t repeat this sadness ever again.” Sadness (Kanashimi)?, I think in front of the statue. Yes, but should the Japanese be in the position to lament their sadness before they apologize for causing sadness among other Asians and Pacific Islanders? Gender might be the strongest of all the corporatist categories as an instrument to aesthetically cover the politics, ethics, and economy of war and its consequences, perhaps due to the level of emotion that it can stir up. The other side of the coin is that the gender difference in corporatism is important only to the extent that it aesthetically contributes to the collectivist end (e.g. war) of the whole. One of the latest expressions

24 Of course orders matter to neonationalists as well. See Norihiko Katō, Haisen-go Ron (Tokyo: Kōdan Sha, 1997) for argument that the Japanese should mourn the Japanese losses first; otherwise, according to his logic, Japan would not be able to set up the national subject, with which to mourn other Asian and Pacific losses. Countless criticisms of Katō have been made, of which see e.g. J. Victor Koschmann, “National Subjectivity and the Uses of Atonement in the Age of Recession” in The South Atlantic Quarterly, 99:4 (Fall 2000), 741-61 and Marilyn Ivy, “Trauma’s Two Times: Japanese Wars and Postwars” in Positions, 16:1 (Spring 2008), 165-188.
of such a logic might be made by the then Health, Labor and Welfare Minister, Hakuo Yanazawa. Notoriously, he remarked that “females are child-bearing machines” for the state’s goal to enrich its pension funds.25

Today, in the middle of the crowds, nonetheless, the heat seems to melt away the stately and statist differences, be it the status that was created in the modern time (the emperor, “aristocrats” (kazoku), the ordinary subjects (shinmin), etc.), the imposed colonial order, or the collectivist gender-norms. Everyone here now seems the same with everyone else in the shared humidity and the neonationalist excitement of visiting the Yasukuni Shrine on August 15. Still, as soon as one falls into the dull and attractive hiatus of illusory equality among the Yasukuni masses, s/he cannot help but notice that s/he is designated to wake up once again in the sight of more police officers, more plain-clothed SPs, and other blunt signs of the state force that divides. The corporatist orders are thus at least partially maintained through physical means, protected from not only the leftists but also from the masses. That is why, I guess, the officers on the side of the Approach look inward at the Approach, watching us, the crowds of visitors passing on the stone pavement and on the “jade” pebbles (tama jari) that are laid on both sides of the pavement.

25 See “Josei wa Kodomo wo Umu Kikai,” Asahi Shinbun, 1/28/2007. The head of Japan’s socialist party, Mizuho Fukushima, asked Yanazawa to resign, arguing that his “remarks practically said ‘women should bear children for the nation-state.’” See “Kōrō-sō Hatsugen wo Hihan” in Asahi Shinbun, 1/29/2007. A socialist feminist organization, I-Women’s Conference (I-Josei Kaigi), and three other similar groups met Yanazawa in person at the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry to hand him their letter, which asked him to resign. The letter also stated that his remarks “revealed that [he] lacked the view to respect women’s right to self-determination regarding their own sexuality and reproduction.” These organizations were joined by about 50 demonstrators, who gathered in front of the ministry and maintained that “the remarks violated the human rights of women.” See “Josei Dantai ya Rōso Yanagisawa-shi Jinin Yōkyū” in Asahi Shinbun, 1/31/2007. Yanazawa did not resign—the superficial reason was that another minister had resigned in December 2006 due to his involvement in a bribery case. Allegedly, the cabinet of the then prime minister, Shinzō Abe, was “afraid that...it would collapse if another minister had to resign” in such a short period of time. See “Suku’enu Shitsugen” in Asahi Shinbun, 2/1/2007. Yanazawa made another problematic statement regarding gender relations in 2/6 of the same year; he said, Japanese “youths are in the remarkably healthy condition [today] in which they hope to get married and have more than two children.” See “Yanazawa Kōrō-sō ‘Kenzen’ Hatsugen: Yatō Sorotte Hanpatsu” and “Shitsugen Umareru Dojō towa” in Asahi Shinbun, 2/6/2007 and 2/10/2007 respectively.
Menacingly, many participants today carry red paper *uchiwa* fans with the slogan, Excavate and Raise the Grassroots (*Sōmō Kukki*). On the obverse side of the fan is the Japanese flag of the red sun in a white background (*nisshō ki*). According to my later conversation with one of the supporters of the ultra-rightist Association to Respond to the War-Heroes’ Spirits (*Eirei ni Kotaeru Kai*), which printed and distributed the fans today, the phrase is taken from what they call “Master” (*Sensei*) Shōin Yoshida. Yoshida is an early nineteenth-century nativist scholar, who taught many pro-emperor revolutionaries against the Tokugawa Shōgunate (1600-1868). According to this Association sympathizer, Yoshida preached that “if you can’t excavate and raise [the political consciousness of] even those ordinary folks [who are otherwise supposed to be politically inactive], then you can’t dare to launch a state-level project.” Even during our conversation by the Association booth along the Approach, the sympathizer keeps giving away the fans to one eager hand of a visitor after another. Behind us, there are several cardboard boxes filled with more fans. When I come back at about 3 o’clock, he is regretful that not even a single fan is left for me. People’s apparent willingness to receive the slogan, Excavate and Raise the Grassroots, makes a stark contrast to their attitudes on ordinary Sundays; they would go around the Association’s booth to avoid it. In the wording, the grassroots (*sōmō*), there is a certain nuance of democracy, which might be favorably received. At the same time, connoted democracy is smeared with a smack of violence, as at least I sense in the word, *ki* (to raise). In the original context of the nineteenth-century Shōin Yoshida, the slogan was after all meant to instigate an insurgency against the shōgunate. Yoshida was executed in 1859 for an attempted coup (the *Ansei no Taigoku* persecution). The constantly flickering signs of revolution, the grassroots, and Japan in the red and white fans seem to be showing people’s old self-identity as the Japanese national and their new palate for violence.
After I finally pass the Second Gate, I start to see such conventional rightist banners as “Return to Us Our Northern Territories,” “Viva His Majesty,” and the like. The rightists must have entered the shrine through the Second Gate, which marks an ordinary road horizontally traversing the stretched shrine. Since the First and Second Gates are made of just pillars, everything should be thoroughly visible from afar. It is the sheer number of the crowds today that must have hidden this view of the banners from me so far. I then notice that the crowds past the Second Gate are divided to make space for rightist-minded mobsters or mobster-like rightwingers in their uniforms, colorful jumpsuits. “One, two, three, four (Ichi, ni, san, shi),” they would yell in flamboyantly “masculine” voices, as they march. In between these groups of several young males each, older males in the oddly sized uniforms of the imperial army or navy similarly demonstrate in march formation. According to one of them, the costumes are available in Okachi-machi, Tokyo, for about 1,000 U.S. dollars a set. As they play brass instruments and shout “march forward (mae e susume)!” the onlookers click their shutter buttons.

Every once in a while, the bands or rightist-mobsters completely stop still, to accommodate the photographers. From behind the throng of such amateur and professional photographers, I see layers of digital screens, big and small, bright and ambiguous, all of which register similar images of a given group of demonstrators. In each of these proliferated images, perhaps the most threatening in the whole scene, the excessively masculinized voices of the rightist-gangsters, seem to be muted. The muted image would likely be then reproduced en masse in photo journalism or as a picture attached to blog or a picture mail. The precarious atmosphere of the live scene will be tempered in the neatly processed image for whatever mass-media one chooses. The irony is that by stopping and posing for the camera, even the rightists themselves cooperate with their own domestication. Between oddly compromising self-control and showy desires for self-
expression, the rightists operate in the realm of the everyday, the everyday logic of the commodity.

These demonstrators are accompanied by the police, yet I am not sure if the officers are watching or guarding them. In the previous year (2005), several peace activists, including a 90-year-old Christian male, were arrested, peacefully demonstrating near the shrine.26 Ideologically, the rightists and gang members tend to be the practitioners and enforcers of the state’s moral orders regarding gender, ethnicity, status, and others—only to an excessive degree.27 Perhaps the police are afraid of that excessive part, while fundamentally sharing the rightists’ state-corporatism, at least theoretically speaking.28

I wade into the crowd to the side of the Approach in order to see my rightist informants, who are active in the Association to Respond to the War-Heroes’ Spirits (the ARWHS) and Japan Youth Memorial Association (*Nihon Seinen Ikotsu Shūshū Dan* or JYMA). As usual, I see they are campaigning for the shrine and the fallen Japanese soldiers behind several folding tables near the Second Gate. Through the minor marches and resonant “Viva His Majesty!” I distinguish “Shihori Naitō” shouting, “About 1.13 million sets of holy bones (*go-ikotsu*) [of the Japanese soldiers] are still scattered unrecovered throughout Asia and the Pacific!” Another college student at JYMA, “Takuya Kanno,” follows, “We’re going to Palau! Siberia! Indonesia [to recover the remains]! Donations are welcome!” As they later let me know, they will be selling 100

27 One of the uncritical representations of the relation between thug violence, thugs’ rightist pretension, and their organization according to corporatist morality (the emperor, ethnicity, gender, etc.) will be found in a Kenji Sonoda-directed movie, *Kyōki no Sakura* (Tokyo: Tōei, 2002).
28 It is ingenious that one of my neighborhood informants, “Mutsumi Machida,” whom I have discussed extensively in the last chapter, compares the neighborhood association’s “control” of her town with the “gangsters’” violence—its various techniques of threat, anachronism, reference to the “religious” idea of the emperor. Like the rightists and gangsters, the neighborhood institution of neocorporatism is protected by the police—when Machida tried to file a complaint, claiming that the association defamed her, with the local police dpt, it was her who was apparently investigated and recorded in detail. The complaint was not even received. The next day, Machida would find out that the association executives had already known about her attempt at the police.
copies of their 1,000 yen (10 dollar) annual report within today. Several veterans at the ARWHS are seated at the tables next to the JYMA booth, talking to visitors and selling copies of a thin, unpublished book, “There Was No Nanjing Massacre,” for 100 yen (a dollar) a copy. Middle-aged staffers in dark T-shirts with the association’s logo are busy handing out the above-mentioned fans.

All of a sudden, “Minoru Terasaki,” the middle-aged JYMA “advisor,” yells to the crowd, “Now, it’s 30 seconds before noon!” In the middle of the chaotic vortex of talking, brass bands, flags, and movements, a couple of people pick up Terasaki’s notice and stop where they are. “Fifteen seconds till noon!” Some more people stop. “Ten seconds! Nine, eight, seven, …. Now, it’s noon!” As I am left with puzzlement, Terasaki deeply bows in the direction of the Hall of Prayer. As he keeps that posture, I hear the amplified, digital signals, “pip, pip, pip, piiiiip!” probably broadcast through the shrine’s radio system. Everyone—I am not exaggerating—in the shrine apparently bows now, since my vision, which has been blocked by taller people’s backs and heads, is now totally clear. Everyone is bowing toward the Prayer Hall—I realize that people have already aligned their bodies into that direction seconds before noon. Now, everything is tranquil; not a single sound is heard.

“Dumb me,” I say in my mind, “it’s the silent prayer (mokutō) at the anniversary of the end of the war (shūsen kinenbī).” Though I was raised in Japan, I did not realize what was meant by the bowing of these Yasukuni crowds until now, probably since I had never (consciously) participated in the designated moment of the noontime prayer. Or, am I seeing a manifestation of the new, neonationalist culture, from which I have hitherto been spared, having stayed in the United States? Or, have the Yasukuni visitors always been participating in the silent prayer this way since 1945 and I just did not know that, for I had never visited the shrine before my fieldwork?
By bowing for a minute, these people currently in front of me are apparently showing their willingness to look like the subjects of the Japanese nation-state in any case and I assume the nation-state that is culturally represented by the emperor. I have mentioned that the annual National Memorial for the War-Dead features the emperor and empress leading the one-minute prayer. Across spatial distances, the Yasukuni visitors connect to those Japanese who are presumably sitting in front of TV or radio and closing their eyes, following the royal couple’s live, televised/radioed lead. The corporatist stage-setting at Yasukuni turns out to be unnecessary to organize the crowds, since they are always already organized and totalized as “the Japanese” in this way. Noticing that I am practically the only one who stands upright in the middle of the bowing subjects, I stop observing and quietly walk away to the stone wall on the side of the Approach, in order not to offend anybody.

**The New Grassroots as the Internet Mass**

Exactly one minute later, Terasaki prompted the crowds to be released from the still time of the nation-state. Confusion and congestion return. The Divine Gate is just right there, glittering with a gold set of the imperial crest, chrysanthemum, on its cypress doors. Yet, that short distance of about 30 feet takes forever to go; in the clotted flow, people are inching forward at an excruciatingly slow speed. There is not even elbow room between people. All I see now is people’s backs and also those faces who try to walk back to the First Gate. I still hear blaring trumpets and drums behind. Over people’s heads, I see the upper parts of the imperial rising sun flag (*kyokujitsu ki*), which the rightwingers must carry with them. Feeling awkward about the slowed speed and over-crowding, I strike up a random conversation with a man in his late twenties, who happens to be next to me in that moment.
“I guess you work for the SDF?” I say, truly just a guess, if not a wild one, based on his crew cut and also on my fieldwork observation that many eager Yasukuni participants are connected with the armed forces in one way or other. “What!?” stunned, he turns his red eyes to me, which are wide-open. He then stumbles, “Why? Yes—no. I'm sorry, but I meant... Well, I used to, but not any more. How did you know— do I look like it?” According to him, even if he does, I should not have pointed that out so loudly in the crowd, since he is now on the “state’s secret mission.” “It’s really secret. I can’t tell anybody about it; sorry.” Having learned about my own mission of ethnography, he apologizes. As he says sorry, his breath reeks of leftover alcohol from the not-so-distant past. As I look closer, his light green suit looks worn and stained. He then whispers into my ear, “I came here today, ‘cause I had something to tell to Koizumi.” Now it is my turn to be stunned. I tilt my head to the side in order to place a distance between us and glance into his eyes. He calmly looks back and says in a normal voice, “But apparently I missed the chance.” He laughs.

He says that this morning somebody in the neonationalist Internet site, Channel 2 (Ni Channel), has uploaded his/her live report and photos of Koizumi at Yasukuni. “If I didn’t see their logs (kakiko[mi]),” he continues, “I might probably have skipped it [a visit to the shrine on 8/15] this year. I didn’t wanna be as disappointed as I was last year, you know.”

He is probably talking about a similar disappointment to that which I have heard being expressed among my rightist informants about Koizumi's hitherto avoidance of the historic day. On August 15 last year (2005), for instance, when the prime minister betrayed the Yasukuni rightists’ expectation, one middle-aged male visitor told me, “If he is a real Japanese, he should have come on the 15.” According to this visitor, who threw some bills in the donation box of the Association to Respond to the War-Heroes Spirits (ARWH), “He [Koizumi] should definitely
have come today (8/15/2006); and then his popularity among the nation must have been hiked 
soooo (paaatto) high.”

Disappointment usually bears the self-justifying denial of the favorable emotions that one 
must have had before these emotions are betrayed, ending up in often excessive hatred toward 
the disappointing object of former love. I had noticed that some rightists had started to criticize 
the prime minister as a “national traitor” (kokuzoku) for what they had perceived as his “wimpy” 
(yowagoshi) foreign policy, particularly vis-à-vis China. China had vehemently opposed a Japa-
nese prime minister’s visit to the shrine on 8/15. When thunder suddenly roared about 4 o’clock 
that year (2005), drawing the ominously dark curtain of premature twilight over the shrine, one 
association activist made a joke to another, “Ho! It’s a heavenly punishment of Koizumi [for his 
failure to show up that day]!”

These days, it seems that the neonationalists have expressed their disappointed hatred and 
frustrated anger of politics, the society, and culture in general particularly on the Internet site, 
Channel 2. The site, which was established in 1999, allegedly has monthly users numbering 10 
million (as of April 2006).29 According to a sympathizer of the ARWHS, who has been active on 
the site under the alias of “anonymous soldier,” the site is a place in which “freedom of expres-
sion is guaranteed.” But anonymous soldier’s freedom refers to the force with which the bloggers 
go over the social taboos, democratic rules, and ethical limits, abusing the environment of open-
ness and anonymity that the Internet promises. For instance, Koreans, Chinese, and others dis-
liked by the neonationalists are not mentioned in Channel 2, unless in names. Women appear in 
the site only in reference to their appearances, marital statuses, or reproductive choices. “Degra-
dation” (Rekka), the bloggers will say, whenever certain media-images of their favorite gravure

idols do not satisfy their expectations. Suspects of criminal cases who are minors are fully identified, despite the postwar media’s convention to do otherwise. I have mentioned a Christian activist, Shigenori Nishikawa’s experience of the abused search-engine to locate his private number. Those show-biz or amateur celebrities who somehow touch the nerves of Channel 2 users would receive server-crashing bombardment of e-mails from them, which they call “flaming” (enjō). As a result of these “freed” expressions and “interactive” violence, various defamation suits against Channel 2 were filed and won by the plaintiffs. Hiroyuki Nishimura, the founder of the site, owes them hundreds of thousands of dollars in compensation, plus more than 4.3 million dollar-equivalent fines to be paid to relevant authorities.30

In addition to freedom in this sense, certain collective power seems to be promised by Channel 2, which might attract its users. This power might be flamboyantly exhibited and also created through instances of flaming, for instance. A known such instance would be the one that involves the pop singer Ayumi Hamasaki. According to the rumor that circulated through the 2002 Internet field, she criticized a seated fan in the front row in her concert, in which every person attending was expected to stand in excitement. “How offending” (Kanji warui ne), she supposedly said into the microphone. The fact was that, the rumor said, the fan was wheelchaired. It took only moments for Hamasaki’s official home page, fan sites, and others to be crashed with an overwhelming amount of critical e-mails, which were apparently sent according to somebody’s suggestions on Channel 2 and other popular sites. The violence that was involved in this instance was perhaps that of pretended democracy or mass-hysterical humanitarianism. It seems

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30 About these trials, see Ishikawa and Sugiyama, Ibid.
to be the massness of the mass-hysteria that might be violently shown off against the super-celebrity (ōmono), Hamasaki’s rumored arrogance and insensitivity toward ordinary lives.31

The power of the massness that might proliferate and accumulate through the reproduced reactions (the plethora of the e-mails) to Hamasaki’s rumor might allow one to reconsider the concept of the grassroots as in the slogan, “Excavate and Raise the Grassroots.” Of course, the grassroots after the neighborhood’s demolition by neoliberalism and by the miniature electoral district system should not be found in actual, geographical locality. Even before the demolition, the grassroots were perhaps already relocated somewhere in the interstices between the TV viewers’ everyday desires to express themselves and the sponsoring corporations’ need to know “ordinary Joe”’s reception of their consumer products. The Internet has perhaps concretized these interstices by providing the virtual space in which the consumer/grassroots’ common-sense and -moods are expressed and surveyed more easily and visibly than before. It is this new space of the Internet that looks to have provided the consumer-grassroots with the leverage that they now can better express themselves, connect with other consumers’ self-expressions, and augment their consumers’ power through the collective opinions formed in this way. That this leverage of the Internet grassroots is illusory will be understood as soon as one remembers that these expressions and opinions are expected and encouraged by corporations. The Internet grassroots remains to be bound by the allure of everyday commodities that the corporations marketize; Ayumi Hamasaki, for example, is to many one of the most alluring commodities of 1990-2000s Japan. It is their responsiveness to her and other commodities’ interpellation that the Japanese Internet users

31 The term, flaming, to any recent observer of Yasukuni Shrine would be reminiscent of the fire set in an LDP politician, Kōichi Katō’s house in Yamagata Prefecture on 8/15/2006. Katō had repeatedly criticized Koizumi’s visit to Yasukuni. The fire burnt down his house completely, in which nobody was hurt but the rightist perpetrator, who tried to kill himself by ritually slicing his stomach. See “Katō Kō Shi no Jikka Zenshō: Otoko, Hōka-shi Kappuku Jisatsu Hakaru?” and “Katō-shi Jikka Zenshō: Sanpai Hihan, Sono Tōjitsu” in Asahi Shinbun, 8/16/2006. Although one has to distinguish this and other rightists from the users of the Channel 2 and other Internet sites, the rightists and the Internet users seem to be connected with each other by means of their violent willingness to set (virtual) fire against whomever they deem as their opponents.
of the period might share in common and violently express, as if to demonstrate the commodity’s interpellating force negatively. In my view, therefore, these users represent their subjective and objective massness (their collective identity and mass-reproduced materiality as the consumers), when they use the self-appellation of the grassroots, as in the Yasukuni fan of and for the sōmō grassroots.

That the mass-character of the self-acclaimed grassroots is structured still by TV as well as by the new technology of the Internet might be shown by the naming of their favorite site, Channel 2. The Internet users’ transitional character in this period seems to be reflected by their pretension that the Channel 2 is a TV station. In the lingering dominance of TV in the country’s media space, the newness that the Channel 2 is claiming is merely that of the number 2—the hitherto seven TV channels in Japan from 1 to 12 skip 2 (as well as 5, 7, 9, and 11). Disproportionately to the quality and quantity of violence that its users seem to be willing to inflict on society, Channel 2 in media history intends to be conservative. In comparison, those civic media that will be emerging after the Fukushima Earthquake of 3/11/2011 seem to explore the possibility that the Internet could challenge the way the conventional TV stations monopolize claims of truth.32 If the post-Fukushima Internet activists intend to be alternative journalists, Channel 2 users might intend to be alternative users of TV journalism and entertainment. The alternative part that the Channel 2 usership is claiming might be to stop letting their effervescent emotions and incipient opinions be molded or repressed by TV and to aim at directly presenting themselves by and for themselves on the web (“freedom of speech”). Of course, the form of self-presentation that Chanel 2 is aiming at is possible only with the advent of the Internet. However, according to

32 Among many publications on post-Fukushima Internet journalism by Japanese civic activists, the following might be some of the most concise and “ethnographic”: Nicola Liscutin, “Indignez-Vous! ‘Fukushima,’ New Media and Anti-Nuclear Activism in Japan” in The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus, Vol.9, Issue 47, No.1 (11/21/2011) and Nobuyo Yagi et. al., Real Time Media ga Ugokasu Shakai: Shimin Undō, Seron Keisei, Journalism no Aratana Chihei (Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki, 2011).
the way in which Channel 2 users employ the interactive technology, the newness of the idea of self-presentation is meaningful only within the overall regime of TV production. The new, interactive way of consumption that is proposed by Channel 2 seems to barely undermine the TV domination over other media.

It is perhaps his acute sensitivity of populism, which enabled Koizumi to discover the fretful and fleeting collectivity of the grassroots in the transitional process from TV to the Internet. His theatrical politics are eagerly presented through the electric mail-list, Koizumi Administration Mail Magazine (Koizumi Naikaku Mail Magazine), as well as in such entertaining TV shows as SMAP * SMAP or TEAM.\textsuperscript{33} The cost that Koizumi has to pay for his aesthetic representation of the new grassroots, though, is the continuous caution that he must use to the spectrum with which the grassroots opinions “swing.” For example, the Gothic ostentation of Koizumi’s visit of Yasukuni Shrine in a diplomatically suicidal opposition to China and other Asian and Pacific countries apparently found a willing audience in 2005-6—the shrine’s visitors on 8/15 surged from 60,000 in 2004 to 205,000 in 2005. In 2006, when this ethnographic research was conducted, the number rose to 258,000. Nonetheless, past the dramaturgical climax of 2006, when Koizumi visited the shrine on 8/15, the dwindled number of 165,000 visited the shrine on August 15, 2007 and 152,000 in 2008, despite the LDP’s and DP’s continued focus on Yasukuni politics.\textsuperscript{34} The anti-swing strategy taken by Koizumi apparently places even more emphasis on appearance than in other cases, whose peacock theatricality seems to have successfully provided the swing-voters with the center of their distracted attention.

\textsuperscript{33} Especially noteworthy might be TEAM (Fuji TV, 1999), in which Ko’izumi plays a role of an education minister even before he assumes the PM office. A deep level of inversion between desires and reality as well as between reality and its representation, which Sontag above talks about, seems to be demonstrated in this episode.

\textsuperscript{34} The statistics are taken from the following articles—“60-nen no Fushime: 20-man-nin Sampai” in \textit{Asahi Shinbun}, 8/15/2005 and “Rupo: Yasukuni Fuyu no Jidai” in \textit{Sankei Shinbun}, 8/15/2008.
With whimsical loyalty and apathetic eagerness, the new grassroots receives Koizumi apparently as a certain prominent figure—if not the leader, then at least the eye-catching main-character in his mass-mediated theater. Walter Benjamin’s contemporary the Japanese Marxist Jun Tosaka said in his ephemeral writings on 1920-30s mass media that people as the media-consumers then were similarly interpellated around the center of their gaze. Tosaka called this center or rather any figure that occupied this central place at a given moment the “fascistic aristocrat of the highest rank” (fascist-teki saikō kizoku).35 “One characteristic that distinguishes fascism from mere political absolutism,” Tosaka continued, “is to look as if [the fascistic aristocrat] had the mass-base or to look as if [s/he politically] organized the masses.”36 In other words, the suppositional aristocrat of fascism (i.e. the central figure of people’s media-attention) had an aesthetic versus political grasp of people, according to Tosaka’s observation. In this sense, the mediated leader of fascism was a “demagogue,” Tosaka says;37 if so, then it is the constantly deflected, fluxing state of mass attention, which might make the flashy existence of the demagogue necessary.

That the contemporary Japanese masses are fascinated with the idea of the literal aristocratic might be shown in their embrace of family dynasties of politicians, including the Koizumis’. The country’s show business, which should otherwise crystallize the capitalist principle

36 Tosaka, Ibid.; p.377-8; italics original. In reality, “the characteristic of so-called fascism’s idea of masses is not to allow the masses to organize themselves by themselves,” he says (p.378). The gap between the appearance of the mass organization by the leader and the reality of the lack of the masses’ self-organization would be bridged by demagogy, in Tosaka’s observation (380). Tosaka’s Benjimianin moments do not stop here. In order for the masses to overcome the fascist demagogy, Tosaka thinks, they should not try to develop their faculty of understanding but their pragmatic relation with reality (380-1). That is, the masses will be “evolved” as “a result of [their] advanced relation with reality, which will correct the relation between [their] ideas [of reality] and it [reality]” (380). Parallel to Benjamin, a Marxist of the everyday, Tosaka, who would be interested in analyzing such everyday “demagogic” tools as radio and magazines, did not have enough time to fully develop his ideas—he prematurely passed away in a prison, days before Japan’s defeat.
of the equal chance to everyone, according to Max Horkheimer and Theodore Adorno, abounds with the offspring of “stars,” reflecting the consumers’ tastes for them.\(^{38}\) Those second- or third-generation politicians and stars are called “thoroughbred,” a marker of the extent to which people seem to be fascinated with the idea of “blood” (chisuji) or “nobility” (iegara).

The grassroots masses’ conservatism that is exalted with the sight of the quixotic “aristocrat,” Koizumi, lets us reexamine the term, the grassroots once again. In the previous discussion, the revolutionary potentiality of the grassroots is partly that of the mid-nineteenth century Shōin Yoshida, with which he attempted a coup against the shōgunate. Now, if one sees a tint of conservative orientation toward status (blood and nobility) dyeing the newness of the Internet concept of the grassroots, then that is the conservatism that inhabited Yoshida’s radicalism as well. The grassroots in this reconsideration has been a loaded term in Japan, which points to the culturalized idea of the emperor. According to the historian Isao Inoue, Yoshida found the sōmō or sōsei, that is, the grassroots, only together with its twin and logically primary category, the emperor (kun).\(^{39}\) Against the then-cultural dominance of Chinese Confucianism (jukyō in Japanese) and also against the newly prominent modern forces (represented by the United States) in East Asia, Yoshida would state that “the national body” (kokutai) of Japan is “unique” (doku), since it is made of the autonomously “sacred” (shinsei) emperor and the grassroots that is mutually equal in their veneration of the emperor. The prototypical community of death, Yoshida’s concept of the national body, then is theoretically guaranteed by the “equally, directly, and spontaneously loyal acts” made by the grassroots toward the emperor, in the historian Inoue’s under-


standing of Yoshida.\textsuperscript{40} Usually summarized as “one lord and equal people” (\textit{ikkun banmin}), the force of the proto-fascistic theory of Yoshida, the historian suggests, lies in its aspiration to overcome Edo’s “caste” system and regional sectionalism. Comparable to fascism about sixty or seventy years later in the 1920s to 40s, Yoshida’s thought seems to be characterized by incipient modernity—the nativist idea of the post-Edo equivalence—and its opposite, archaic mythologism (the “sacred” emperor).

The same dialectic characterizes Yoshiaki Yoshimi and other postwar leftists’ criticism of what they call “fascism of the grassroots” (\textit{kusa no ne no fascism}).\textsuperscript{41} The grassroots (\textit{kusa no ne}) to these leftist scholars is part of the naturalized ethnoscape, where even “a bit of grass, a single tree” in the country is supposed to grow out of the cultural soil of what they call the “emperor system” (\textit{tennō sei}) of Japan.\textsuperscript{42} According to them, the idea of the emperor seeps into the “habitus” or the “unconscious” of the Japanese, which was totalized by the modern state and abused as the dynamo for the Asia-Pacific War (see Chapter 3). More than a century later than Shōin Yoshida, these leftists seem to show the degree to which Yoshida’s ideology has been proved true as grassrooted fascism during the war.

The Internet masses that I observe in Yasukuni today obviously do not use the leftist terminology of the \textit{kusa no ne}. These masses’ choice is the loan Chinese word of \textit{sōmō}, which might sound more “masculine” than \textit{kusa no ne} with the nuance of revolution and violence. However, when even the leftists cannot imagine the grassroots in Japan outside the ideological landscape of the national emperor, the Yasukuni masses’ reference to the rightist \textit{sōmō} becomes the same with the case in which they call themselves \textit{kusa no ne}. In either case, as long as they

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{40} Inoue, Ibid.; p.10.
\item \textsuperscript{41} See Yoshimi, \textit{Kusa no Ne no Fascism: Nihon Minshū no Sensō Taiken} (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppan Kai, 1987).
\item \textsuperscript{42} See Yoshimi Takeuchi, “Kenryoku to Geijutsu” in Osamu Kuno and Jirō Kamishima eds., \textit{“Tennō Sei” Ron Shū, Vol.1} (Tokyo: Sanichi Shobō, 1974), 301-311; p.311.
\end{itemize}
use the term of the grassroots, the Yasukuni masses can never look to be truly new, due to their implication of the emperor. Perhaps that is their intention. They sally forth onto Yasukuni with the participatory violence and the violent aspiration for equality that the new Internet technology seems to guarantee (“I have something to tell to Koizumi” via and only via the Internet-type of interactive/democratic imagination); but they prefer to do so only within the confines of such a conservative space, Yasukuni Shrine. The conservatism of the shrine is that of the symbol of “tradition,” the emperor, which it espouses in addition to the radicalism of fascism (i.e. the idea of equality in death within a capitalist formula). The Internet masses’ reception of the produced leader, Koizumi, is then pre-conditioned by their self-identification with the emperor’s grassroots.

The contemporary Japanese grassroots’ conservatism seems to be supported by their spatialized sense of temporality that the Internet promotes. A female college student in a prim navy-blue blouse and sharply pressed gray pants, who is now walking next to me, would say, for instance, that she is here in Yasukuni today, since she received a text message through a mail list, informing her of Koizumi’s appearance. “I’m not particularly a huge fan of his, you know,” this student of elite Tokyo University winks at me, having apparently been convinced that she has somehow discovered the common political sense with me. “But I came here anyway, ‘cause I want to witness the historic moment [of Koizumi’s visit] by myself.”

In order to be able to perceive the current moment as already historic, I think that one needs to adopt something similar to what Eduardo Cadava calls “photographic temporality,” in which the object of photography has to be made “dead” upon being shot. Photos are taken for the future beholder; the temporality of photography always renders the present to be the past (dead) seen from the future. In the current instance, Koizumi’s visit that happened only half a

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day ago already becomes history, when the event is completely consumed and possessed, that is, rendered to be the dead object of interpretation, as soon as or even before the event happens. An intensified mode of capitalist consumption might be underlining this sense of time. Perhaps the Internet enhances this temporality, by facilitating the users to constantly record their everyday moments in blogs, social networks, and Twitter (2006, though, was a year of pre-social-networks and pre-Twitter). The Internet users do so for the sake of the potentially worldwide audience for sure, but perhaps also for the sake of themselves—the future them, who would nostalgically look back at the current moments of blogging as everyday landmarks in their personal histories. By uploading banal snapshots and tweeting instant thoughts in the shutter-clicking speed of photography, the bloggers hasten the advent of the future and equalize the present with the past except just a blink of moment of delay. History here is a flat space, where the past, present, future are photographically juxtaposed with each other. It is probably this type of historical consciousness that underscores the sense that Koizumi’s visit today is already historic, as well as that the Japanese atrocities did not even happen (“the lie of the Nanjing Massacre”).

Political conservatism of the Internet masses likely builds on this kind of obedient adaptation of their temporal sense to the technological assignment of the era. Whether Koizumi’s neo-nationalist visit of Yasukuni Shrine on August 15 is looked back on as historic or, say, the then social democrat prime-minister, Tomiichi Murayama (1994-6)’s apology to the rest of Asia on 8/15/1995 should be regarded as historic is a judgment that not only history but also ethico-

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44 Of course, the photographic temporality should be framed in the overall tempo of modernity—see Peter Osborne, *The Politics of Time: Modernity and Avant-Garde* (London and New York: Verso, 1995). About intensification of the modern temporality in the late capitalist phase, see Frederic Jameson, “Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism,” *New Left Review*, no.146 (September/October 1984), 53-92.
politics will make in the future.⁴⁵ Today, I heard the euphoric reference to the “historic moment” (rekishi-teki shunkan) again and again throughout Yasukuni. When academia and journalism faced similar remarks upon the death of the emperor Shōwa in 1989, scholars and journalists then tended to dismiss the mainly young Japanese who made the remarks as “apolitical.”⁴⁶ Nevertheless, to me, the college student and other youths, to whom I have talked in the shrine today, are unambiguously expressing their political consciousness—the consciousness of conservatism, whose main feature is to remain apolitical in order to conserve the status quo. It is the Internet- and other new-technologies-generated consciousness, which marks contemporary rightist events as historic, looking back from the future. Looked back on from the future, the shock and violence that rightist events might likely inflict on the contemporary people will turn out to be changing nothing about the present. It is these rightist events’ system-preserving eventfulness without politico-ethical progress that the Internet masses are celebrating today. These masses are summoned by their sense of spatialized historicity, in joining not the peace families rally but the Yasukuni “prayers.”

The path to the Hall of Prayers is now completely jammed. As soon as we passed the Divine Gate and started to stop and step, step and stop, over the about 50 feet distance between the Gate and the Prayer Hall, the crowds pull their cells out of their pockets likely to check e-mails and send the rare photos of the uniformed and marching rightwingers that they took before the Gate. The visitors eventually encounter about a 20-feet wide, tatami-matted entrance area to the Hall of Prayer, though only from outside—entry is not permitted, unless one is willing to pay the

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⁴⁵ In Murayama’s word, Japan “inflicted enormous damages and suffering to many countries, particularly people in [other] Asian countries, by means of [Japan’s] colonial domination and invasions.” See “Sengo 50-nen ni atatte no Shushō Danwa” in Asahi Shinbun, 8/15/1995.

2,000 yen (20 dollars) suggested admission. As far as I can see, nobody is entering the hall today. The area that is exposed to the average visitor is anti-climactically plain, without any particularly important-looking objects of religion, such as statues or reliquaries. The “divine body” (shintai) of the shrine, the list of the fallen and consecrated soldiers (reijibo), is actually laid out in the Repository of the Spirits’ Registry (Reijibo Hōan Den) further down to the west and unlikely available to even paying visitors. The average visitor is expected to toss token coins into the coin box (saisen bako) outside the Prayer Hall and offer prayers there to the invisible collectivity of “gods” (saishin), the fallen soldiers.

Still, I see signs of efforts to individuate the abstracted and collectivized “spirits” (rei) of families. On the side of the coin box are laid cups of sake and cans of beer. Similarly laid on the ground are lit cigarettes. I also see the approximately five dollar bouquets made up of white and colorful flowers, which are sold at the Divine Gate. The middle-aged male vendor raised his thumb, as I asked if his business was good today. Facing the entrance to the Hall of Prayer, a gray-haired man in a white shirt and blue-gray pants closes his eyes and silently prays. There is another, similarly elder female, accompanied by what appears to be her daughter, also praying with her palms joined together. A middle-aged male in a black suit and tie deeply bows and admiringly looks into the Hall’s interior.

The clamor and confusion of the crowds continue, enveloping even these genuine prayers and solemn nationalists. People are taking pictures, standing on their toes to see better, throwing coins, and waiting for their turns before they leave. The air is pungent with tobacco. The metallic noises of the tossed coins against the wooden coin box and clicked shutters of cameras add to the booming whirl of the chattering crowds.
Though the entrance to the hall is hardly spectacular, the vision is certainly opened up all of a sudden after the long, tortured procession behind and next to the claustrophobia-inflicting backs and arms of fellow visitors. To describe the atmosphere in front of the Prayer Hall as festive emphasizes a certain excitement only at the cost of the sense of tension that is created by the over-presence of the police. Consciousness of the tensed “here and now” seems to underline people’s constant references to “Koizumi” or “China” or other buzz words of international and domestic politics. But perhaps I am wrong and the air is excited exactly due to the state’s visible existence that the police, or rather the concept of Yasukuni Shrine itself, inevitably embodies. If that is the case, then the celebratory excitement that I feel among the crowds now at the anti-climactic end of their journeys must be the showcase of how agilely these conservative minds find the magnetic field of an era, in which the state’s force concentrates. The conservatives are finally showing their radicality, the radicality of being excessively attracted to the idea of the state—some of them come even all the way from the northernmost Hokkaido to demonstrate their obedience.

Technologically, the Yasukuni masses’ nature of radical obedience might be reflected by their supplementary usage of cell phones, in addition to the Internet. For instance, now, two boys of high-school age are taking pictures of the shadowy inside of the hall with their cell cameras. They ask to each other,

“Isn’t this it? Here?”

“I bet. This must be the place, from which Koizumi got in [the Prayer Hall] in this morning.”

According to them, they are going to mail the pictures to their friends right there then.
Although cell cameras are part and parcel of the Internet culture, I think there is a difference between sending images via cell-phones and uploading them onto web-pages. It is true that both technologies boast their mobility and interactive possibilities, which TV can only envy. However, cell-phones carry what McKenzie Wark calls the TV “vector” or “any trajectory along which bodies, information, or warheads can potentially pass.” Although Wark says that the vector is about “fixed length” and not about “fixed position,” in the Iraq War that he writes about, televised information always came from Iraqi “locations” and warheads from the Allied Forces—positions and directions were always fixed.

Similar fixity has characterized postwar Japanese TV, which has more or less been associated with the idea of the public, due to the half-state-owned station, NHK’s existence. At the end of a given day around midnight, NHK (Nihon Hōsō Kyōkai or Japan Broadcast Association) has never failed to broadcast the image of the supposed flag of Japan (nisshō kī) waving in the wind to the accompaniment of the supposedly national anthem “Our Lord’s Reign.” Through this televised ritual, the order between the TV Subject (the state/emperor) and the (imperially) subjectified viewers has been created and re-created as the matter of the everyday. Even in other, less nationalist stations, which the postwar Japanese with their leftover statist minds would derogatorily call “the private” (minkan), that is, private companies as opposed to NHK, the massive

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47 See Wark, Virtual Geography: Living with Global Media Events (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994); p.11.
48 See Wark, Ibid.; p.11.
49 In her analysis of the historical sagas that NHK has broadcasted in Sunday evenings for decades, Soomi Lee does not particularly discuss what I would regard as the imperial element of the station. Yet she similarly maintains that the sagas (taiga drama) “simultaneously summon their viewers as the historical subjects of the ‘Japanese’ and arrange them into the national space-time of ‘Japan.’ In these processes,” she continues, “there is an ideology present, working to encourage the viewers to memorize and memorialize past Japan. Then, past Japan is expected to function to [help the viewers] praise and [imaginatively] integrate current Japan.” See her “Taiga Drama no Bunkai Seiji Gaku: Televi Media Kenkyū ni taisuru Hitotsu no Teian” in Shun’ya Yoshimi and Reiko Tsuchiya eds., Taishō Bunka to Media (Sōsho: Gendai no Media to Journalism 4) (Tokyo: Minerva Shobō, 2010), pp.197-220; p.215. Shunya Yoshimi similarly argues that one of the most important functions of postwar Japanese TV in general is that it has “inserted into the household the everyday schedule that has national significance.” See his “Televi wo Dakishimeru Sengo” in Yoshimi and Tsuchiya, Ibid., pp.166-196; p.188.
difference is clearly visible between the capital that can afford gorgeous commercial films and the ordinary viewers, who merely admire capital’s power in front of the screen. The economic difference immediately converts to the political distance between those who could interpellate others into certain identity formations and those who are interpellated. It is true that TV’s difference from prior technologies, such as cinema, is its intimacy, with which the interpellating voice reverberates literally in one’s living room or even bedroom. However, the distance, which the power-difference between the interpellater and interpellated makes, have never been and will never be collapsed by the technology-enabled intimacy. It is that insurmountable distance, which makes the glamor of TV technology.  

Cell phones, in their play with intimacy and separation, work to maintain the media vectors and accompanying orders of things that TV has created. The more or less personalized messages fed in the cell-phone machine are meant to go across long distances and different times, which are assumed to separate the sender and receiver. It is the drama of distance and simultaneity that supplies the technology’s romanticism, as is perhaps perceived by the users. At least in Japan, the cell-phone figures that companies promote are typically two lovers geographically separated (enkyori renai) or grown-up sons and daughters working in cities away from their “real home” (jikka), that is, home where their parents are. Even though many uses of the cell phone are textually made, the point of its primary difference from other contemporary media technologies is its transmission of voices. Corporate interests do not know any better sales-points of cell-phones besides the romanticism of the origin and its displacement, which the technology plays  

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50 About the interplay between the public and private that TV enacts, see Martin Scorsese’s Taxi Driver (Columbia Pictures, 1976). Michael Haneke’s Funny Games (Wega Film, 1997) focuses on the meaning of TV violence introduced directly into the private sphere.
out with the transmitted voices. In the present case of the boy senders of Yasukuni images, the images’ authorship will be easily attributed to them, probably due to the desires of their personalized circle of receivers (their friends). These are the desires, which also accompany ordinary instances of cell-phone usage, i.e. the desires to keep the romantically imagined distance from the receiver of one’s voice, which are always traversed by other kinds of desire to attain technologically enabled proximity to the same receiver. The boys’ “live” transportation of the pictures is meant to establish this miracle of the simultaneous far and here.

Like cell phones, some moments on the Internet continue the distancing and hierarchizing techniques of TV. Those moments are when the Internet operates in the modes of blogging, tweeting, and mailing. These modes thrive on the users’ desires for the origin, for clearly distinguished authorship and unique time and place, which the author is supposed to mark. At the same time, claims for originality on the Internet are stretched thin by its culture of sharing, interacting, and participating. These other moments of the Internet, in which it downplays the idea of the origin, also characterizes cell-phones. Especially in their texting mode, which enables bulk and carbon-copied mails, as well as in their conference function, cell phones join the Internet, marking their technological abilities for reproduction, anonymity, and co-respondence. Nevertheless, what fundamentally differentiates the cell phone from the Internet is, again, voice and its technology of aura, to which the cell phone always comes back in the last instance. When cell phones create the illusion of simultaneity in order to dramatize distance, the Internet creates the same illusion in order to delete the sense of distance at all—in the Internet fantasy, everyone in the world is just “one-click away.” This last analysis might allow me to conclude that cell phones

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are ultimately the same as TV in their reliance on the media vector, while the Internet is characterized by its movement to depart from that reliance. What distinguishes the Internet among these other technologies might be its stronger tendency toward displacement, interchange, and dissemination than the other technologies’ tendencies toward them.

Now, let us look at the three technologies’ relation within the larger history of mass-media in modern Japan concerning the fascist moments that such history seems to contain. My sense is that this history is not likely a teleological path to liberation, liberation of the fascist moments from corporatist binding. When the death-communal aspirations might accompany temporally and spatially “equalizing” technologies such as the Internet, these technologies have always coexisted with the TV-type of corporatist media of distance and hierarchy—they have dialectically evolved together. In 1920-40s Japan, for instance, the equalizing (“massifying”) technologies of cinema and newspapers asserted their technological advantages and disadvantages vis-à-vis the hierarchizing technology of radio. As I have analyzed in the second chapter, cinema and tabloids were petty bourgeois tools to express their grotesque desires for equality. In contrast, the centralized device to distribute official voices, the radio, was used by the state for such mythically authoritarian purposes as to announce its false “victories” in losing battles or to “de-consecrate” the emperor in 1945. In the current moment of history, the aspect of the Internet that underscores simultaneity and confluence seems to refer the technology back to the earlier moments in Japanese media-history, viz. the filmic and tabloid moments, than the moments of

52 The radio-broadcast in which the emperor Hirohito declared that he was a human was called the “broadcast of the jade sound” (gyokuon hōsō). This was the first time that the ordinary Japanese heard the emperor. About the place of the emperor’s embodied voice in the historic moment of democratizing Japan, see Yoshikuni Igarashi, *Bodies of Memory: Narratives of War in Postwar Japanese Culture, 1945-1970* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000).
TV and cell phones. TV and cell phones, in turn, might belong to another corporatist genealogy within media history, which seems to tie these technologies with radio.\textsuperscript{53}

In the death-communal line of media history, the line that threads together cinema, newspapers and the Internet, the shocking force of photography has been carried over. Such force flattens time into space, while the interpreter of the “shot” objects of photography cannot help but be affected by the photographic violence. Or rather, the interpreter has to be already affected by modernity’s photography-like shocks of lights, in order to be able to understand how to interpret a photo.\textsuperscript{54} Benjamin suggests film’s advancement of the photographic shock in both its subjective and objective aspects. In terms of the object, film introduces the ultimate speed with which it shoots the object—that of speech as in the sound film.\textsuperscript{55} The filmic subject, the mass audience of film, is the advanced version of the shocked interpreter of photography, since it is an assemblage of the distracted and isolated interpreters of photos.\textsuperscript{56} The audience of film is always collective—even after home videos, DVDs, and bluerays, the film-producers always assume and try to appeal to people’s common-sense and -sentiment. Reflecting their mechanically reproduced identi-cality as masses, the movie-audience even outside the theater exists as the invisible audience of movies, always ready to be assembled into a totality of the movie-audience. This is why the aes-

\textsuperscript{53} According to Yoshiaki Hashimoto’s suggestion, Japanese TV’s rootedness in radio dates back to 1926, when NHK was established originally as a radio-broadcaster of the state, integrating three private radio-stations. After NHK the radio station stopped broadcasting the state voices upon Japan’s defeat in 1945, the station tried to transform itself into a national broadcaster; along with two postwar, private broadcasters, NHK the radio station started to work to “encourage the nation” with “Ringo no Uta” (1945) and other pop songs and “Kimi no Na wa” (1952) and other audio dramas, according to Hashimoto. In his and many other scholars’ implications, postwar Japanese radio’s nationalism was inherited and advanced by TV, which started its broadcast in 1953. It is popularly said that many Japanese became motivated to purchase black and white TV sets in 1958, in order to watch Akihito, the then prince’s wedding parade in 4/10/1959. Different from his father, Hirohito, Akihito is known for his ambition to represent the Japanese nation and its mass culture. See Hashimoto, \textit{Media to Nihon-jin: Kawari-yuku Nichijō} (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2011); pp.13-39; the quote is from p.18. About the relation between Akihito and the mass-cultural formation of the postwar Japanese, see Keiichi Matsushita, “Taishū Tennō Ron” in \textit{Chūō Kōroni}, April, 1959, 30-47.

\textsuperscript{54} See Cadava, Ibid.

\textsuperscript{55} See Benjamin, Ibid.; p.219.

\textsuperscript{56} See Benjamin, Ibid.; p.239-40.
thetic totalitarianism of spatialized temporality, which photography-film promotes, is politically realized as fascist totalitarianism. Aesthetics of the organized-looking masses in photography and film is acted out in reality only when it has the subject of acting-out, the already totalitarian masses of capitalism. Film actualizes the invisible massness of photography’s interpreter.

Attaining new levels of displacement and simultaneity, the Internet seems to retrieve and develop the condition in which the filmic masses were placed. This inheritance is despite the decline of the cinema industry—the industry has long been said to be declining because of the shadow of TV. It is true that the Internet seems to inherit the commoditized field of celebrities and authoritative sources of journalism from conventional TV stations, as I have argued. But Internet users also seem to undermine the TV technology of distancing, in order to inherit the cinematic emphasis on participation and interaction. The Internet advancement of cinematic technology is such that even the speed of the sound film becomes slow—Twitter can keep up with the flow of thoughts even before they are formed as speech. While film commodified people’s unconsciousness, the web-camera makes sure that there is no realm in the everyday unconscious that is not covered by the web-cam’s abstracting power. As for the media subject as well, Internet users can be more easily assembled than in the case of the movie audience either inside or outside the theater. The homogeneous breadth of the Internet masses, though, is dotted with points of fascist integration, just like the movie audience. Similarly to the movie audience, which prefers to be assembled by the actors’ aura, the Internet masses seem to be tempted by the idea of being totalized as not just masses, but as, say, the emperor’s (or the “thoroughbred” Ko’izumis’) masses. It is this nostalgic moment built into the Internet masses’ modern sensibility, which pro-

57 About the relation between the state authority and the country’s journalism, see Helen Hardacre, “Aum Shinrikyo and the Japanese Media: The Pied Piper Meets the Lamb of God” (an unpublished paper presented at East Asian Institute, Columbia University, 1995).
58 About the filmic unconscious, see Benjamin, Ibid.; pp.235-7.
vides fascists with the point of integration. TV or cell-phone lovers might have some affinity with this point of the nostalgic origin (e.g. the emperor), but will be appalled by the distance-closing image of simultaneity and atomized interaction presented by the Internet grassroots.

In the Yasukuni Shrine in 2006, fascism-minded crowds seem to allude to the Internet in its dialectic with TV- and cell phone-technologies. In the middle of the commodifying process that the Internet accelerates, TV and cell phones insert the idea of the origin and author. At the same time, TV and the cell phone have those moments in which these technologies refer to the proliferating power of anonymity and displacement, just like the Internet. The Internet’s newness in this dynamic is its renewed possibility for death-communal equality, that is, the possibility to realize the mutually equal mass-grassroots. However, this possibility is fundamentally compromised by TV’s authoritativeness or the cell-phone technology of aura, since the imagined grassroots-mass is mutually equal only under the emperor, at least ideologically speaking. The hybridity of the Yasukuni crowds’ mass-consciousness that I have observed likely shows a transitory state in which 2006 Japan is moving from one technological regime to another. At the same time, the transitory hybridity could be fundamentally fascism’s, showing its deeply split duality between its mechanical reproductive materiality and its desires for the auratic.
“After the company commander admitted [his crimes], I confessed I had robbed deserted villages of potatoes, wheat, and ilk, when I was a rookie.

“Then in one village, I accompanied our sergeant interrogating a [Chinese] communist combatant [who was taken hostage]. Though we [the imperial Japanese army] had an interpreter, the sergeant had got so irritated that he repeatedly (zuka zuka) stabbed the [hostage’s] knees with his bayonet. The hostage said he had no doubt that Japan would lose the war. He told the sergeant if he was going to kill him anyway, then he should do so as soon as possible. The sergeant said kono yarō (this bastard) and beheaded him. I was right there and supported him.

“I also joined ‘rabbit hunts’ [the ‘hunting’ of able-bodied Chinese males as forced laborers for Japan]. Even though it was a state policy, I apologize and sincerely reflect. [During one of these hunts] the squad leader Nakajō found a mother and a son. ‘Private Kubodera, shoot the man,’ he ordered me; I shot the boy who was about fourteen years old. It was about twenty meters in distance. Felt as if I had shot my own younger brother.

“I had thought the war was something that was to be fought between soldiers and never thought I would end up killing innocent people (jinmin).”

The approximately fifty young and old men and women gathered on a hazy May afternoon today (2007) are hushed. They are just gazing at the witness, unable to even blink. In this tense instance, apparently nobody can truly understand what s/he has just heard. Then, some sigh; others start to look at the handouts again, desperate for clues. The eighty-seven year-old former private, Hisao Kubodera, does not even pause. He continues to mechanically read the prepared draft and impassively point at an about one square-yard hand-drawn map of East to
Northeast China. On its side also standing on a wooden tripod is a chronology of the battles he fought there more than sixty years ago. There is a certain robotic quality to this extremely good-postured witness. Wrapped in a grayish blue suit and a bolo tie with a big cold stone ornament, this pencil-thin, quiet farmer from Hatano, northern Kanagawa, never even sets his eyes on the audience during his thirty-minute testimony. His eyes are either intensely following the script or fixed in midair, as if he was talking to something else there. It is true that he says he is “sincere” when he apologizes. Yet, its clichéd wording—“I apologize and sincerely reflect” or “mōshiwakenaku, kokoro kara hansei shimasu”—merely emphasizes his ritualism. The hardened way in which he says the phrase might indicate he has repeated it many times. Given the kinds of war-crimes that he says he committed (assistance in hostage-execution, murder and capture of civilians, and robbery of foodstuffs), the first question that his ritualism raises might be that of ethics.

Apology is usually expected to accompany sincerity, truthfulness, and other meanings—like words of love or condolence, apologies are not supposed to be mechanically said without meaning. In a case like Kubodera’s, which attempts to redo ethically grave acts, one might wonder if the apologizer is even more obliged to this general rule of meaningful apologies than other cases. At the same time, like any other kinds of words, it is hard to know the meaning of apologies. The apologizer can be sincere and make sincere-sounding apologies; or, s/he can be insincere and still make sincere-sounding apologies. How can one judge Kubodera’s insincere-sounding apologies? Of course apologies do not have to be semantically meant in order to produce pragmatic meanings. Like postwar Japanese politicians’ apologies to the rest of Asia and the Pacific, which accompanied aid monies, scholarship, and others, apologies could be
meaningful in their effects. Could individuals like Kubodera meaningfully apologize in this pragmatic sense? Finally, when one considers the pragmatic of apology, the moral—“legal”—aspect of apologism is highlighted. If one regards Kubodera’s apology or the politicians’ monies as expressions of their respective senses of indebtedness, how will one reconsider Kubodera’s ritualism and the politicians’ formalism? Would mere gestures of apology, even without either semantic or pragmatic meanings, suffice as gestures of return in the exchanging relation with the victims? Ultimately though, I surmise that either moral or ethical implications of these apologies have to miss truths seen from the victims’ perspective, since the victims’ losses would never be completely recovered—no matter how sincere the apologizer is, no matter how generous compensations are, and no matter how good the gestures of return are. Within this limitation, I wonder, is there still a more meaningful apology than others, which Japanese war-criminals and their descendants can make to other Asian and Pacific victims?

The last chapter of this dissertation concerns itself with the questions of ethics and morality. To ask moral-ethical questions is to consider the consequences of fascism. Fascism in previous chapters has been analyzed in terms of its commodity structure and mass-technologies. These analyses were meant to provide insights into the factor in fascism—desires for mechanical-aesthetic organization of those mass-situations and events that could be regarded as chaotic in certain minds. In spite of these desires and corresponding projects, fascism was far from organizing the chaotic; it ended up generating causally haphazard and historically specific effects, as Kubodera’s execution of a hostage might show. These effects cannot be discussed without referring to the categories of morality and ethics, the latter in particular, since in their

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1 About the relationship between these politicians’ apologies and the monies that they offered to Japanese fascism’s victims, see Norma Field, “War and Apology: Japan, Asia, the Fiftieth, and After.” Positions 5:1 (Spring 1997): 1-49. Ultimately, she considers this relationship in terms of J. L. Austin’s theory on speech acts—see his How to Do Things with Words, 2nd Edition, eds. by J. O. Urmson and Marina Sbisà (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1997(1962)).
attempts, fascist projects were those of formalization, i.e. reduction of singular lives and historical events into mechanically static forms.

Investigating Japanese fascism’s effects and their ethics, the current chapter tries to explore the possibility of a future between Japan and the rest of Asia and the Pacific. Those nationalist projects that similarly address fascism’s effects without an ethical view of other victims could ideologically construct a moral future within Japan, but not beyond Japan—recall the victimological narcissism that I have analyzed in Chapter 1. In the subsequent chapters, I have suggested that the possibility of an ethically minded future seems to be presently prevented by the contemporary Japanese psychological structure of melancholia, the socio-political institution of corporatism, and the economic mode of mechanical reproduction. I have argued that these structures and institutions in Japan have given birth to the problem of “second fascism,” i.e. fascism of reducing the victims’ voices (Chapter 2). Nonetheless, this chapter attempts to provide ethnographic evidence of future-oriented movements initiated by the Japanese for other victims. This chapter will focus on these Japanese efforts to apologize and compensate for their fascism’s effects on other Asians and Pacific Islanders. Against the fascist grain of the larger Japanese society, and despite the seeming impossibility of reparation (e.g. how could Kubodera revive the life of the boy that he shot and killed?), these progressive Japanese have tried to forge and maintain just relations with other Asian and Pacific victims. This chapter will ethnographically explore these efforts.

The moral-ethical movements by the contemporary Japanese are generationally organized. What separates the first generation from others is the question the younger activists tend to ask, “Should the second or third generations’ apologies be the same as the perpetrators’?” The younger generations seem to attempt to apologize, while reflecting on the differences between
apologies and compensations, between accountability and responsibility, between the individual crimes and social structure—what is at stake here seems to be the issue of the subject.

Subsequently, my ethnography in this chapter is composed of two parts. First, I will go back to Kubodera’s testimony to analyze the moral-ethical judgments that the actual perpetrators of fascist crimes are facing today. I focus my attention especially on the language that Kubodera uses to address other victims. Within the pragmatic confine of address, Kubodera’s vocabulary is limited and expressions are stylized. I would like to think about his pragmatically impoverished words in terms of the commodity, especially the commodity’s power of circulation. Due to its generality, the commodity is equipped with not only the power to go across national borderlines, but also the power to transmit apologism from generation to generation. After Kubodera, I will move on to his children’s and grandchildren’s generations in order to see how the linguistic currency of apologism that Kubodera’s generation abstracted from their particular experiences is bequeathed and developed over time. I will introduce the Kanagawa Prefectural Affiliate of the Peace Families Association (Kanagawa Heiwa Izoku Kai), to investigate such concepts as Japan’s “ongoing imperialism” and the “postwar [Japanese] responsibility” to resolve imperialism. These activists say they hope that the postwar Japanese taking their responsibility make them qualified to “cohabitate with [other] Asians.” Through these ethically commoditized languages and exchange of moral gestures, these families and remorseful perpetrators have formed a loose network of mourners in the melancholically forgetful nation. This network has constituted another death space in postwar Japan, the death space in which other victims instead of the Japanese victims, ethical ideals instead of fascist ideals, are remembered. I will elucidate how this space has been maintained throughout the postwar period, as actors exchange moral thoughts of apologism and ethical reflections on others. Let us return to Kubodera to start.
The Ethics and Morality of the Contemporary Japanese Apologism

According to Hisao Kubodera, he was born in 1920 on the Hatano farm, Kanagawa Prefecture, where he lives now with his wife. As soon as he was conscripted in 1942 at the age of 22, this tobacco and peanut-grower was dispatched to Jinan, Shandong Province in China. The army’s Division 59 (otherwise called Robe or Koromo), to which Kubodera belonged, was newly formed in 1942 for the purpose of Jinan’s “public security.” The 12,000 lightly-armed soldiers in Division 59 were placed in a position to easily commit war-crimes against Chinese civilians, whom they were told were “communists.” In addition to murders, abductions, and robberies, as Kubodera testifies, Division 59 is proved to have been accountable for rapes, enslavement, arson, and other kinds of horrendous crimes.2 According to Japanese journalists, Katsuichi Honda and Setsuo Naganuma, it was said among the Jinan Chinese that “let the Japanese military rest in your house for fifteen minutes, and you’ll take three years to restore the household; let them stay overnight, and it will take forever.”3 A Japanese historian, Yutaka Yoshida, argues that these crimes that had initially accompanied Division 59’s campaigns in “accidental” ways later became the main purpose of the division. The change reflected the degree to which ordinary Chinese had started to join or support the Red Army, according to the historian.4

In such a criminally oriented division, Kubodera had been steadily promoted. By 1945, when the division was disarmed by the Soviet army in Hamhung, North Korea, he had become a corporal in charge of recruit training. After the war, the Soviet Union kept him and 968 other Japanese war criminals from Division 59 and other divisions and forced them to work in

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4 See Yoshida in Honda and Naganuma, 436-7.
Vladivostok labor camps for five years. Upon the new People’s Republic of China’s request, the SSRC agreed to hand these Japanese to the PRC in July 1950. The PRC transported them to its Fushun Detention Center in Liaoning Province and detained them there until August 1957. Additionally, 140 more Japanese war criminals were similarly detained in Taiyuan, the capital of Shanxi Province, and released in 1957. During the six years in detention, apparently none of these war criminals experienced vengeful violence from guards or any other Chinese personnel. Humanitarian treatment was the norm in these centers; the detainees’ moral growth was their goal. In their trials held in 1957, the heaviest sentence passed was eighteen years of imprisonment, from which five years in Vladivostok and six in Fushun were subtracted.

Kubodera and other rank- and file-soldiers were immediately shipped back to Japan. Upon repatriation, about 60% of these former detainees gathered together and established the Liaison Office of the Repatriates from China (Chūgoku Kikansha Renrakukai or Chūkiren). “Admission of crimes,” “remembrance of the past for the future,” or “inheritance of Fushun’s miracle” became their slogans, in the logic of gift-exchange with Chinese humanitarianism. For decades, they have published several collective memoirs and held thousands of testimonial gatherings like Kubodera’s.

Kubodera did not join the Liaison Office immediately. In 1957, he became 36 years old. As the eldest son of a farmer, he had to start a family and together run the farm. In the social environment of the Cold War, in which the repatriates were called “red” (aka) or worse,

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5 See one of the former superintendents of the Fushun Center, Meisai Sun’s memoir, “Fushun Senpan Kanri Shochō wo Tsutomete” in Kikan Chūkiren 2 and 3 (http://www.ne.jp/asahi/tyuukiren/web-site/index.htm). According to a historian, Zhiyong Song, Chinese humanitarianism was caused by their communist will to observe international laws and by their political calculations to seek a future “development of friendship between Chinese and Japanese.” See his “Sengo Chūgoku ni okeru Nihon-jin Senpan Saiban” in Kikan Sensō Sekinin Kenkyū, No.30 (Winter 2000), 62-68; p.67.

6 That was the sentence that the last commander of Division 59, Shigeru Fujita, received.

7 See these repatriates’ memoirs—e.g. Chūgoku Kikan-sha Renraku-kai, Shin Dokusho Sha eds., Shin’ryaku: Chūgoku ni okeru Nihon Senpan no Kokuhaku (Tokyo: Shin Dokusho Sha, 1982(1958)). They are available also online—see http://www.ne.jp/asahi/tyuukiren/web-site/index.htm.
“brainwashed” (sennō sareru) to be red, Kubodera’s family-orientation dictated him not to involve himself in the progressive activism by the Liaison repatriates. Indeed, according to a Liaison member, Tsuyoshi Ebato, local police visited the repatriates about once a week; nobody hired them except for those construction companies which paid only 240 yen a day on a daily contract.⁸ Kubodera says he did not wish to isolate his family from the farming neighborhood more than necessary.

But now in 2007, his children are fully grown up and he and his wife are semi-retired. In today’s meeting, which is the second one for him, Kubodera mentions the notoriously neonationalist former prime minister, Junichirō Koizumi, as the launcher of the new activist phase in his life. Advocating that Japan should become a “normal country” (futsū no kuni) with military capabilities, Koizumi and other neonationalists have struggled to abrogate the Article 9 of the country’s 1946 Constitution (renunciation of war).⁹ Kubodera is applauded stating, “It is citizens who actually go to the battlefield. I feel I have no other choice than fighting for the current Constitution in order not to let the Japanese citizens kill other citizens, just as I did.” The vivid testimony of atrocities is then meant to bring home to the contemporary Japanese the importance to stop their support of the popular politician, Koizumi, and other neonationalists. I surmise that it is supposed to be a type of educational process. For this purpose, the testimony cannot be timelier; the supposedly “self-defense” forces (SDF) of Japan have started to be dispatched abroad under the excuse of joining the United Nations’ peace-keeping operations

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⁸ According to Ebato, the job was called “niko yon” after its 240-yen wage. See “Kanagawa Shibu Dayori” (an unpublished pamphlet by Bujun no Kiseki wo Uketsugu Kai); p.6. In the pamphlet, Ebato is transcribed as he is interviewed on 1/24/2007.

⁹ Kubodera has similarly published his interview by David McNeil in 1/26/2007—see McNeil’s “A Foot Soldier in the War Against Forgetting Japanese Wartime Atrocities” in The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus (http://japanfocus.org/). Relevant to this current chapter will be the level of the testimony’s repetitiveness observable throughout these three occasions, two testimonial events and one interview.
among others. Many in the country see these dispatches as the state’s preliminary steps toward remilitarizing the country.

At the same time, there is a sense of anachronism and idiosyncrasy in Kubodera’s testimony, which does not quite fit the timely goal of pacifism and public cause of education. His eyes are not an educator’s eyes, which would look into those of students to make sure they learn the right lessons. His speech is not a public orator’s speech, which would modify its speed, emotionality, and gestures according to the audience’s responses. It is true that in his entire life Kubodera was never a public figure; one should probably expect this level of social oddity from an eighty-seven year-old farmer from Hatano. At the same time, the level of his oddity is such that at least I wonder if he even requires us, the audience. It is as if he was addressing somebody else, likely his slain and robbed victims; we were placed there as a token of the audience so that his address could take the form of a testimony. I said anachronism, since he seems to be fixated on the more than sixty-year-old scenes of murders and robberies. Across time and space, he seems to try to address those original scenes that are impossible to recover, and as part of the token audience, I feel I am excluded from the dialogic relation that he seems to intend to forge with his victims. If exclusion is not the right word, then we might be included merely as privileged eavesdroppers of his personal address.

If this is the case, then the next question is his ritualism, especially when he actually apologizes. He says, “I apologize and sincerely reflect’ (mōshiwakenaku, kokoro kara hansei shimasu) on what he did. In this probable climax of his speech, in which he actually looks to be

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10 According to Jacques Derrida, justice-demanding others of a given regime always come back to the regime as an opening to other times, “anachrony”:“This spectral someone other looks at us, we feel ourselves being looked at by it, outside of any synchrony, even before and beyond any look on our part, according to an absolute anteriority (which may be on the order of generation, of more than one generation) and asymmetry, according to an absolutely unmasterable disproportion. Here anachrony makes the law.” See his Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International, trans. by Peggy Kamuf, with an intro by Bernd Magnus and Stephen Cullenberg (New York and London: Routledge, 1994); pp.6-7; italics and parentheses original.
directly talking to the victims, what might strike one would be the apology’s banality.

Particularly in the 1990s, Japan and the rest of the world experienced what Norma Field called politicians’ “apology movement” that was meant to redress those half a century-old wrongs done during World War II.\footnote{Field, Ibid.; p.3.} In the finely calibrated world of diplomatic protocols and political calculations, such words as “I apologize” or “sincerely reflect” became standardized and made to correspond to similarly standardized meanings and monetized compensations. Why would Kubodera, who has personal and embodied relations with his victims, use these public and emptied words? Would not he have more specific things to say to his particular victims than the obsolete words of politicians and diplomats, which are so obsolete that they hardly mean anything (except for the material meaning of compensations)? Is it even ethical for a perpetrator to present standardized words to his/her victims, thus standardizing the pains and sufferings that s/he inflicted on the victims?

Let us consider the unethical appearance of Kubodera’s ritualism some more—what is so unethical-looking about his apology? It seems that there is a problem of standardization, of grading singular cases into a corresponding hierarchy of appropriate apologies. If fascism can be minimally defined as a reduction of singularities, the mechanical standardization of victims’ plights is connected to the problem of fascism (see Chapter 2). The possibly fascist standardization here should be discussed together with the overall mechanism of commoditization, of which fascism is born and over which fascism tries to rise. I think one needs something like the mechanism of commoditization in order to be able to treat particular losses and personal agonies as if they could be converted into abstract numbers, into monetary values. By selecting the widely circulated words of politicians’ apologies, Kubodera seems to intentionally or unintentionally make his victims exchangeable with those other victims who can
be estimated to have suffered from similar grades of pain to his. The initial impression of unethicality that one might have toward Kubodera’s apologies must be generated from this mechanism of abstraction, of commodification.

Even though instances of commodified apologies are imbricated with the problem of fascist reduction, commodification in itself does not have to be unethical. Ethics is related to but separate from morality, since morality, as I refer to in this dissertation, is the Kantian sense of law. Recall my relevant discussion in the first chapter, in which I have stated that Kantian morality is based on causality through freedom—this sense of morality assumes the groundlessness of moral codes and human freedom to observe groundless codes.12 “Free” humans in Kant, in other words, are the subjects with the subjected will to belief versus knowledge. In Chapter 1, I have discussed that this freedom to belief is comparable with Marx’s concept of commodity fetishism. Without the misconception of the commodity’s agency, humans can produce neither the commodity nor themselves as commodities (subjects), according to Marx. In contrast to these ideas of morality and the inseparable issue of subjectification, ethics is the concept that was rearticulated by Jacques Derrida among others, focusing on the ground of the groundlessness of moral laws, that is, on the instituted traces of the others that moral conduct blindly signifies. No matter how automatically moral law reigns, no matter how unconsciously the subject obeys, the others to whom moral conducts are supposed to direct themselves remain as “necessity” and as “event[s]” in the whole subjectifying and commodifying system of moral

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12 Therefore, moral persons are exercising their freedom to act morally, in the environment where there is no ground or authority to dictate them to do so. In the enlightened world, where knowledge and belief are discrepant, morality is human’s freedom, will power, to ascend from the phenomenal world, over which knowledge rules. It is true that in another respect morality is blind obedience to a system of everyday imperatives. But these “practical laws refer only to the will, irrespective of what is attained by its causality, and one can disregard this causality (as belonging to the sensuous world) in order to have the laws in their purity.” In *Critique of Practical Reason, Third Edition*. ed., trans., intro. by Lewis White Beck (New York: Macmillan, 1993(1956)); p.19; parentheses original. See also Chapter 1 of this dissertation.
law, according to Derrida. That others constitute necessity means that the kind of mental
activity that addresses them is decision, although it would “not be a free decision; it would be the
programmable application or the continuous unfolding of a calculable process.” To say others’
place in moral codes is decided is also to say that questions regarding others are solved in
heteronomous ways—a “decision comes to him [the decision-maker] from the other” like an
event, whether the decision-maker likes it or not. Ethics to Derrida is therefore the necessary
and necessitated consideration of others. This consideration tries the limits of law, reason, and
the self, yet remain within the limits as something programmable and calculable. Although the
ethical considerations of others are imperative and inerasable, such considerations should
differentiate itself from substantiation of others. Otherwise, philosophical endeavors of ethics
would fall in the “nonphilosophy” of empiricism, like Emmanuel Levinas’. Or, those projects
that attempt to philosophically reclaim others might mention such an “audacious” and “perilous”
idea as “divine violence,” as Walter Benjamin does. In both hermeneutical and political senses,
these ethical attempts to immediately recognize others fail, as Derrida depicts. Despite their
ethical intentions, these attempts end up revealing that empirical encounters with others require
language and that just treatments of others require law. Derrida’s studies prove that ethics does
not transcend but delimits, and in that sense, inhabits law and language.

16 Derrida, “Violence and Metaphysics: An Essay on the Thought of Emmanuel Levinas,” Writing and
Difference, trans., with an intro. and additional notes by Alan Bass (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press,
17 The first two of the three quotes in the sentence are both from Derrida, “Force of Law,” Ibid.; p.286; the
last quote is from Walter Benjamin, “Critique of Violence,” ed. and with an intro. by Peter Demetz, trans. by
Edmund Jephcott, Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings (New York: Schocken Books,
18 Responding to the Derridian understanding of the relation between ethics and morality, Annika Thiem asks,
how can one make those recent ethical issues such as cohabitation, poverty, and environmentalism incorporated in
the normative? and vice versa, how are these and other ethical questions already involved in moral philosophy? See
If one goes back to the issue of commodification and reexamine the issue in terms of Derridian ethics, the ethicality of commodification will be unambiguous. According to Marx, commodities will not even be produced, where there is no ethicality involved in their exchanges.

It is only by being exchanged that the products of labour acquire a socially uniform objectivity as values, which is distinct from their sensuously varied objectivity as articles of utility. This division of the product of labour into a useful thing and a thing possessing value appears in practice only when exchange has already acquired a sufficient extension and importance to allow useful things to be produced for the purpose of being exchanged, so that their character as values has already to be taken into consideration during production.

People produce “useful things…for the purpose of [these things] being exchanged,” that is, people produce commodities, apparently bearing in their minds the existence of others, with whom they are going to trade their commodities. This ethicality as the consideration of others in the middle of the production process is intimately related to morality, to the degree that it is not required that these others take any particular figures in the producer’s mind. The irreducible others in the production process is rather an idea of the general subject with the same moral sense with that which the producer possesses. Even though there is no authoritative guarantor

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(e.g. God) who assures that others are not treacherous, one embarks on production for others anyway, since this embarkation constitutes the habitually determined freedom of the modern capitalist subject. Commodity fetishism is another name for this habituated freedom, i.e. the producer’s unguaranteed assumption of others’ morality or others’ commodified appearance under the same moral law with that to which the producer subjects him/herself. The fetishistic misconception of others here is supplemented by the affect of sympathy—as I have discussed in Chapter 3, the sympathetic faculty allows one to imagine oneself in others’ positions. Even as the economy develops and capitalism deepens, the affect of sympathy and the object of such an affect, i.e. the idea of moral other, persist. In a credit economy, in which payments are delayed and credited, commodities’ exchanges have to depend on the buyer’s pledge for payment—the nexus rerum or the “obligation of the debtor to the creditor”—and the seller’s trust in the buyer’s pledge.20

According to Max Horkheimer and Theodore Adorno’s observation, though, this fundamental sense of capitalist ethics looked already outmoded in the 1930s monopoly economy in Germany. It was true that the “independent economic subject,” who had previously existed in the country, had been characterized by the “true interests of others” and “penetration of receptivity and imagination”—the “economic basis for moral decision.”21 But with monopolization of the economy, the face-to-face types of ethicality between independent businesspersons and other petty-bourgeois actors had been taken over by “contribution to the


apparatus.” The ethicality of the moral subject was instrumentalized and totalized for the purpose of the monopolizing totality of the state and industries. Now, the state and industries functioned as people’s externalized super-ego, Horkheimer and Adorno observed—if pragmatic ethicality is the “devotion of the ego to the substantial outside world,” the monopoly economy abuses ethics’ pragmatism, they suggest. The monopoly state and industries’ totalization and instrumentalization of capitalist ethics were closely related to fascism, especially in terms of fascism’s actuality, such as the Holocaust. “In Fascism,” they say,

As one’s “responsibility for wife and children” was replaced by mechanical subjection to the system, Jews were robbed and massacred without ethical reflection or conscience. Ultimately, Horkheimer and Adorno think, this is an extension of the tendency that is inherent in the Enlightenment—reason just systematizes; it does not know moral sentiments, which encompasses or otherwise connects to the ethical consideration of others. According to their reading of Kant, these sentiments and considerations are a sort of accidental “fact” that have somehow been born out of the systematizing Enlightenment. By representing the monopoly state

23 Horkheimer and Adorno, Ibid.l p.198.  
and industries and by being supported by them, fascism concretely showed what would happen when even the last bit of freedom left for the enlightened subjects, viz. morality and its fundamental ethics, was systematized.  

By staring at midair, where the murdered Chinese ghosts might hover, Hisao Kubodera is perhaps trying to remember the pre-monopolized mode of capitalist morality. That Kubodera the farmer operates to the accompaniment of natural rhythms might allow him for such a quixotic remembrance in the middle of the monopolized economy of contemporary Japan. “Even now [at the age of eighty seven], he and his wife still go out to the farm when it is sunny and they feel better,” one of the middle-aged staff members at the Kanagawa affiliate of the Liaison Office of the Repatriates from China, Eiji Matsuyama, says. The maxim of the *nexus rerum* might have survived in Kubodera, in the environment in which the amount of labor that he inputs is immediately reflected by the amount of harvest that he reaps. As for Marx, he does not say that the *nexus rerum* would disappear as capitalism develops. Certainly, obligatory relations between business partners become more complicated everyday, while the moral sense that usually accompanies individualized transactions might be subsequently dispersed among an extended set of transactions; the moral sense would also be attenuated in each case of transaction. Money in an advanced stage of capitalism will no longer be used for its use-value, i.e. for its function to measure and symbolize other commodities’ values. For, more transactions will occur than those to which a given amount of money in an economy can accurately correspond. However, in a crisis, the *nexus rerum* will brutally come back to the market as the creditor’s confirmation of the

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“Reason contributes only the idea of systematic unity, the formal elements of fixed conceptual coherence. Every substantial goal which men might adduce as an alleged rational insight is, in the strict Enlightenment sense, delusion, lies or ‘rationalization,’ even though individual philosophers try to advance from this conclusion toward the postulate of philanthropic emotion”—Horkheimer and Adorno, Ibid.; p.85. In Kant’s expression, they say, morality happens as a “fact” (Horkheimer and Adorno, Ibid.; p.82).
debtor’s pledge to return the sold commodities in the bodily form of money. This might mean that even if the debtor in a credit economy omits her/his pledge, the creditor remembers the absent pledge. Even Horkheimer and Adorno have above said that in the monopoly economy “There is no object left for the conscience…even if the old moral assumptions are retained,” the ghostly assumptions without objects.

Nevertheless, as a possible holder of the fundamental ethicality of capitalism, Kubodera, is doomed—he will not be able to completely return his moral debts to his Chinese victims. No matter how much reflection and imagination of the victims his pragmatic morality allows him, he is a mere sentient being without the capacity to resurrect the victims. Even to approximate wish fulfillment, fulfillment of his wish for repayment, he has to use one sort of indirect measure or another—he has to use a substitute for resurrection. His choice, words of apology, is already proliferated to the degree that they have lost meaning. The linguistic inflation of course reflects the economic condition in which it is placed. Kubodera is the linguistic counterpart to the debtor in a credit economy, who would not be able to return the debt in the form of actual money. At this point in history, discrepancy between the physical bodies of money and their proliferated specters of credits has become too widened for any moral debtor to completely repay in money. Likewise, the actuality (sincerity) of an apology has already become too distanced from the wording of the apology for Kubodera to use the apologetic words meaningfully.

Did Kubodera make a wrong choice here—should he have chosen money instead of words as a means of his apology? Even if both money and words suffer from mechanical reproductive proliferation, would there still be difference between these two value systems? What if Kubodera made the moral gesture of remembrance and repayment in the form of money

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and not language? “If apology is a verbal performance centered on the penitent recognition of absolute inadequacy,” Norma Field observes, “its paradoxical character is highlighted when accompanied by material restitution.”27 She continues, “In contrast to the verbal apology, material restitution seems to undercut the acknowledgement of the stark impossibility of repair by being explicitly subject to calculations of value.”28 In the particular culture in which the current apologizer (Kubodera) is situated, money and other materials’ “[explicit] subject[ion] to calculations of value” usually results in these material’s taboo-charm, which people usually try to avoid as much as possible. A series of moral codes sets the taboo of money apart from the field of people’s everyday activities—money is literally wrapped up, disguised, and put aside, since it is supposed to be too blunt, too corrupt, too “dirty” for people to casually touch and see.29 However, as Field discusses, words of apology that are regarded as politer, purer, and cleaner than money and other materials cannot materially help the aging victims’ lives, which tend to have been impoverished due to the colonial and other Japanese deprivation.30 In turn, words could be material in a negative way—they are supposed to “earn” the apologizer dignity, trust, and legitimacy, the symbolic capital that can be the apologizer’s “selfish” purpose to begin with.31

With these differences between apologetic words and monetary compensations in mind, I would like to return to their overall framework of commodification. It seems to be commoditized apologies in general, either in monetary or linguistic forms, which raise moral and ethical questions. Earlier, I have compared Kubodera’s commodified apology with the fascist reduction

of the victims. The question whether his apology is ethical or moral seems to hinge on his act of commodification in general. What Marx, Horkheimer and Adorno have contributed is the insight that the production of the exchange value does not have to be unethical when it is considered in the context in which the producer of the commodity is embedded, i.e. in the producer’s relationality to other producers. In this dialogic view of commodification, Kubodera’s apology differs from fascist reduction—fascism reduces for aesthetic purposes of organization, whereas Kubodera reduces for pragmatic purposes of communication. The key is probably the existence of others in the act of reduction. When one looks at the pragmatic aspect of the commodity, the ethical consideration of others is already incorporated even in the commodity’s production as the producer’s imagination of the scenes of exchange. Likewise, Kubodera seems to reduce whatever emotions or truthfulness he might or might not hold for the intended circulation of his apology. Kubodera might be neither specific nor expressive enough in his apology, but in his case, specificity and expressivity are sacrificed or rather sublimated into dialogism. He surely reduces the specificity of his case into a generic form of apology—yet without this reduction and generalization, a moral exchange between him and his victims would not even start. Too much specificity and/or too much expressivity would result in idiosyncrasy; non-formalized idiosyncrasy would not be understood by the victims. In this fundamental orientation toward his victims, Kubodera’s intention for moral exchanges seems to contain the seed of ethics.

In this analysis, fascism turns out to be a project that tries to defy the ethical definition of commodification—the fascist reduction of others. Fascists emphasize the idealized orderliness among the equalized commodities and ask if such orderliness can be maintained completely statically without any exchange between commodities, without any dialogue between reified producers. When there is no exchange or dialogue assumed, there will be no room for others in
the entire economy, the entire society. Similar to what Rosalind Morris calls structuralists’ “fantasized universalism under the rubric of representation,” fascists’ idealized order without others might be “beautiful” to look at but impossible to carry out. Just as fantasized perfection and permanence of representation (perfect and permanent coincidence between the signifier and signified) has to always fight “time’s intrusions into the relations of difference between signs,” fascism’s idealized stasis among constellated commodities has to always exclude others, because differences lead to movements, exchanges. Both endeavors, the endeavor of fighting time and that of excluding others, are utterly unrealistic. To make their unrealistic project real, fascism cannot help but bear violence—fascism’s projects of commodification without consideration of others are deeply unethical. To me, the seeming contradiction between Kubodera’s apology and his commodification of the victims reveals the real contradiction between fascism’s commodification and its will to delete any dialogism. Fascism’s is a real contradiction, since those goods and services that are not produced for exchange cannot be called commodities.

Pushing this contradiction, fascism necessarily fails in the self-consuming community of death

32 Morris, In the Place of Origins: Modernity and Its Mediums in Northern Thailand (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2000); pp.46-7; Italics original. Here, she is reading Michel Foucault’s The Order of Things. According to her, “Because representation remains committed in some sense to what is perceived to be the true order of things, and because it secures itself with reference to something outside of itself, it is the point from which the consciousness of loss emerges. Only from within representation can the plenum of experience become an object of knowledge and thus a point of departure. Only from within representation can one become aware of the disarticulation of language from the world. That is to say, only in loss can a sense of origin be perceived” (p.47). The Foucaultian type of representation, though, should be strictly distinguished from fascists’ actualization of their ideals. As a reader of the Japanese novelist Yukio Mishima might notice, an aspect of fascism could be defined for its confusion between representation and reality—“action” (kōdō) is the name that Mishima gives to this confusion. See his “Bunka Bōei Ron,” Chūō Kōron, July 1968: 95-117. In previous chapters, I have explained the confusion in terms of the inverted temporality in fascism, referring to Susan Sontag, “Fascinating Fascism,” New York Review of Books, February 6, 1975. In the last analysis, fascist actions that try to subjugate reality to its representation are of course totally different from Kubodera and others’ pragmatism that tries to introduce others into reality.

33 Morris, Ibid.; p.47.

34 That is why air or the ocean cannot be called commodities—neither is a dinner cooked for oneself. “In order to produce [the commodity],” according to Marx, he [the producer] must not only produce use-values, but use-values for others, social use-values...In order to become a commodity, the product must be transferred to the other person, for whom it serves as a use-value, through the medium of exchange.” See “The Commodity,” in Capital, Ibid., pp.125-177; p.131.
sans exchange, sans others. The irony is that it is in such an impossible community of death that the ultimate exchangeability between mutually identical members can become even fathomable.

According to this understanding of fascism, the postwar Japanese state’s treatment of other Asian and Pacific victims to me seems to deserve the name of second fascism. Together with Kubodera and other Japanese perpetrators, the nation-state of Japan as the legal representative of the Japanese perpetrators is in a position to be the pragmatic agent of apologies to and compensations for other victims. For various reasons, the Japanese state has yet to perform these pragmatic obligations to the victims. First, the state interprets that the International Military Tribunal for the Far East has resolved all the relevant war-crimes. Postwar Japanese domestic laws are subsequently not equipped with the ability to criminally pursue individual Japanese regarding any crimes that they might or might not have committed during the war. Second, according to the San Francisco Treaty of 1951, in which Japan regained its sovereignty, its forty eight signatories renounced their respective citizens’ civil right to the Japanese state-compensations for their individual losses in the war. With those invaded countries that did not participate in the treaty, viz. China, South Korea, India, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the USSR, Japan forged bilateral treaties, stipulating that Japan provides aid-monies for each country’s economic development instead of compensation for the country’s losses that Japan caused. In exchange, each donee’s citizens are legally interpreted to be bound to the San

35 This legal system makes a stark contrast to that of West Germany, whereby Nazi crimes do not even have the statute of limitations. See Linda Hoaglund, “Stubborn Legacies of War: Japanese Devils in Sarajevo” in The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus (http://japanfocus.org/, 1/26/2007). The irony is that Kubodera and other Japanese witnesses take advantage of the loopholes in the Japanese system—the Japanese domestic laws “protect” them from the chance that they will be indicted in Japan for what they testify.

36 Excluded even from this international diplomatic scheme of “aid” are Taiwanese and North Koreans—Japan has yet to forge peace treaties with their countries. Similarly, North and South Korean residents in Japan are never given a chance to take advantage of even the aid-monies from the Japanese state due to their ambiguous nationality and citizenship. See Michael Weiner, The Origins of the Korean Community in Japan, 1910-1923 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989); Sonia Ryang, “The North Korean Homeland of Koreans in Japan” in her ed. Koreans in Japan: Critical Voices from the Margin (London and New York: Routledge, 2000),
Francisco Treaty, i.e. that they have forsaken their individual right to pursue reparations from the Japanese state concerning their war-related losses. Third, there are cases that have to risk stigmatizing the plaintiffs in their home countries—those that involve rapes and sex-slavery being prime examples. These socio-cultural reasons aside, individual victims of Japan’s fascism in the rest of Asia and the Pacific could not receive compensations due to the postwar Japanese state’s fascism that has summarily reduced these individuals’ unique losses to their respective countries’ general interests. Other states have apparently cooperated with the state of Japan—the Allied Forces, and the signatories of the San Francisco Treaty and other bilateral peace treaties with Japan have lent deaf ears to individual victims’ demands for justice in order to save the invader Japan’s primitively accumulated capital, accumulated through its invasion into and colonialism of the rest of Asia and the Pacific. No wonder, when the capital could be used to finance the invaded and colonized countries’ military dictatorship and other forms of totalitarianism developed in postwar days.37 “A [possible] swarm of individual suits,” as a judge of Japan’s Fukuoka District Court is reported to have said to his colleagues, which would otherwise have been brought by the other Asian and Pacific victims against Japan, are then

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37 According to Namhee Lee, *The Making of Minjung: Democracy and the Politics of Representation in South Korea* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), South Korean Park Chung Hee, who seized the country’s presidency in 1961 through a military coup, received Japanese monies in exchange for his dictatorial ambitions. Before the 1965 “Normalization Treaty” between South Korea and Japan that Park forged despite the “oppos[ition] by an overwhelming majority of Koreans” (p.31), “[t]he ruling Minju Konghwadang (Democratic Republic Party: DRP) [of Park] was rumored to have received a $130 million advance from Japan, from the property claims settlement fund, and it was said that the government and the ruling party had used the money to organize the party. These rumors heightened suspicions that the ruling party was hurrying the settlement in order to maintain its power. Distrust increased further when the Japanese government revealed that it had already arranged several commercial loans of more than $100 million with South Korea” (p.30; note 37). South Koreans also suspected the anti-communist American encouragement behind Park’s decision (p.31). “Once Koreans became aware of the negotiations in March 1964, many expressed the thought that normalization with Japan should be preceded by Japan’s sincere apology for its past colonial rule of Korea. They said the treaty was against Korea’s national interests, that it was another humiliating episode for Korea because it made Japan’s ’40 years of crimes against Korea justified,’ and that it provided a way for Japan to rule over Korea once more” (p.30).
neatly represented by the international diplomatic bodies of the nation-states and their interests.\textsuperscript{38} Visceral details of the individual losses are laundered into the clean form of aid-momies. The victims’ voices are thus commodititized, but unlike Kubodera’s case, the purpose of commoditization is anti-apologism—compensations as such have never been paid by the Japanese state to either the invaded countries or their citizens. The possibility of dialogic and other exchanges between the actual victims of fascism and the postwar state of Japan are completely precluded from this international scheme of second fascism.

Just as fascism cannot sustain its ideal of monologism, the second fascism of the Japanese state and the supporting community of other states has to disclose its internal discrepancy. The internal discrepancy manifests itself as different positions in the international scheme that the Japanese state has constructed and joined. For example, although it was drawn into Japan’s diplomatic scheme of fascism and receives Japan’s official development-assistance (ODA), the Chinese state effectively allows its citizens to sue the Japanese state for their individual losses. Since the mid-1970s, approximately eighty lawsuits were brought by various Chinese plaintiffs against the state and corporations of Japan, albeit with their results always being the plaintiffs’ losses.\textsuperscript{39} According to the Chinese state, “the 1972 Chinese renunciation of the [Chinese state’s] right to Japan’s reparation [which China declared upon its forging a peace

\textsuperscript{38} The remark is reported by Keiichi Sasaki in his “Kurai Kako wo Seisan-suru Hōzu: Sengo Hoshō Saiban wo Ou” in \textit{Nikkan Berita} (www.nikkanberita.com, 2/14/03). The occasion of the remark, according to Sasaki, was that on 4/26/2002 the court ordered the Mitsui Miike Mine and the Tagawa Mining Corporation to monetarily compensate for the forced labor that these corporations used during the war. The plaintiffs were those fifteen Chinese males who were forced to work in these corporations’ mines in Kyushu Islands, where the court is located. Replying to the above quoted remark, the presiding judge, Motoaki Kimura, is reported to have said that “the number of the Chinese who were forcefully brought to Japan for labor [during the war] is about 40,000. Even though we [the Japanese state] pay 10 million yen [about 100,000 U.S. dollars] to each of them, it’ll be only 40 billion altogether. It’s not going to hurt us [the Japanese state and its budget].”

\textsuperscript{39} See Daisuke Oshima and Keisuke Nishikawa, “Sengo Hoshō Saiban: Ta no 4-ken mo Haiso” in \textit{Asahi Shinbun}, 4/28/2007. More strictly, according to the article, most of these cases were dismissed, first, according to the statute of limitations of twenty years. Second, the Japanese courts have interpreted that before Japan’s 1947 State Reparation Law, the Japanese state in its exercising its public rights (such as the right to war) was immune to civil litigations. Additionally, on 4/27/2007, Japan’s Supreme Court newly presented its judgment that the Chinese individual right to the Japanese state-compensation had been renounced in the 1972 Japan-China Joint Statement.
treaty with Japan] was politically decided by China for the sake of the two peoples’ friendship. It is unlawful and invalid [for the Japanese state] to interpret [China’s renunciation] as encompassing the Chinese citizens’ equivalent right.” 40 The Japanese Association of Scholars of International Law upholds the Chinese state’s claim and comments that “jurisprudently, a state cannot renounce its citizens’ civil right to seek other states’ compensations.” 41 In addition to, or rather, as something that is intrinsic to this legal reason, one would like to consider the ethical principle of justice that the Chinese state may or may not mention here. Any project of fascism will not be able to annul the principle of justice, no matter how many others it kills, no matter how many voices it suppresses. Or rather, the more murderous and suppressive fascism becomes, the more pressing the question of the victims’ justice becomes. This fundamental sense of justice as an inerasable principle of fairness between one and others is recovered even from the internationally legitimized scheme of Japan’s anti-compensation, probably since the recoverer, the Chinese state, is positioned to represent others (the individual Chinese victims). The state of China, like other modern states, is recorded to have violated its citizens’ human rights, but vis-à-vis the Japanese state, I think it has largely spoken for the victimized Chinese people. 42 Derrida says that deconstruction is “[n]ot to change things in the no doubt rather naïve sense of calculated, deliberate and strategically controlled intervention, but in the sense of maximum intensification of a transformation in progress, in the name of neither a simple symptom nor a

40 Ōshima and Nishikawa, Ibid.
42 See Human Rights Watch’s 2012 report on China, for example—http://www.hrw.org/world-report-2012/world-report-2012-china. Nonetheless, against certain, conservative, North American public opinions that single out China’s human right-violations and culturalize such violations, I would emphasize, a la Horkheimer and Adorno, that these violations are derived from instrumentalized reason of the Enlightenment. The Chinese state is just one example of the modern bureaucratic state in general, the most systematic user of such reason. I hope I do not have to point to the U.S. state’s reduction of Muslim Americans and others to homo sacer in Guantanamo and beyond, in order to prove my point.
simple cause; other categories are required here.”\textsuperscript{43} This is perhaps the attitude that allows us to find the way in which the Chinese citizens struggle to make their state represent their demands for justice. Another victimized state of Republic of Korea has followed China’s footsteps by overlooking South Korean victims’ legally pursuing justice in Japanese courts, though the ROK’s support of justice had to wait for the end of its military regimes in 1979. During the Roh Moohyun administration (2003-2008), the South Korean state set up an investigatory and compensatory apparatus concerning individual citizens’ losses during Japan’s colonialism (1911-1945). Tens of thousands of South Koreans responded to their state’s offer of investigation of and compensation for the losses that they sustained under Japanese colonialism.\textsuperscript{44} The Japanese state promised to cooperate with the investigation, if not with compensation. Even within the Japanese state, justice-oriented reassessment of its second fascism has generated dialogic attempts with other victims. In August 1993, the then chief cabinet secretary, Yōhei Kōno, admitted that the wartime Japanese institution of sex-slavery was constructed and managed by the Japanese military. He remarked that he “felt apologetic and remorseful” about the state’s accountability. In the same year, the then prime minister, Morihiro Hosokawa (1993-1994) similarly described the Asia-Pacific War as an “invasive” and “wrong” war on the Japanese part. The social-democrat PM, Tomiichi Murayama (1994-1996), inherited the state-apologism and uttered that Japan had “inflicted enormous damages and pains on people in many countries, particularly [other] Asian countries, with [Japan’s] colonial dominations and invasions.”

These apologies made by these Japanese politicians are surely commodified. But they are ethically minded and in that sense comparable with conservative Japanese politicians’ apologies.

\textsuperscript{43} See his “Force of Law,” Ibid.; p.236.
\textsuperscript{44} More precisely, the number amounts to 20,000 as of 6/20/2005, according to a supporting Japanese activist, Kazuyuki Kawamura. Earlier in 2005, Kawamura joined other leftist Japanese and resident Korean activists in Japan to establish the Network to Investigate the Truth of Forced Mobilization (Kyōsei Dō’in Shinsō Kyūmei Network). The network intends to help the ROK’s new investigatory/compensatory apparatus, particularly when the ROK officials and civilians make research trips to Japan.
According to a historian, Yutaka Yoshida, the apology movement in Japan dates back to the 1980s, when the then PM, Yasuhiro Nakasone (1982-1987), and others started to think that “the issue of Japan’s accountability for the war-related losses would politically stymie Japan, as it was going to assume leadership in [the rest of] Asia.”\(^{45}\) Nakasone and others then dreamt about Japan’s political “leadership” in Asia and the Pacific at the peak of the country’s economic boom. Unless Japan apologizes, peoples in these regions would not find Japan as a holder of those moral qualities that are usually thought of as necessary for political leadership, according to these politicians. Yoshida comments that in this type of thinking, “there is only exceedingly little [room for] problematization of and interest in how to change [Japanese] policies to admit the war’s invasiveness and offensiveness and how to change the Japanese consciousness to support these [potential] new policies.”\(^{46}\) So, according to the historian, Nakasone and other hawks of the 1980s tried to apologize without meaning either the war’s (or rather the warring Japanese) invasiveness and offensiveness. Their apologies were not sincere, the historian suggests, since they did not mean to change related policies or consciousness. Could Kōno and other doves in the 1990s be described as sincere in their apologies? How can we distinguish Nakasone’s nominal apologies from Kōno’s? Are not these two sets of apologies similarly arbitrary in their discrepancy from sincerity? The answer to these questions, though, lies not in the meaning but wording of the apologies. Kōno’s apology is the admission of the Japanese state’s accountability for the sex slavery. Murayama’s apology similarly defines the war as Japan’s invasion and colonialism. These admissions and definitions are not “sincere” in the sense that it does not matter whether they accompany the apologizers’ emotional or personal convictions. These apologies rather show the apologizers’ political positions in the spectrum of the finely calibrated


words of diplomatic apologies. It is in their calibrated words that Murayama and other politicians point to a certain set of calculated positions, which differ from those which are pointed to by Nakasoné and others—the latter never made public statements on Japan’s invasion or accountability.

In current, neonationalist Japan, even Nakasone-types of ultra-formal apologies should make a difference—the idea of conversations with others in general seems to have completely ceased to exist in this country. Neonationalists started their non-apologism with toning down of Murayama’s ethical wordings—during his administration, due to the demands made by many conservative alliances formed in the Diet, the social democrat draft for the Resolution for No War (submitted in June 1994) was reduced to the Resolution to Renew the Determination for Peace Based on the Lessons Learned from History (June 1995). In January 1997, the Association to Write New History Textbooks (Atarashii Rekishi Kyōkasho wo Tsukuru Kai) was established among neonationalist politicians, intellectuals, and lobbyists, to revise the history of Japan’s fascism, especially that of sex-slavery. As the country plunged into a deep recession in

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48 That Japan’s second fascism attempts to reduce the memories and testimonies of the country’s sex slavery in particular might underscore the deep, gendered structure of fascism in general. According to Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies*, trans. by Stephan Conway in collaboration with Erica Carter and Chris Turner, forward by Barbara Ehrenreich (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987-1989), in Nazi Germany, fascism’s stasis without exchange, without others, was fantasized through the figure of the “hard,” “seamless,” armor-like body of a “masculine” soldier. Homosociality is the interpersonal mode through which the figurative soldiers are expected to relate to each other. Jews, women, and others, who were assigned the “feminine” signs of fluidity, porousness, and intermixture, were destined to be tamed and/or exterminated in this symbolic imagination. The Japanese sex-slavery with the ideology of the female sex-slaves’ “comforting” (ian-suru) of the male soldiers should therefore be the secret of the secret of Japan’s fascism. It represents one of the most acute contradictions to the fascist fantasy of the masculine soldiers—their hard autonomy and self-sufficiency. One of the discourses to try to solve this contradiction will be that of the “release of (male) sexual instinct” (seiyoukushori) by means of the “comfort women” (ianfu)’s bodies—sex without other. Apparently many neonationalists, e.g. Hiroki Azuma, prefer to employ this discourse. See the entries of 5/12-13, 2013, on this literary critic’s twitter. He was practically endorsing the then Osakan Mayor, Tōru Hashimoto’s similar remark—see ‘Ianfu wa Hitusyō datta ‘Shinryaku, Hansei to Owabi wo’ Hashimoto-shi’ *Asahi Shinbun*, 5/13/13. Literature on Japan’s wartime sex slavery is vast—Yūko Suzuki’s “Jūgun Ianfu” Mondai to Sei Bōryoku (Tokyo: Mirai Sha, 1993) and Yoshiaki Yoshimi’s Jūgun Ianfu (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1995) provide classical studies from the Japanese leftist and feminist perspectives respectively. Shinichi Arai, Akira Maeda, and Rumiko Nishino, Jūgun Ianfu (Tokyo: Shinkō Sha, 1997) adds journalistic will to truths.
1990, a certain philanthropic-ethical mood that might have accompanied what Field above called the apology movement among Murayama, Hosokawa, and other politicians has apparently given way to the narcissistic-monological logic that the neonationalists would call “self-existent pride” (*rin to shita hokori*).

Let me analyze these neonationalist languages of non-apology more closely. Unlike Kubodera’s or Murayama’s commoditized apologies, the neonationalists’ non-apologies seem to be characterized by these actors’ excessive will to meaning at the cost of the forms in which the meaning should be enveloped. This characteristic is comparable also with the other extreme in the non-apology movement—the extreme of pure formalism without any meaning (the sense of obligation, justice, or sincerity), which was exercised by Nakasone and others in the 1980s. According to one of the representatives of the meaning-oriented neonationalists, Norihiro Katō, who is a literary critic, Japan does not have to, or rather cannot, apologize to the rest of Asia and the Pacific until the country reasserts its national subject. In his logic, any apology needs the subject of apology, whereas the nation of Japan has lost its subjectivity due to the nation’s “deprived” pride and “twisted” legitimacy after its defeat in the war. Katō argues that his project of national reconstruction is intended to be the step toward reconciliation with Japan’s victims. But the hypocrisy of this argument is obvious in his language of (neo)nationalism, which contains his ambition to transcend even his own language as the means of communication. Another literary critic, Kōjin Karatani, points out Katō’s impossible ambition for non-semiotic language by calling it “private language” (*shi-teki gengo*). With an over-usage of the phonetic *hiragana* letters, Katō seems to want to enact a poetic union with his readers, the necessarily

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49 See his *Haisen-go Ron* (Tokyo: Kōdan Sha, 1997); p.261 and p.13 respectively.
national readers. He would describe this union as “literary,” with literature being a means through which the national readers share “deep” national emotions such as those that might accompany defeats of the country. Ironically, the depth of the shared emotions in these instances will eventually erase the necessity of literature as a linguistic art, since in Katō’s logic, these instances should be felt instead of discussed through the texts. That which is unambiguously excluded from Katō’s emotional nationalist language and literature is political consideration of others, other Asians and Pacific Islanders, who will not understand his idiosyncratic words at all. Neither will they understand his logic of the two-step process for Japan to be able to apologize—first, construction of the Japanese national subject and then, apology by the constructed subject. The non-ethical and -moral language here is at once the cause and effect of the non-apologism.

These (neo)nationalist languages of the contemporary Japanese non-apologism clearly differ from the ethical apology made by Kubodera. Robotically apologizing, looking at midair, he seems to be driven by the idea of the moral obligation to his slain victims, whereas this obligation would not even exist if he did not think about the victims. Moral calculations and ethical considerations here are inseparably entangled, generating and generated by each other. Balancing between the monetary value of the victims’ deprivations, the incalculable losses of these victims’ human dignity and lives, and the always insufficient medium of apologetic words,

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51 There is another phonetic system of writing in Japan—katakana, which is usually used to represent “foreign” sounds among others. Perhaps due to this usage of katakana, hiragana seems to be preferred by nationalists as the device to express their logo-centric desires against yet another writing system, kanji, the ideogramatic system borrowed from China. Takaaki Yoshimoto, for instance, seems to me to be involved in this problematic of hiragana logo-centrism—see his Kyōdō Gensō Ron (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1982). Nobukuni Koyasu discusses the logo-centrism of the early 19th century nativist scholar Norinaga Motoori in his Motoori Norinaga (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1992). About the historical process of kanji-importation and its socio-cultural repercussions, see H. Mack Horton, “Japanese Spirit and Chinese Learning: Scribes and Storytellers in Pre-modern Japan” in Jonathan Boyarin ed., The Ethnography of Reading (Oxford, England: University of California Press, 1993), pp.156-179.

52 Katō, Ibid.; p.218 and p.213-4, respectively. See also pp.107-9.
Kubodera keeps the vacant seats for the victims, the victims as the unnamed yet concretely pictured addressees of his apology. These places of the addressees are the minimal evidence that Kubodera is the holder of the profane ethics that Derrida talks about. Such ethics are irreducible to either monetary or linguistic values, yet instituted by and instituting these values. It is these ethics as supplementary considerations of others, supplementary to the logic of the commodity, which fascism lacks. The latter’s difference from the commoditized apology by Kubodera might look slight, but I would like to keep focusing on it in order to see how the possibilities of other futures than fascism’s have been inherited and expanded in postwar Japan.

**Mourning Beyond Melancholia**

Psychoanalytically, Hisao Kubodera’s moral-ethical attempts can be better analyzed in the framework of the Freudian theory of mourning and melancholia. Briefly, the theory addresses the questions of how one deals with losses in one’s life and what relations one should and can forge with the lost objects as well as with the new objects to love. The lost objects that inflict psychological pains on Kubodera are not only the murdered boy, executed hostages, and robbed villages, but also Kubodera’s own innocence and integrity. At more collective levels, he suggests he used to believe in the popularity of Japan’s fascism among other Asians and fantasize victories of the country over the “western” nations. None of these beliefs and fantasies remained after August 15, 1945. In today’s testimony (2007), asked how he felt upon Japan’s defeat on that day, Kubodera’s answer is straightforward—“I thought it was a great pity.” He says, “Even before [the 15th], I’d heard the U.S. and the Soviet militaries talking [about Japan’s defeat] through the ‘Radio No. 6 [rokugō musen],’” he continues. “But I’d never even dreamt

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that we’d lose.” Having joined the war, “believing it [the war] to be righteous,” he “lost [himself]” on the 15th. On the next day, the battalion commander committed suicide. Other officers were “like insane, saying ‘we’ll never forget this [the loss]. We’ll seek revenge.’” Kubodera had to feel another “great pity” in northern Korea, where his Division 59 (Robe) was captured by the Soviet army. As the division lined up and marched to Vladivostok, those who were near the end of the line were robbed and stoned by their former colonial subjects, Koreans. “I think this [the episode of the Japanese soldiers’ symbolic ostracism by Koreans] is totally understandable, seen from the historical perspective,” Kubodera says, “yet from the personal perspective [of his], it is a pity.” That is, even now, he regrets that the colonial empire of Japan collapsed and the Japanese were ostracized. According to him, it is the same sense of pity and regret that occupied his mind during the first years in the Fushun Detention Center, China. It was “after [and perhaps only because his] company commander admitted [his crimes],” that Kubodera “confessed [he] had robbed deserted villages,” according to him.

However, his seeming remorselessness is complicated by such remarks as “I’ve had no interest in the Yasukuni [Shinto Shrine, where fallen Japanese soldiers are consecrated as national heroes] then or now… I don’t believe in things like ‘Vive His Majesty,’” which the soldiers are ideologically supposed to shout as they fall—the nation is said to be embodied by the emperor. “Facing the matter of life or death, most of us, foot-soldiers, were remembering our moms” and not the ideological existences of Yasukuni or the emperor, he informs the audience. Similarly, he mentions his brother, who fell in the “South” (Nampho) (Southeast Asia and the Pacific), and three cousins who were similarly killed in battle, and states, “I don’t want any more war. Each individual soldier doesn’t have any grudge or hatred toward the enemy soldier whom he has to kill; he kills only for the sake of his state.” These anti-ideological and pacifist remarks
are backed by his holding testimonial events about his crimes, atrocities, and defeat, in the newly fascist and nationalist country of contemporary Japan.

In the seemingly still ongoing process through which Kubodera might dialectically work through his emotions of chagrin, undead fantasies, and thoughts of others, language seems to perform an important role. At least to me, it is not hard to notice that he seems to be switched on and off between formal, apologetic words and informal, emotional expressions. The expressions of chagrin and pity are limited to the time of questions and answers, when he spontaneously speaks without drafts, actually looking at the audience. Even then, as soon as questions touch certain ideological kernels, he is quick to return to the reciting mode of a robot, starting to look away and stating such stiff, formal things as “why war? I heard that the purpose of the last war [the Asia-Pacific War] had been economic interests” or “as a son of a farmer, I learnt how to listen to the powerful so that I could survive the poverty in which I’d been conditioned” or “the class difference between me and my superiors in the military was so enormous that I had to listen to what they said as absolute orders.” Through the conversations between postwar Chinese communists and leftist Japanese intellectuals, the ideological consensus seems to have been established that the Japanese soldiers had invaded China, but they had done so to effectively benefit Japan’s “imperial” interests. Without sufficient education, these soldiers were of the farmers’ class; the intellectual consortium would say that they were easy targets of imperialist indoctrination and enforcement. Of course, there are a lot of problems in this theory—historical materialism that sees imperialism as a necessary “phase” in the teleologically conceived path to communism, the related elitism that sees the farmers as manual laborers.

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54 For example, see Saburō Ienaga, Taiheiyō Sensō (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1968).
without either intellectual abilities or practical agency. Nevertheless, the theory, as long as embodied by Kubodera, seems to provide the possibility of a conversation between the Japanese perpetrators and the Chinese victims. According to the theory, since these two groups of people belong to the same international class of farmers similarly oppressed by international imperialism, they, as part of the collectivity of the victims of imperialism, could unite together to advance certain historical consciousness. In the process of unification that is by definition self-awakening according to the historical materialists, the wrongs will be admitted and apologies will be made. Though highly ideological, the theory has obviously caused at least Kubodera’s apologism. The theory seems to have lent him the intellectual mold and formal language in and with which he could temporarily sublimate his attachment to prewar Japan’s ideals. The mold and language have allowed him to disguise the fact that he has a new leftist consciousness and apologetic humanism; only in this disguise, the possibility of a new history emerges as a new chain of dialogic exchanges between him and his victims. No matter how awkward he looks, he has to say “I apologize and sincerely reflect” to begin the conversation.

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56 See Sun, Ibid.

57 My reading of historical materialism regarding the East Asian historiography of imperial Japan’s invasion and colonialism is inspired by Jacques Derrida, Specters of Marx, Ibid. According to Derrida, the humanist Marx in the German Ideology does not have to be seen as “false, unnecessary, or illusory” (p.214). Since, what matters is “a relatively stabilized knowledge [as is presented in the GI] that calls for questions more radical than the critique itself and than the ontology that grounds the critique. These questions are not destabilizing as the effect of some theoretico-speculative subversion. They are not even, in the final analysis, questions but seismic events. Practical events, where thought becomes act [se fait agir], and body and manual experience (thought as Handeln, says Heidegger somewhere), labor but always divisible labor—and shareable, beyond the old schemas of the division of labor… These seismic events come from the future, they are given from out of the unstable, chaotic, and dis-located ground of the times. A disjointed or dis-adjusted time without which there would be neither history, nor event, nor promise of justice” (p.214; italics, parentheses, and square brackets original).
In the Freudian framework, this formalist genesis of an apology and its historical
development into a conversation are parts of the process of mourning. Upon theorizing mourning,
Freud asks,

Now in what consists the work which mourning performs? I do not think there is
anything far-fetched in the following representation of it. The testing of reality,
having shown that the loved object no longer exists, requires forthwith that all the
libido shall be withdrawn from its attachments to this object... The task is...carried
through bit by bit, under great expense of time and cathetic energy, while all the
time the existence of the lost object is continued in the mind. Each single one of the
memories and hopes which bound the libido to the object is brought up and hyper-
cathected, and the detachment of the libido from it accomplished... [W]hen the work
of mourning is completed the ego becomes free and uninhibited again.  

The labor of mourning here is said to be the libido’s “withdraw[al] from its attachments to this
[loved] object.” This withdrawal is supposedly accomplished by “[bringing] up and
hypercathect[ing],” that is, by thematizing and investing much libido into “each single one of the
memories and hopes” regarding the object. Much libido is mobilized in this process, probably
because, after loss, touching these memories and hopes requires a lot of courage and energy.
Consciousness and thoughts of the objects may be hurtful yet absolutely necessary here; only
through them can one “detach” one’s libido from the object, that is, can one regard the object as
lost, as other than oneself, the survivor of the loss. This process of conscious thinking of the
object as other necessarily involves a certain semiotic means, as Eric Santner says. When the
subject thinks about the object, s/he should surely work through his/her libido pertaining to the
object; according to Santner’s suggestion, the mournful subject in the Freudian theory does so by
distancing him/herself from libido, by working on the object’s memories and related hopes
instead of the libido itself. This is strictly a semiotic process, in which meaning (the libido) is not
and cannot be directly addressed by the subject, but its signs (memories and hopes) are and can.

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Linguistic abstraction of the object here approximates what Freud calls psychological “detachment” from the object. Santner suggests that mourning is complete when abstraction is so advanced that the object becomes a generic sign to be exchanged with other signs in the everyday semiotic field. At this point, the object’s raison d’être to the subject, viz. the lovable quality and other unique traits that the subject used to desire the object to possess, has been completely dissolved into the generic idea of that particular object (although certain, unresolvable ghosts of the subject’s attachment to the particular object will remain). The whole process of mourning resembles that of commoditization in that it is summarized as abstraction, through which the use-value of the object (its specific raison d’être to the subject) is turned into its exchange-value (its generic qualities common among other objects as signs).

Freud’s argument is effectively that the processes of abstraction and exchange heal the subject in mourning. In Kubodera’s case, we have earlier learnt that he remembers the Chinese

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59 See Santner, Stranded Objects: Mourning, Memory, and Film in Postwar Germany (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990). His reading of Freud’s article, “Mourning and Melancholia,” will be found in pp.2-3. Santner elaborates on the symbolic aspect of mourning in his discussion of the fort/da game, which Freud observes his toddler grandson playing. Meaning “gone”/“here” in English, the fort/da game seems to Freud to be the ritualized taming of the child’s sense of loss regarding his mother’s occasional absence and, more generally, regarding the foreseen end of the imaginary unity with his mother. Santner remarks, “Bereft by the mother’s absence, and more generally by the dawning awareness that the interval between himself and his mother opens up a whole range of unpredictable and potentially treacherous possibilities, he [the child] reenacts the opening of that abysmal interval within the controlled space of a primitive ritual. The child is translating, as it were, his fragmented narcissism into the formalized rhythms of symbolic behavior; thanks to this procedure, he is able to administer in controlled doses the absence he is mourning. The capacity to dose out and to represent absence by means of substitutive figures at a remove from what one might call their ‘transcendental signified,’ is what allows the child to transform his lost omnipotence into a form of empowerment. This empowerment is called creativity; it is the capacity for play, for symbolic behavior in accordance with rules and forms” (p.20). James Siegel, “Language and Hierarchy in an Indonesian City,” Solo in the New Order (Princeton N.J.: Princeton U.P., 1986), pp.257-276, similarly discusses the work of translation that Javanese employs during their funerary ritual—the raw emotions upon death is meant to be displaced into the cultural imagery of death through the attitude of the iklas (detached) or the help of photography.

60 Using another example of a Greek myth, Apollo and Daphne, Santner says that, after the symbolization of the lost object, the next phase of mourning involves the question, how can the mourner “[weave]” the symbolized object into the society in which s/he is embedded? As Apollo makes a wreath out of the laurel tree, into which Daphne is metamorphosed, the mourner has to go through an “ambivalent troping or turning from the organic matrix into a transitional space organized by the unnatural codes of the Symbolic. The partial ‘demotivation’ of the figure of consolation—its capacity to be exchanged and grafted—is what allows it to become a sign or title of power and vocation: the floating signifier of a legacy” (22). This phase of symbolic weaving of the lost object is of course parallel to psychoanalytic sessions, in which the patient has to verbalize his/her loss in the language that is shared with the analyst (25).
boy that he shot and killed as an image. We also know that this image has been substituted by that of Kubodera’s own brother. Perhaps through this chain of substitution, his remorse is deepened and articulated better. After more than 60 years, this ethico-symbolical process of mourning seems to have developed into his political activism against the possible constitutional revision proposed in Japan today and against war in general. Apparently this is not an easy process, as long as bits of evidence of his continuous attachment to prewar Japan’s ideals—the country’s military victories and colonial glories—seem to be still betrayed. Kubodera’s efforts for symbolization and ethicalization of his losses will be appreciated, once they are recognized as processes and also when they are juxtaposed with the larger society’s attempts at incorporation of the losses.

As opposed to the symbolic process of mourning, Freud says melancholia is featured by desires for and acts of (re)incorporation. In the Freudian scheme of socio-sexual evolution of an individual and civilization, melancholic patients belong to the “narcissistic” stage. Similar to the world of Bataillean sovereignty (see Chapter 2), the world of melancholia is that of a solipsist, made of the enlarged ego and objectified others readied for the ego’s devouring consumption—“cannibalism,” Freud says. Note that Freud thinks melancholic narcissism is a problem of not so much immaturity as “regression.” Melancholics are fixated on the narcissistic world of expendable objects retroactively, that is, after they have already acquired the social skill to respect the objects as others. Similarly, even though melancholics are said to pursue the oral aspect of the linguistic process (voice, breath, mouth), they do so not because

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61 Freud, Ibid; p.171. His social-sexual teleology here is ethical, in which a person’s or culture’s complete maturation is supposedly marked by their acquisition of sociality. In the case of a child’s development, the child starts with auto-eroticism of “organ pleasure” and then proceeds to narcissism then to oral incorporation of others. Their “sadistic-anal” mastery follows this stage. Genital love of others comes in the end as the figure of the child’s full sociality. See his “Instincts and Their Vicissitudes,” in Philip Rieff ed., General Psychological Theory: Papers on Metapsychology (New York: Touchstone, 1997(1963)), pp.83-103; p.102.


63 See “Mourning…,” Ibid.; p.171.
they do not know how to signify meanings with sounds, but because they refuse what the sounds should mean—their linguistic symptom is staged as de-metaphorization. In Jacques Derrida’s words, “[T]his [that melancholics can speak anasemically] is only because the forbidden moment of the oral function had first been a ‘substitute’ for or a ‘figure’ of a wordless presence,” such as mother. In my previous analysis of Nakasone and others’ purely formalist languages, they could talk about other Asians and Pacific Islanders as if they had not carried any historically specific meaning to the contemporary Japanese, not because these formalists do not know the meaning but because they symptomatically omit the meaning, with unconsciously knowing about the meaning. The symptomatic amnesia of meanings and focus on appearances here should be contextualized in the overall mode of mechanical reproduction, in which “the very memory of use-value is effaced.” The possibility to forge linguistically and otherwise mediated relations with the objects as others is attenuated in this mode. Such a possibility seems to be rather replaced by the pleasure of consuming the objects as pure appearances and desires to aesthetically totalize such appearances.

Kubodera’s apology is surely formalist, but it is different from melancholics’ formalism due to his assumption of the specific addressees. Formalism seems to be his instrument to reach his victims as well as to calibrate his positionality in the society—the purpose here seems to be reconciliation with his victims as others and recovery of his own humanity that is lost. The third aspect of his mourning that I have not discussed fully would be its temporal transmission. I have briefly mentioned that his testimony is supposed to provide a historical lesson to younger

65 See his “Forward: Fors: The English Words of Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok” in Abraham and Torok, The Wolf Man’s Magic Word: A Cryptonomy, trans. by Nicholas Rand (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986); xxxviii; italics are original.
Japanese. As a tool of an intergenerational communication of the spirit of mourning as well, the formalist language seems to be pragmatically effective.

**The Mournful Rhizome: Generations, Transmission, Futures**

The difficult process of mourning through which Hisao Kubodera has tried to address his victims qua victims is a pattern that is similarly observable among the first generation members of the Kanagawa Prefectural Affiliate of the Peace Families Association (*Kanagawa Heiwa Izoku Kai*). These several men and women have come a long way to forsake their identities as the victims themselves and recognize other Asians and Pacific Islanders as their families’ victims. Its representative, the 89-year-old Kiku Ishizaki is a bereaved wife, who lost her husband in the Pacific. He was twenty-eight years old. As a geology scholar at Taipei University in colonial Taiwan, he was drafted to survey occupied Borneo for its oil reserves. When he was killed aboard the Awa Maru, he was on the way back to Taipei, where the couple had gotten married and lived together. Immediately, Ishizaki noticed that she had to give up the luxury of the colonial life as the wife of an elite “imperial university” (*teidai*) professor—all she used to do was to play Chopin or Beethoven piano pieces. After her “withdrawal to the inland” (*naichi e no hikiage*), that is, repatriation to Japan, she spent the first several years in a “dead or alive kind of condition” in a small room in Nagasaki, Kyūshū Island, which she shared with her parents-in-law. Her secretarial job in a “special” school for the blind supported herself and the in-laws, a former judge in Taiwan and his wife. After she left the in-laws, she moved to Kyoto and back to Nagasaki and then to Yokohama. In the middle of her jobs as different types of assistants, she studied to become a middle school teacher. She never married again. In the capitalist economy, in which women tend to be hired for worse-paying jobs at lower wages than those that are
available for men, Ishizaki seems to have struggled throughout the postwar days. Her sister-in-law, for example, who similarly married a Taipei Imperial University professor, does not have to retire to a publicly funded home, as Ishizaki does in the Miura Peninsula, Kanagawa Prefecture—just because this in-law’s husband survived the war and has provided for the family, teaching at Kōbe University. Economic hardship as an unmarried woman might help Ishizaki raise her pacifist consciousness (ishiki), but the consciousness-raising took a long time, according to her.

“For a long while, I’d known that the Shiba Zōjō Temple [in Tokyo] held an annual memorial in April for those who died aboard the Awa Maru, just like my husband. I’d always wanted to attend. I’d wanted to meet other families. I’d wanted to know what had happened [on the boat]. But simply, I was too busy to attend—I was barely surviving.

“Even now in this Health Care [Center, her home now], I’ve noticed that female residents tend to be like me—they don’t seem to have had enough time to learn anything about the society.”

Elegantly clad in a finely flower-patterned summer dress, Ishizaki in this high-end café in Kamakura, Kanagawa Prefecture, where we meet over cakes and parfaits, hardly looks like she has struggled. At the same time, I can imagine many of the female residents at the Health Care Center might have ended up in the Center, having had similarly hard lives to hers, alone or with their families, bereaved by the war or not.

“Recognition of one’s own family member as an invader” (shinryaku-sha toshite no nikushin to iu ninshiki) is tough and slow to come, even if one has enough time to learn anything about the society, she says. “Look, my late husband is consecrated in Yasukuni as one of the war-heroes. It’s not that I’ve ever believed in the consecration—even when I had yet to develop my consciousness [as a peace family], I knew I didn’t like the idea of war [which Yasukuni
glorifies]. But I guess many families of Yasukuni have hard times changing their consciousness, once they develop a sense of pride [as families of consecrated soldiers of the nation-state].”

So, why could she make a difference? She points out the existence of a certain network of peace activists, to which she was introduced through her Christian belief. Particularly influential was “Pastor Deguchi,” as Ishizaki and several other peace families in Kanagawa call him. I have briefly seen this legendary pastor, now in a wheelchair, in his Rokkaku-bashi Church, Yokohama, of whom these families are members. “Guided by Pastor Deguchi,” Ishizaki says, she read “many books that criticized the emperor [Hirohito] and emperorship; those books started to be published in the 1960s.” The pastor then was also interested in learning how Christians had cooperated with the warring state (see Chapter 4). Gradually, Ishizaki started to notice that there were many anti-war meetings held in Yokohama. Going back and forth between the church’s study group, civil meetings, and her grinding jobs, “it became my habit (shūkan) to turn my consciousness into that [pacifist] direction. Every time I met new people, every time I read a new book, I was let notice, ‘Wow, it [the socio-political situation during the war] was like that.’ I’d go back to my own consciousness and say, ‘Wait a minute. I’ve thought about it this way, but I was wrong.’ And then I had to start making an effort to change my consciousness.”

According to this habitual thinking, the current (2007) national movement to revise the Article 9 (renunciation of war) of the 1946 Constitution of Japan is to “trample on the victims’ sacrifices.” The victims, according to her, are “those who were invaded [by the Japanese], those who were injured [by the Japanese] all over their bodies.” She bores suppositional holes in her forehead, cheeks, breasts, and stomach, with both of her index fingers. The current Constitution is, she says, “a congealment of those victims’ tears and blood” (gisei-sha no omoi ga komotte-iru). Since “such a wonderful thing as the Constitution is grounded on the victims’ voices,” these
victims could be thought of as having been “sacrificed” (gisei ni sareru), she wants to think (somewhat problematically).

Shigenori Nishikawa, one of the leaders of the National Liaison among Peace Families Associations (Heiwa Izoku Kai Zenkoku Renraku Kai), which represents the Kanagawa and other prefectural associations of peace families, suggests that he has pursued his activist career in the opposite way of Ishizaki’s. As opposed to her, who discovered others’ voices as a result of her recognition of her husband as an invader, Nishikawa says his similar recognition of his fallen brother was “necessitated by the purpose to unite with the bereaved in the world.” Now, in the same summer of 2007 when I interview Ishizaki, Nishikawa and I are sitting at the wooden table near the window as usual, in the Yotsuya Church, Tokyo, where he leads a study group for peace on Sunday afternoons after service. Across the table, Nishikawa, a retired employee at a small, Christian publisher in Tokyo, is looking for a paper through his lawyer’s briefcase. Surviving the immediately postwar days as a milk deliverer in Osaka and a print-shop boy in Tokyo, he never lost his ambition to study more. Nowadays, he brings his heavy briefcase with him in his everyday trip to the Diet, which he attends as a citizen. He writes a weekly report on the Diet and presents it at the Yasukuni Committee of the Nihon Christian Conference (NCC: see Chapter 4). He finally finds the paper that he was looking for and starts eating his small lunch box—“I can’t eat so much any more—I’m already 78,” says he. As for me, I am working on the instant ramen that I bought in the church’s basement for 150 yen (about 1.50 U.S. dollars). Mrs. Nishikawa, a friendly woman from Marugame, Shikoku Island, serves green tea to the several participants. Many of them are young. “Manami Hasegawa,” a middle-aged woman with “digital-permed” hair comes belatedly with her trademark smiles. Today, specifically for me, Nishikawa is going to talk about how he and his fellow activists established the Christian Families Association
(Christ Kyō Izoku no Kai) in 1969. The Christians’ association is now a member organization of the National Liaison among Peace Families Association, which was established in 1986, uniting Christian and other preceding movements.

Nishikawa starts with the background information. Back in 1969, he states, the conservative Japan Families Association (Nihon Izoku Kai) and the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP or Jimin Tō) had been struggling for several years to “nationalize” the Yasukuni Shrine (see Chapter 2). According to Nishikawa, the nationalizing movement was an apparent reaction to the students and citizens’ peace movements of the period against the Vietnam War (1955-75) and the U.S. military usage of Japan for its warring efforts. Kōji Misono’o of the Association to Support the [South Korean] Veterans’ and Former Military Personnel’s Lawsuits [against the Japanese state] (Gunjin Gunzoku Saiban wo Shien-suru Kai) is the living witness of the peace movements in the 1960s. As a college student in Tokyo, Misono’o participated in the Citizens’ League for Peace in Vietnam (Vietnam ni Heiwa wo: Shimin Rengō), demonstrating in the street and assisting American deserters. “The air among us [the Japanese anti-war students] was like, ‘Koreans, yes! Zainichi [resident Koreans in Japan], yes! Chinese, yes!’” he informs me. According to him, this air was made of a certain “pan-Asian” logic against the U.S. and the transnational citizens’ solidarity movement against the “American imperialism” (bei tei). These students were similarly acting as the second-generation Japanese after Japan’s invasions and atrocities in the rest of Asia and the Pacific during the Asia-Pacific War, according to Misono’o. He says that the students tried to unite with other Asians and Pacific Islanders “to undo the wrongs” done by their parents’ and grandparents’ generations.67 Propelled by the overall liberal-activist atmosphere of the period and opposing the Yasukuni activists’ reactions, one of the first-

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67 A similar complex of trans-generational, political, and psycho-analytical factors seems to have been observable among the leftist West-German students during the same period and beyond—see Uli Edel dir., The Baader Meinhof Complex (Munich: Constantin Film Verleih, 2008).
generation activists, Nishikawa, wrote up his draft of the peace families’ manifesto overnight. “I was crying though,” he confesses.

His brother was 24 years old when he was officially recorded to have incurred some disease and died somewhere in Burma. Nishikawa the survivor was sixteen. “Since I’m a man, Brother left his will and library to me,” Nishikawa tells me, implying his belief in a certain patrilineal inheritance pattern. Between the brothers, there is a sister. In their home in Marugame, Shikoku, Nishikawa says his brother’s library was filled with almost all the literary and philosophical books that had been published in Japan during the war—Kiyoshi Miki, Kitarō Nishida, Martin Heidegger, so on and so forth. Following the underlines and notes that his brother left in the books, Nishikawa was assured that his brother had “had doubts about Japan’s fascism.” He also found that his brother had marked all the descriptions concerning death that there were in the books. This made him think, “he knew he had to die for something that he didn’t believe.” Later in 1969, upon writing the peace families’ manifesto, Nishikawa says he thought, “Should my non-fascist brother be called an ‘invader’ as well?”

“Yasukuni was almost being nationalized [in the 1960s], as I’ve told you,” Nishikawa says to us, the several listeners in the Yotsuya Church, “while I wanted to say no to that. And I wanted to say no with my hands in the hands of the [other] Asian victims. And then, as I looked at [the imagined victims of other] Asians, I couldn’t say ‘at least my brother was irrelevant [to Japan’s fascism].’ Just because he [must have] held a gun [toward the Burmese and other Asians], I couldn’t. Then, I looked at myself. Would I be irrelevant? No, I said. I had the accountability for having seen him [his brother] off [to the battlefield]. I could not say only the [then] prime minister [Hideki Tōjō] had been accountable [for the invasion].” Compare this “I” that Nishikawa says emerged then as an invader’s brother to that which I have mentioned is
advocated by the neonationalist Norihiro Katō. Nishikawa’s “I” seems to be a temporarily established agent of apology, as the apology becomes necessary for the pragmatic political purposes of anti-Yasukuni Shrine and anti-Vietnam War. Katō’s “I” is supposed to be emotionally extending itself over the whole nation and by implication over the whole period of national times. This “I” of Katō could be easily surmised to be ideationally set up against others as similarly logo-centric nations. The pragmatic subject of Nishikawa seems to have carnally emerged, when he “looked” at other Asians and was looked at from their perspective. Like in Hisao Kubodera’s case, the first generation of the perpetrator Japan seems to have possibly started the long and yet-to-be achieved reconciliatory process with other victims only in this type of embodied imagination—changing of perspectives and feeling of finger-bullets. Apparently, the majority of the Japanese have lived the postwar period without these ethical gestures—what started these gestures in these activists?

To Hatsue Ishida, a Kanagawa peace family, the question “all comes down to my poverty, and ultimately, to my being a woman, which is related to my poverty.” In the same summer of 2007, I am sitting in one of the empty conference-rooms in the Kanagawa Prefectural Residents’ Center near the Yokohama Station over the handmade daifuku snack that I bought for 150 yen apiece. “I thought it could be impolite [since daifuku is supposed to be casual], but I couldn’t resist—these pieces are made from scratch!” I apologetically explain. “Oh gosh, how did you know I had a sweet tooth!” The seventy-five year old is rather glad. In exchange, she treats me to a vending machine tea. A light yellow, cotton shirt and a hat; under the hat, her grayish hair is naturally thick and wavy, tamed by several tiny hair-clips. Her small leather bag and several plastic bags are filled with books and documents, which she brought with her for me from her home in remote Atsugi City, Kanagawa. Earlier in this summer, in the annual meeting among the
prefectural peace-families, I saw her losing her temper over a one-time participant. Criticizing how the families managed their movement in the past, the middle-aged male said, “Your movement is tapering off—you should think more seriously about involving younger generations.” “But you don’t know us; you haven’t joined even a single demonstration by us!” Ishida immediately stood up and shouted. The woman who looked tall and strong then turns out to be petite and frail today. I have also found that she usually whispers. An independent thinker with strong will, nonetheless.

“What came to determine the way of my life?” she asks herself, eruditely looking at the table. “I was born in a family of six—four older brothers, me, and my mother. My father passed away as soon as I was born.” According to her, the eldest brother worked for the Ministry of Finance and provided for the family. “My mother kept saying she felt bad [that he had to take care of the family]. She was totally diminished, while my brother was the boss of the family. I grew up thinking that women were like this [that they had to exchange their power for their financial needs due to the social condition of the society].” By the end of the war in 1945, the family had added one more member—although the family’s second eldest son was drafted and killed in Imphal, India, his newlywed wife and newborn son remained in the Ishida household. Eventually, the then 21-year-old wife was “sent back [to her natal] home” by the Ishidas; the Ishidas instead adopted her son as the family’s youngest son. “War is hurting not just the fallen soldiers but also their families,” says Ishida. This boy, her fallen brother’s son, later uncovered the family secret and became alcoholic, according to her. As for his biological mother, Ishida’s late brother’s former wife, “apparently she didn’t feel comfortable back in her ‘real [natal]’ home—she rented an apartment and eventually got remarried,” she sighs and continues, “The war affected our lives this much. I bet we were not alone—but I bet we were affected this much,
because we weren’t so rich.” And I think her point is that in the less-privileged lives, it is the women who tend to be affected by war more than men. Later, as a student in an all-women’s high-school (jogakkō), which was the only kind of school available to girls of that age, Ishida says she read Tolstoy’s “Resurrection.” She states, “I realized that the system that oppressed poor women was everywhere, of which my family was just an example.”

At the age of 17, she graduated and became a clerk at a department store. It was 1949. “They were kinds of days in which you could sell anything—you put, say, picture frames with little flower ornaments or something at the Christmas time and then people would come avalanching at you. You’d be pushed so far that you wouldn’t be able to give change to your customer. And then I realized,” she continues, “that my hard work in this period had never been reflected in my wage. Timecards, vacations, dress codes—we female clerks (uriko) were so controlled. Controlled in a gendered way. Our boss was male, who’d want to control even our romantic relations in our private lives.” In her implication, this type of gendered control, which she describes as “feudal,” legitimized these female clerks’ fixed (and likely low) wages. After a year, she joined the one-year-old labor union established in the store. She met her ex-husband there. Together, they led a strike and were fired. This “stigmatized” (shirushi wo tsukeru) them, according to her, in the job market. Ever since, he has had no other choice than working as an independent furniture maker and she as a part-time worker in various workplaces. “He was great theoretically. Raichō Hiratsuka, Kukue Yamakawa, de Beauvoir—he educated me to be a feminist thinker. But when it comes to our everyday life, he had never done any chores at all. His idea was that they were lowly; women should do them. According to the feminist thoughts that he taught me, we were both wageworkers, equally contributing to the household.”
If they had lived a little more comfortable life, she could not have had to face his contradiction, Ishida says. “The economical issue was connected with the gender issue. They are always connected, if we notice it or not. So, if we want to resolve either of them, we have to resolve them together, simultaneously.” It is war that most acutely represents the dual issues of economy and gender, according to her. “Capitalists wage war as they pursue their interests. In the corporations that they run, women are exploited. The corporate exploitation of women is based on the male domination of females in their everyday lives. These are the relations that cause war. War isn’t naturally caused. I’ve just learnt this fact by living my kind of life.” Branded with the 1950s or 60s vulgar Marxism perhaps, Ishida’s thoughts, though, seem to me to be strong in their visceral origin. She suggests that it is in her forced background of the proletariat and due to her lived identity as a feminist that she has discovered her fallen brother as an invader in the rest of Asia and the Pacific. The classed and gendered exploitation that she says she has abstracted from her life-experiences diffused throughout those regions along the expansion of Japan’s “imperialism” (teikoku shugi), i.e. an economic and military expansion overseas driven by its monopoly industries and state. The imperial Japanese soldiers, including her brother, were the forerunners of Japan’s sexist imperialism, according to this logic.

This discovery then seems to let her listen to other Asian females’ voices, the economically impoverished and physically violated voices, as the voices of female victims of Japan’s imperialism. “I went aboard one of the Peace Boats to see Young-soo Lee [one of the victims of Japan’s sex slavery during the war] in Seoul. I don’t have so much money or time to do anything grand, but I always think about [other] Asian women. Remember the remark ‘childbearing machine [which the then Health, Welfare and Labor minister, Hakuo Yanagisawa, made in 1/27/2007 regarding his idea of the relation between the low birth rate in Japan and the
country’s thinning pension-fund—see Chapter 3’” I thought it [the remark] was totally capital-driven. As long as that type of remark keeps being made, the possibility of war continues [since the remark suggests the existence of the driving force of capital in Japan, which may or may not be imperialist in its foreign relations]. As long as the possibility of war continues, the necessity [for Japanese women] to unite with [other] Asian women continues.” In other words, as a Japanese woman she is placed in the same oppressed position as other Asian females, which separates them from the imperial state and monopoly corporations of Japan—by implication, these corporations and the state are gendered as male. I am not sure if other Asian females might agree with her. At the same time, I recognize that this thinking of hers has allowed her to declare her brother an invader—the minimal point from which she can start a conversation with these other women.

Class-caused, gender-entangled, the first generation Japanese’s visceral thoughts of others were abstracted in the following manifesto. Based on Shigenori Nishikawa’s 1969 declaration, the manifesto of the National Liaison among Peace Families Associations was issued on July 7th, 1986—the date commemorates the so-called Marco Polo Bridge Incident of 1937, which led to the Fifteen-Year War between China and Japan. “We lost our beloved families in Asian and Pacific battlefields,” the manifesto starts.

Our postwar days have been sad ones, because of the losses; our beloved families have never returned to us, to our hometowns…

However, as we have recognized the war’s criminal nature [on the Japanese part], our feeling [toward their families] has become complicated. Our recognition is that the war that took our families away was an invasive war [on the Japanese part], which threatened peace in [other] Asian countries, destroyed people’s lives [in these countries], and deprived more than 20 million lives [of these people]. [After this recognition,] we have never been able to console ourselves with such an idea that the death of [their] sons, husbands, brothers, and fathers were “purposeful.”

We seek peace more than anybody else, just because we are bereaved. We think we should never antagonize [other] Asian people and kill these innocent people without any sense of remorse…
We…will reflect [on the past] again, to newly create a real peace, holding hands with [other] Asian and global victims of wars…

Who are the “we” (watashi-tachi) that they mention here? To whom do they represent themselves as “we”? Perhaps to Japan Bereaved Families Association (Nihon Izoku Kai), the conservative and biggest association among bereaved Japanese, with whom the peace families have tried to communicate for years to no avail. At the same time, the addressees here might be other Asians, to whom the peace families seem to be trying to be cooperative as well as apologetic (they “will reflect again” [jikaku wo aratani-shite]). In that case, the manifesto’s plain language is comparable with the language of Hisao Kubodera’s apology, which I have surmised shows his will to transnational communication. The difference between these two instances of languages is that the manifesto’s language is more distanced from the original events of war crimes than the language of Kubodera’s staged apologies. The manifesto, after all, is authored by the soldiers’ families. Their apologies are and should be discrepant from those by Kubodera and other war-criminals.

These soldiers’ children and grandchildren pursue this discrepancy, as they try to inherit and deepen the ethical projects started by the first generation. The bereaved children (iji) of the Kanagawa Peace Families Association seem to have taken advantage of their temporal, spatial, epistemological, and structural distances from the original crimes to talk about such abstract, ethical themes as “a future-oriented new peace in Asia-Pacific” or “cohabitation with [the rest of] Asia.” Several of these children are the association’s committee members, who hold monthly meetings in the Kanagawa Prefectural Residents’ Center. They also organize bi-annual teach-ins, attracting more than 100 participants each time. In addition to them, fewer than twenty families are the association’s members in Kanagawa; 54 more are also “friends” (kaiyū), that is, non-bereaved members. According to the committee’s secretary general, Yasuhiro Uchida, the peace
families nowadays try to generalize the first generation’s thoughts and emotions, “since the
bereaved as such will die out soon; the movement should evolve into something else besides the
families’ movement.”

It is in February 2007 in his home. As we warm ourselves at his kotatsu table with an
electric heater underneath and a comforter draping around the table, hamsters are running in a
wheel by the sunny window—“ham-chan,” he calls the favorite pets of his grandchildren, with
whom and whose parents he lives in this mammoth complex in Kōnan-dai, Yokohama. On the
wall near the ceiling, I see an A-4 sized picture of his late wife. Next to it is hung a picture of his
fallen cousin, forever young in his navy uniform. Uchida says he used to call this former medical
student at the Hokkaidō University “big bro.” In 1945, “big bro” was drafted as a medic and
killed in a sinking battleship. Uchida was a freshman in a middle school in Ashikaga, Gunma
Prefecture. “Boy, how many times did he help me with my homework,” he sighs. All of a sudden,
the kettle in the kitchen begins to howl. I customarily try to refuse the coffee that he is going to
make for us. I place my notebooks and pens on the table, on which he is serving two oddly sized
mug-cups of aromatic coffee. For a moment, he stares at my hand as I try to transcribe
everything that he says.

“So, the peace families’ movement is coming to a cul-de-sac at this moment.” He stops
and sees if I have written it down correctly. “One way out of it would be to develop the
movement into a peace movement in general. Another way would be to stress our kind of
historical consciousness (rekishiki ninshiki) even more than before, the consciousness as the
families of the invaders. If you’ve had a chance to go to Gunma Prefecture and see the
monument that they built to commemorate those Chinese forced laborers who had been abducted
to and used in the prefecture…” He pauses to see if I have. I say no. “OK,” he continues,
“anyway, the monument reads ‘Remembrance, Reflection, and Friendship.’ If they [other Asians] would ever forgive and befriend us, they’d forgive and befriend us only after we remember the truths [of Japan’s invasions and atrocities] and reflect on their being wrong. As the second generation of the peace families, we’ve been working for remembrance and reflection. We’ve held many teach-ins; we’ve supported relevant lawsuits [against the Japanese state and corporations]. Especially the matter of compensation (hoshō no mondai)—we’ve struggled to make sure that [other] Asian victims get compensations [from the Japanese state and corporations].” Would remembrance or reflection imply or lead to a certain sense of redress? “Perhaps”—a little moment of epoché, as this quiet, thoughtful man always has. “The most serious problem that we have to solve is,” he continues, “that [other] Asian victims have been left without being apologized to or compensated. It [the problem] is not about money only. There’re those who were enslaved for labor, enslaved for sex. I think it [the problem] is about justice,” Uchida says. So, the second generation remembers and reflects so that justice (seigi) is established between the Japanese state/corporations and their victims. “Yes, I guess this is a big problem,” he says, implying that it has yet to be solved. Since according to his syllogism, friendship would not be forged before remembrance and reflection are conducted, i.e. justice is restored, he seems to be hesitant about resolving his particular position as family into something more general. Either way, perhaps reflecting his position as the secretary general, strategy-making seems to be one of the predominant concerns of his. Such a hard thing to say for Kubodera or Ishida, justice, which could be said only with the help of the molding or enabling language of historical materialism, is mentioned by Uchida as if it were a matter of fact. He seems to take it for granted that the problem that the second generation has to solve is that of justice. This generation can afford to take advantage of the result of the embodied labor of
mourning that Kubodera’s generation made in thinking of and apologizing to others. The purpose is thus inherited; and the issue that the younger generations face now is that of strategies, how to establish and practice justice and just friendship, he suggests.

When one takes the second strategy that Uchida mentions, viz. the strategy to resolve the peace family’s position into peace movements in general, obviously the inherited ethical thoughts of the first generation are further generalized, as is seen in the example of Junko Nishikiori, a bereaved child in her early sixties. With a neatly cut bob that is dyed red, the social woman Nishikiori has given me an impression that she is always hopping from one activist event after another. To her, her volunteer job at the Kanagawa peace families’ committee might be just another activity. She says she was so young when her father fell that she does not even remember him at all. I am sure that she participates in the peace families’ association with a certain type of identity as a family, but I have a feeling that that identity does not define her as deeply as it does the first generation.

In these days (2007), she could even skip the peace families’ monthly committee, when something pressing happens in a peace movement in Yokosuka City, Kanagawa, where she lives with her family. George Washington, a nuclear-generated aircraft carrier of the U.S. Navy, is about to make the Yokosuka Port her home. The U.S.S. will be officially stationed in Yokosuka on 9/25/2008 after this fieldwork, even though on 1/5/2008 they found some problems in its generators. As of 2007, Nishikiori lets me know that 70% of Yokosuka citizens are against the carrier’s planned stationing. According to her, vigorous demonstrations are everywhere in Yokosuka, everyday. Another Yokosuka activist and a city assembly member, Akihiro Harada, conjectures that the vigorousness of these demonstrations is proportionate to the “stubbornness” of the mayor, Ryōichi Kabaya. According to Harada’s observation, the Liberal Democratic Party
mayor started to preach that the U.S.S. was “not dangerous” newly after his trip to the Pentagon in 1995. Harada tells me that there was a rumor among the assembly members that the then prime minister, Junichirō Koizumi (2001-6) of the LDP “scolded” the mayor that even the LDP members in the assembly were publicly against the U.S.S. Under the double pressures from the Pentagon and the Japanese PM, the mayor became “fortified as a reactionary bulwark” against the citizens’ movements, Harada says. Leading activists like Harada or Nishikiori witness that they have never seen so many citizens participating in their kind of leftist demonstrations.

“Yokosuka citizens are otherwise pretty conservative,” Harada states, “which I think is demonstrated by the fact that most of the assembly members are elected with neighborhood associations’ official supports.” As I have discussed in Chapter 3, the neighborhood association is a corporatist institution that is intimately connected with the conservative LDP’s interests. In Nishikiori’s feeling, “the Yokosukans are united this time as mothers and fathers” against George Washington beyond their partisan interests. As for her, she says she “can’t hand such a future to [her] children, the future that is contaminated by George Washington’s possible nuclear-accidents.” Anti-George Washington activists estimate that in case of an accident, “those who live in the 165 kilometer radius of Yokosuka would risk their lives, bodies, and properties”—the radius will cover not only the whole Kanagawa Prefecture but also Tokyo, Chiba, Shizuoka, Yamanashi, Saitama, Gunma, Nagano, Tochigi and Ibaraki Prefectures.68

Nishikiori’s environmentalist concern as a mother seems to be related to her pacifist position as a daughter. The U.S.S. has a history of indiscriminate (“anti-terrorist”) bombings of Iraqis and Afghans; Nishikiori says “it is totally unacceptable that Yokosuka ends up contributing to the war, to killing of innocent citizens, even indirectly.” In addition to lending

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68 The citation is from an unpublished pamphlet by “Stop! ‘Genshi-ryoku Kūbo Bokō Saiban’ wo Susumeru Kai.”
ports, airports, and other facilities, Japan’s host-nation support to the U.S. military, as stipulated in the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan of 1960, includes Japan’s payment to the Japanese employees working in the U.S. bases in Japan. Many Yokosuka citizens live on the jobs provided by the U.S. base, while the city’s budget is supported by the Japanese state’s relevant payment. When I visit the vicinity of the base with Harada in June 2007, some Yokosukans’ economic reliance on the base is obvious even outside its properties—around the base, which is only about a five minute walk from a Keihin Kyūkō railroad station, Shioiri, I see a dozen or more high-rises for related Americans, small hotels and inns with English signs, ads for “home-staying,” and embroidery shops for insignia selling their works for 300 yen (3 dollars) apiece. Late in the night, Harada says one of the backstreets, Dobu Ita Dōri Street, will be filled with neon lights, American sailors, and prostitutes and other Japanese girls. During the Asia-Pacific War, the Yokosukans similarly worked for the Japanese naval base, whose facilities the U.S. occupied intact and uses even today. From March 1940 on, thousands of abducted Koreans were introduced to Yokosuka in order to construct the Japanese navy’s underground headquarters, airplane sheds, and other structures. Some of these Korean forced laborers were then dispatched to the “South,” that is, Palau, Iwo Jima, the Ogasawara Islands, and others, to construct naval facilities there. As of August 15th 1945, there were 1,700

69 Facing the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, Japan introduced the Iraq Special Measures Law in July 2003. The law enabled Japan to contribute to the U.S. military in broader dimensions than before. For instance, following the law, Japan dispatched its Self Defense Forces’ advance team to Iraq in December 2003. In the same month, some army personnel were similarly dispatched for the “humanitarian supports” of the Samawah residents. In June 2007, Air Force units were also sent to transport some clandestine matters from Kuwait to Baghdad. Arguing that these acts violated the Article 9 of Japan’s Constitution, about 5,600 citizens and 100 attorneys brought the issue to the court and gained a favorable ruling in the Nagoya District Court on 4/17/2008. The state did not appeal and withdrew the forces in December of the same year. See the plaintiff’s homepage, Jieitai Iraq Hahei Sashi-tome Shoshō no Kai at http://www.haheisashidome.jp/.

70 Many have studied gender-related dynamics and sexually-motivated crimes around the U.S. bases throughout the world—see, for instance, Cynthia Enloe, Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics (London: Pandora, 1989). The oeuvre of a Japanese novelist, Ryū Murakami, shows the process through which the violently masculine consciousness emerges among the host country males, starting from their sense of being penetrated by the U.S. soldiers—see Murakami’s first novel, Kagiri-naku Tōmei ni Chikai Blue (Tokyo: Kōdan Sha, 1976).
Korean forced laborers left in Yokosuka. For various reasons, many of them decided to stay in postwar Yokosuka; constructing their own primary school (Chōsen shokyū gakkō in Japanese), these Korean survivors worked for a Toyota’s affiliate, Kantō automobile factory, until it shut down “recently” due to the recession, according to Harada. Now, Harada estimates there are 1,000 resident Koreans in the city, extremely antagonized and impoverished after the anti-North Korean policies of the former prime ministers, Junichirō Koizumi (2001-6) and Shinzō Abe (2006-7 and 2012-). So, Yokosuka has a long history of economic reliance on the base, whether American or Japanese—they literally live with the reminders of their violent past and prospects of more violence to be exercised. Nishikiori insists, “nobody, especially no Japanese, should be blinded by their economic interests to kill other citizens in a war.” According to her, it is because “we [the Japanese] were invaders ourselves. When we are in the position to pay back [the moral debt that the Japanese incurred during the war], why would you even accumulate the debt even more [by indirectly contributing to another war]? It doesn’t sound right to me.” Although she generally seems to take more emotional distance from the Asia-Pacific War as compared to the previous generations, the introduction of the moral logic of exchange seems to enable her to engage herself. Perhaps it is because the logic turns her into an agent, the agent of repayment. Even though she is distanced from the actual event of the Asia-Pacific War by a generation, she becomes interested as soon as she thinks herself as a descendant of what she calls the “Japanese”

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71 The statistics are taken from my interview of Harada as well as Chōsen-jin Kyōsei Renkō Shinsō Chōsa Dan, Chōsen-jin Kyōsei Renkō Chōsa no Kiroku, Kantō Hen 1: Kanagawa, Chiba, Yamanashi (Tokyo: Kashiwa Shobō, 2002). Harada, a high school teacher by occupation, is the secretary general of Kanagawa Prefectural Team to Investigate into the Truths of Forced Mobilization of Koreans (Kanagawa Ken Chōsen-jin Kyōsei Renkō Shinsō Chōsa Dan, since 1991). Ko’izumi and Abé politically thematized North Korean abduction (rachi) of Japanese civilians, causing the formation of an emotionally-charged, nation-wide movement not only against the criminality of the North Korean state but also against the North Koreans in general and their residents in Japan. The counter-strategies taken by Japanese leftists were to point out the similar criminality of the prewar state of Japan, which had forcefully mobilized more than 10,000 Koreans for variously back-breaking kinds of labor in the Japanese Islands and elsewhere. Many Korean individual experiences of their departures from their natal villages can indeed be described as the Japanese state’s abduction of these innocent lives. See Kyungsik Pak, Chōsen-jin Kyōsei Renkō no Kiroku (Tokyo: Mirai Sha, 1990(1965)). Some of those Koreans who were sent to the south from Yokosuka were killed in battles—as I will mention later, their remains are still missing.
(nihonjin), the temporally stretched collectivity that she thus sets up at least for the purpose of moral exchange with Japan’s victims.

Note here that the moral strategies that Nishikiori takes differ from those that the earlier generations have taken. In contrast to Kubodera, for instance, who seems to struggle to repay the actual victims that he murdered and damaged, Nishikiori suggests that she intends to repay the Iraqis and Afghans in the current wars. The debt was made in older Japanese’s relation to other Asians and Pacific Islanders; yet her suggestion is that her current civil activism to save the Iraqis’ or Afghans’ innocent lives will make a repayment to the long-killed victims in the rest of Asia and the Pacific. At least, the Japanese would not have to accumulate more debts by desisting from their contribution to the Iraq and Afghan Wars, according to her. A more or less similar logic has to be taken by anybody in the second generation, as it seems, even when they engage in civil movements for the Asian and Pacific victims of the WWII Japanese invasions. Even though Harada, who is in Nishikiori’s cohort, did not personally contribute to the institution of the forced Korean labor, he says he has to “correct the [past] wrongs” that were not corrected by the actual perpetrators, the prewar Japanese state and their agents, viz. older Japanese. A similar thing must be true to Uchida in his activism for other Asians’ justice. Their activism is moral-ethical acts, whose motivations were created even before they came of age. In these imagined moral exchanges, they are media, vessels that convey unfulfilled pasts into reconciliatory futures. These conveyances might need the media, to the degree that the past and future never coincide—humans are not meant for resurrection or restoration.72 The younger peace-families’ activism grows to be general and far-reaching, due to this type of displacement

72 According to Marshall Sahlin, in the moral exchange of gifts among Maoris, “a direct return on the initial gift is excluded. In each instance [of gift-transmission], reciprocation passes by way of a third party. This mediation in every case brings issue to the original gift: by the transfer from the second party to the third, some value or effect is added to the thing given by the first party to the second. And one way or another, the first recipient (middle term) is menaced by destruction (mate) if the cycle is not completed.” See “The Spirit of the Gift,” Stone Age Economics (New York: Aldine Publishing Company), pp.149-183; pp.164-5; parentheses original.
between the past and future, between the motivation and acts, and between the agent of an event and the subject of the event’s responsibility. The younger families act as the conduit not only between these discrepancies; as the third party between these parties, the younger families introduce other events and other thoughts into these families’ movement. These other events and thoughts are not directly related to the perpetrators’ testimonies or the perpetrators’ families’ movements, yet associatively pertinent, like Nishikiori’s peace activism. Imaginative association seems to be the younger generations’ intellectual and pragmatic tool. The tool allows them to exchange the apologetic attitude and language that they inherited from the older generations with those similarly conscientious attitudes and languages developed in other civil movements.

Through this process, the initial dialogism of Kubodera, Nishikawa, and others become trilogism and eventually multi-partied conversation. The language of more or less personal apology will subsequently become that of translation. The general language and multi-partied conversation seem to be the outcomes that the younger families seek, when some of their slogans are “cohabitation with [the rest of] Asia” (Asia to no kyōsei) and “future-oriented relationships” (mirai shikō no kankei) with others. Indeed, Nishikiori’s language is meant to be transmitted beyond Asia to the Middle East—to the warless future.

These general goals and slogans can become fathomable only among the second or third generations, who think they are and should be distanced from the first generation’s immediate

73 Here, the source of my inspiration is Walter Benjamin, who says “Although translation, unlike art, cannot claim permanence for its products, its goal is undeniably a final, conclusive, decisive stage of all linguistic creation. In translation the original rises into a higher and purer linguistic air, as it were. It cannot live there permanently, to be sure, and it certainly does not reach it in its entirety. Yet, in a singularly impressive manner, at least it points the way to this region: the predestined, hitherto inaccessible realm of reconciliation and fulfillment of languages.” See his “The Task of the Translator: An Introduction to the Translation of Baudelaire’s Tableaux” in ed. and with an intro. by Hannah Arendt, trans. by Harry Zohn, Illuminations: Essays and Reflections (New York: Schocken Books, 1968(1923)), pp.69-82; p.75. The “predestined, hitherto inaccessible realm of reconciliation and fulfillment of languages” refers to memories of the future utopia to come, in which the pre-Babylonian unity of languages will be embodied in what he calls “pure language.” The idea of the ultimate language of translation, the pure language, is comparable with Marx’s concept of the “universal commodity,” according to Rosalind Morris, in that both guarantee the fundamental exchangeability of languages or commodities, thus enabling everyday exchanges of these things. See Morris, Ibid.; p.46.
needs for specific apologies. In the country’s discursive field, this thinking is known under the rubric of “postwar responsibility” (sengo sekinin), which is supposed to be contrasted with the actual perpetrators’ accountability (zaiseki). According to Hiroshi Taguchi, the postwar responsibility of the Japanese is the concept that focuses on the postwar Japanese “consciousness of [their] responsibility for the present and future, which should be based on [their] reflection [on the past].” He argues that the concept of postwar responsibility consists of three relevant ideas—first, that the war and the wrongs committed in the war were “done by others,” that is, by the past Japanese, who Taguchi thinks differ from the present Japanese. Second, the current Japanese still cannot help but “earnestly look at each individual victim’s ‘tiny’ existence, whose precious life and welfare were irreparably deprived” by the past Japanese. Third, those “various conditions (jōken) that enabled the [Japanese] invasions” still condition the contemporary Japanese society.” He says, “it is possible for the postwar generations to ‘reflect’ (hansei-suru), if [they] think that those individual atrocities or discriminations that were committed and exhibited in the ‘past’ war of invasions were unjust and if [they] judge that they and their society contain the potentiality of doing—or have been repeating—similar conducts [to those taken by the past Japanese]. Under these circumstances, reflections are possible, even though these mistakes [in the past] were done by others.” In this understanding, the subject of the atrocities is not inherited; the atrocities’ conditions are inherited, albeit unintentionally. Taguchi suggests that the postwar Japanese responsibility concerns itself with the future, with the creation of a

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75 Taguchi, Ibid.; 43.
76 Taguchi, Ibid.; 47.
77 Taguchi, Ibid.; 40.
78 Taguchi, Ibid.; 43.
society that does not contain the potentiality for another example of atrocity, another instance of discrimination.

One of the earlier thinkers about postwar responsibility, Yasuaki Ōnuma, says more specifically that what he calls the trans-war “foundation” (kiban) of Japanese society, based on which the atrocities were committed, has been maintained and still incessantly renewed in the postwar Japanese everyday unconsciousness of ethno-centrism. According to him, “when [people] try to form a thought on [the postwar Japanese] responsibility for the war and on the war’s position in Japanese history, the war tends to be treated as an independent phenomenon, as an abnormal event that is separated from the history of everyday human lives. Perhaps one of the important tasks for the theories of postwar responsibility is how to think through the war’s abnormality… and turn it into general thoughts on everyday lives.”

Concretely, the “everyday lives” (nichijō-sei) under discussion refer to the trans-war structure of the Japanese society, in which “each individual Japanese in his/her everyday life stands in the discriminator’s or oppressor’s position toward the Koreans or Chinese and violates these people’s humanity.”

This structure of everyday discrimination (sabetsu) and oppression (yokuatsu) is deep-rooted in Japan’s modernization, in which Ōnuma suggests modernity has been misconstrued as Euro-American cultures. It is this misconception that allowed the prewar Japanese to slaughter other Asians and Pacific Islanders remorselessly, since these people were supposed to be someone else than modern humans, according to his suggestion. Insofar as this misconception is still held among contemporary Japanese, they are responsible for resolving it; and this constitutes their

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80 Ōnuma, Ibid.; p.118.
81 Ōnuma, Ibid.; p.183.
responsibility for other Asian and Pacific victims of the war. \(^{82}\) Postwar Japanese responsibility for the war, he states,

> would not be truly fulfilled by [the Japanese] apologies for the irrevocable past or by [their] monetary compensations as substitutes [for apologies]. The responsibility would be fulfilled only after the foundation on which the war was started is dissolved. [I] have to say that it is the responsibility of the whole postwar Japanese that this foundation still exists even to this date… To the extent that the Japanese society still keeps the foundation on which the Fifteen Year War was started, the Japanese today in their everyday lives share the experiences of the Fifteen Year War [as discriminators and oppressors of other Asian and Pacific people]. \(^{83}\)

The postwar responsibility of the Japanese is the accumulated “non-actions of each individual [Japanese],” i.e. the absence of the accumulated efforts to correct their ethno-centrism and the ethno-centric society, Ōnuma similarly says. \(^{84}\) Note that responsibility, foundation, or everyday life, as he discusses, are at once historical and ahistorical concepts. They are historical in the sense that he problematizes the historically specific consciousness of modernity among the Japanese, which he suggests has been intimately connected with the categories of the “west,” “Asia,” “race,” “culture,” etc. \(^{85}\) The historicity of this view will be clear, when compared with the argument that attributes the Japanese atrocities to the supposedly cultural existence of the emperor (see previous chapters). At the same time, Ōnuma’s idea of the postwar Japanese responsibility looks ahistorical from the perspective that tries to look at the commodity structure of Japan’s fascism. Ōnuma’s problematization of Japan’s ethno-racial conflation between modernity and the west or between non-modernity and the rest of Asia will surely help him theoretically extract the structures of what he calls discrimination and oppression. But fascism,

\(^{82}\) Ōnuma, Ibid.; p.183.
\(^{83}\) Ōnuma, Ibid.; p.186.
\(^{84}\) Ōnuma, Ibid.; p.188.
\(^{85}\) He refers to Yoshimi Takeuchi and says that he agrees with Takeuchi in that “in [Takeuchi’s] Kindai no Chōkoku, [Takeuchi] shows his view that the war should be divided into two dimensions—the war that Japan fought with the U.S., Britain, and other imperial forces and the war in which Japan invaded [other] Asian countries—and that [Japan] is responsible for the latter only” (Ibid., p.167).
which I would think is responsible for Japan’s violence against the rest of Asia and the Pacific, would be out of his theoretical reach, unless he thematizes the commodity logic behind the violence. The argument that I have made throughout this dissertation is that Japan’s violence is historically specific to the mechanical reproductive mode of production that was achieved in Japan and the rest of the world during the 1920s and continued ever since. Without this historicist view, Ōnuma’s criticism of racial-ethnic discrimination looks to replicate the essentialist problem that is attached to the categories of race and ethnicity.

In spite of these points, Ōnuma or Taguchi’s idea of the postwar Japanese responsibility seems to prevail among progressive thinkers on prewar Japanese violence and its aftermath. A variation could be found in Kōjin Karatani and others, who argue that the trans-war foundation that caused the Japanese invasions is statist systematization of the society, most vividly represented and promoted by the “all-out” war policies among others. Tetsuya Takahashi presents a slightly different thought from others, stressing postwar Japanese accountability versus responsibility. According to him, postwar Japanese responsibility should fundamentally be “response-ility” (ōtō kanōsei), that is, the ethical ability and potentiality to respond to the other victims’ voices—a position that is similar to Yasuhiko Uchida’s or Akihiro Harada’s activistisms. This focus on the ethical aspect of postwar Japanese response-ility seem to enable these leftists to reflect on the issue of the Japanese’s still on-going accountability. Even though the individual bodies of the postwar Japanese may not be those that actually committed the war-crimes, “politically, the Japanese ‘qua Japanese’ should be [still] accountable” for these crimes, Takahashi argues. According to him, the “Japanese” (nihonjin) here are the concept that is

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88 Takahashi, Ibid.; p.52.
close to Japanese citizens (*shimin*), who hold the “political right to pressure the Japanese government to formally admit its accountability [and compensate for the victims’ losses].”\(^{89}\) The postwar Japanese accountability to Takahashi is this right, which emerges in their represented relation with the Japanese state. The argument is meaningful in the historical context in which the Japanese state has never admitted its involvement in the Japanese war-crimes, except for the admission by Yōhei Kōno and a few other ethical representatives. I have also discussed that the Japanese state has never paid compensations to other victims.

As for the Kanagawa peace families association, Yasuhiko Uchida emphasizes the association’s moral “expansion of its agenda should not allow us to lose sight of our roots,” the ethical roots in their self-consciousness as the invaders’ families. In their “Agenda 2007,” they declare that they will “cooperate with support-organizations of those [other Asian] victims’ lawsuits [against the Japanese state and corporations], which demand the [Japanese] state’s sincere apologies and compensations for the losses and damages that [the Japanese state and corporations] inflicted [on these victims].” To take an example, the above-mentioned support-group for South Korean draftees, represented by a former anti-Vietnam War activist, Kōji Mison’o, is one of those organizations with which the Kanagawa families has cooperated. On June 29th 2001, 252 South Koreans, including former draftees, forced laborers, and their families, started a suit against the Japanese state to take back the fallen South Koreans’ remains and their salaries. According to Mison’o, “there’re double, triple firewalls for the [Japanese] state not to return [either the remains or salaries].” During the war, the state effectively abducted some of these draftees and laborers; most of them were listed, if they were, in their forcefully assigned “Japanese” names (*sōshifai*). War-time confusions similarly seem to contribute to the difficulty, which the Japanese state says it has in recovering lost records—for instance, some of

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\(^{89}\) Takahashi, Ibid.; p.56.
the forced Korean laborers taken to Yokosuka were then shipped to the South, as I have mentioned, making it hard to trace each individual laborer’s fate. “In the court room,” Misono’o lets me know, “they [the Japanese state] say they can’t return those things that they can’t locate. They say non-locatable things don’t exist legally; they have no legal obligation to return legally non-existent things, according to them.” To beat this logic, the South Koreans have “only humanitarian principles, the principle of justice,” Misono’o says. Out of the 252 plaintiffs, the first generation is dying; even over the year of 2005, he witnessed about 10 elder plaintiffs became unable to travel to Japan any longer. I do not recall how many times he says “time is getting short” during the two-hour interview in a chain coffeehouse, Renoir, near the Japan Railroad Nippori station, a walking distance from his employer, Arakawa Ward Office. Since local-level state-offices tend to strictly follow the legal principle of equal employment opportunity, many leftist activists are employed by them if not by private corporations, which try to avoid their activist experiences and critical thoughts. Sipping a characteristically small cup of Renoir coffee, I start wondering if time is getting short for the plaintiffs to achieve their justice in their lifetime or for the supporting Japanese to repay their moral debts directly to the actual victims.

As Yasuaki Ōnuma points out, the original injustice that the Japanese caused during the war, though, is probably not a one-time event but part of a sedimented structure, sedimented in the trans-national temporality of mechanical reproduction. Injustice seems to be constantly done to the most vulnerable kinds of labor force in any given time, placed in the clefts between domestic laws and international desires. In 1985, when Ōnuma wrote his book, the Japanese economy was expanding overseas, outsourcing factories and importing a labor force. Memories of Japan’s having continuously profited from the Korean War (1950-3) and Vietnam War are
still fresh, with the bitter after-tastes of having exploited Japan’s former colonies and occupied territories once again. After Japan’s “bubble” economy blew up in 1990, it might be somewhat nonsensical to entertain such an idea as Japanese discrimination or oppression of other Asians, as Ōnuma does. As Japan has steadily sunk into a deep quagmire of recessions, other Asian and Pacific countries, particularly South Korea and China, seem to be asserting their economic and political prowess. However, even in 2007, the wake of postwar Japan’s economic exploitation of the rest of Asia is still observable, at least in my eyes—rather, the wake manifests itself as odors in places like Kotobuki Town, Yokohama, a known town among day-contractors.

Today, Kubodera’s testimony is held in Kotobuki’s Kanagawa Labor Plaza. In one of the vinyl sofas in the hallway after the testimony, Nishikiori starts nibbling on the boiled eggs that she cooked with a kitchen timer so that they are perfectly coddled. Tetsushirō Yoshida, a bereaved son, finds and joins us, unsuccessfully convincing Nishikiori to trade one of her eggs with the convenience-store bought rice-balls that he brought with him. Having comfortably retired from one of the major trading companies, Yoshida spends days participating in various peace meetings. The classy Katsuko Tsuhako, an Okinawan who lost her father in the war, smilingly listens to their teases. Before she developed a heart problem, Tsuhako used to be one of the most eager representatives of the Kanagawa association of all. Yasuhiko Uchida approaches us with his usual, quiet smiles, asking how we liked Kubodera’s testimony today. Yoshida, the always-articulate leader of the families’ discussions, of course responds first—“I thought it was great. More than anything, I admire his courage.” Everybody guesses how much effort he had to make in order to “come out” from the more than sixty years of public silence. “Particularly in this kind of period,” Uchida points out, mentioning current neonationalism, in which the pop-culturally represented soldiers of Japan are always righteous—war-crimes like
Kubodera’s might look to be “lies” forged by the “brain-washing” Chinese.\(^9^0\) As we criticize such recent buzzwords as “pride,” “public-mindedness” (kōkyō shin), or “patriotism” (aikoku shin), unemployed laborers wander around outside the windows. We also discuss the violent slogan of one of the media-created “representatives” of neoliberal poverty, Karin Amamiya, “let us live!” (ikisasero). According to her, in these days the poor say they “hope something like war could happen” so that “they could be honored and paid [as soldiers] or they could restart [their lives in the social chaos created by a war].”\(^9^1\) A former singer in a rightwing punk-band, Amamiya, and the hitherto liberal Asahi Shinbun newspaper, which seems to be oddly willing to give her self-representational spaces, might seem to encourage an aesthetic simplicity of the logic that poverty leads to a war—as if these actors were expressing their hopes for a war in the stifling air of neoliberal distress. But of course the Kotobuki laborers’ unemployment and war should be connected through international mazes of injustice and inter-generational complication of memories.

In muddy tank tops and paint-stained cargo pants, those middle-aged to elder males who pass outside the windows look characteristically spacy—perhaps they are already (or still) drunk. Yoshida casually proposes we go out to look, saying “C’mon, it’ll be educating.” Neither Uchida, Tsuhako, nor I have ever had a chance to explore the supposedly off-limit Kotobuki Chō. “Ah—well, I guess I’ll go then,” I say. “Did I tell you I loved your being so curious and active (footwork ga karui)!” Nishikiori almost embraces me. As it turns out, there is a convenience


store near the Labor Plaza, where these day-laborers (hiyatoi) buy 200 milliliter cups of sake (cup zake) and variously sized beers—sake for 200 yen and the smallest Sapporo or Asahi (200 ml) for 350 yen. On the ground next to the convenience store, a stocky guy is in the middle of his nap, casually stretching his limbs in all directions and faintly smiling as if he were sleeping the king’s sleep. Hidetoshi Watanabe, a pastor and activist for these laborers, had once told me that the aging Japanese male laborers who gathered here struggled in the post-bubble economy. According to him, these laborers are unable to pay even the 2,200 yen (about 20 dollars) a day for a bed—outside Kotobuki, a room in a functional business-hotel would cost more than five times. The so-called “casual inns” (kan’i shukuhaku-jo) around here, which are a sort of dormitory equipped with bunk beds, seem to feature unusually low ceilings, as long as I can see from outside—perhaps to save the space. These inns emit strong odors of human flesh throughout the street; the inns apparently use chlorine, but the chemical seems to accentuate instead of erase the odors. According to Watanabe, during the boom, approximately 1,200 South Korean men came and supplemented the Japanese laborers here. These were former construction workers for the 1989 Seoul Olympics, who were unemployed after the Olympics were over. Philippines came after these South Koreans—then Japanese Brazilians, Pakistanis, and Bangladeshis. As of 2006, all but just more than 100 of them left, due to the recession and the post 9/11 “anti-terrorist” state of Japan, which has been willing to round up different-looking laborers on the street. Providing physical labor to Japan’s manufacturing industries now are mainly Chinese “interns,” whose ambiguous status is exploited so much so that their wages are reported to be only a few dollars per hour in one of the most notorious cases of all.92

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92 Some of the worst examples of these “interns” of all will be those six female Vietnamese, who worked for an apparel factory in Ibaraki Prefecture. According to their witness, the factory never let them have an access to the portion of their earning, which was supposedly “saved for them.” Subtracted this portion, the actual wage of these
As the peace families and I come back to the entrance to the Labor Plaza, women who might be "hostesses" pass us. Hostesses, as they are so called, are female workers in night clubs and bars, who charge their male clients expensive “service charges” for their company. In the broad daylight, apparently in their off-time, the young females look rather vulnerable. Donning colorful, revealing T-shirts and black leggings, they swing the plastic bags from their shopping at the convenience store. Their Korean conversation momentarily stops as they get busy observing us, apparent intruders from uptown. We are also seen as Japanese intruders, I gather, who are regarded to belong to the community that has sexualized and capitalized on them—as war-time sex-slaves, “kisaeng” prostitutes for the postwar Japanese sex-tourism, and hostesses, as we see them in Kotobuki now. In the back-road of nearby Hinode Chō, I have seen a lot of small hostess clubs and brothels, which I hear hire Philippine, Taiwanese, in addition to Korean females. Those who feature them are known among not-so-well-off Japanese males as “Philippine pubs” or “Taiwan pubs.”

93 See an ethnography by Anne Allison, Nightwork: Sexuality, Pleasure and Corporate Masculinity in a Tokyo Hostess Club (University of Chicago Press, 1994). Although she argues that hostess clubs concern themselves with sexuality and not sex, this argument might depend on the ethnicity and class of the hostesses and clients that one is talking about. In a movie, Tsuki wa Docchi ni Dete-iru, dir. by Yōichi Sai, (Tokyo: Ciné Canon, 1993), for instance, it is implied that in a tacky Kabukichō club, the heroine, Connie, and her colleagues from the Philippines might engage in prostitution upon the request from the not-so-affluent Japanese or resident Korean clients and from the resident Korean mistress of the club.

94 The post-1960s South Korean prostitutes were sold in the nostalgic image of kisaeng, courtly entertainers. According to Namhee Lee (Ibid.; p.36; note 67), the number of these prostitutes amounted to 200,000 in 27 brothels in South Korea as of 1973. The customers were mainly Japanese males, who accounted for 80% of the country’s tourism in 1973, revenue-wise. Upon the above-mentioned statement that the imperial Japanese military “needed” sex slaves, made by the then Osakan mayor, Tōru Hashimoto, Hashimoto’s colleague in the same Japan Restoration Party (Nippon Ishin no Kai) and a congressman, Shingo Nishimura, blogged, “it’s as if Korea was exporting comfort women (ianfu). You’ll know what I’m talking about once you walk down the street of Tokyo or Osaka downtown during the night. Even the Korea that became rich is exporting comfort women. I wonder how many they exported when it was poor.” It is in political insensitivity and historical anachronism that Nishimura calls the Korean prostitutes on the contemporary “street of Tokyo or Osaka downtown” “comfort women.” Despite many criticisms, he remains in his office as of June 2013. See Fumihiko Hori and Yukiko Hayashi, “Nishimura Shūin Giin: Netto ni ‘Kankoku, Ianfu Yushutsu’: Hashimoto-shi Hatsugen ‘Tōzen’ to Yōgo,” Mainichi Shinbun, 5/18/2013. 

seamstresses was only about three hundred yen (three U.S. dollars) an hour. See “Gaikoku-jin Ukeire Minaoshi-ron Kōsaku” in Asahi Shinbun, 5/16/2007.
Of course, these men and women are not just victims of Japanese ethno-centrism and sexism. One can say that they came to Japan to agentically take advantage of the ecumenical flow of capital and labor-force. At the same time, the “racial” and gender discriminations that they are facing in Japan are real. Ōnuma and other thinkers of postwar Japanese responsibility would say that these are the kinds of discrimination that keep conditioning the Japanese for another instances of invasions and atrocities. I ask, “If racism and sexism are resolved, then would the condition of fascism be resolved? Is fascism the same thing with racism or sexism? What caused the Japanese invasions and atrocities?” According to my position, racism or sexism is relevant to corporatist, versus fascist, desires, which try to create a hierarchical order in the middle of the massive flows of labor force or commodities (see Chapter 3). Philippine or Korean females are assigned to some of the most exploited jobs in Japan today due to the socio-economic structures that are created by corporatist interests, which profit from differences and distances. Fascism, according to my previous analyses, is a product of another line of desires, desires for equivalence without differences. Fascist desires might have motivated the Japanization of Korean names, to take an example—the Korean alignment to the form of the Japanese subject. Certain ethno-centrism must surely have existed in this motivation, which distinguished Koreans from Japanese. At the same time, I am not sure if ethno-centrism or racism alone could explain the more prominent feature of this instance—the momentum of alignment itself, standardization, commoditization. This view and not the view of racism will have easier time, explaining the massness of the war-crimes committed. In just one campaign by Kubodera’s Division 59, more than 140 Shanxi villagers were slaughtered and more than 100 houses were burnt.


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were sawed down—an act of cruelty in the village whose main source of income was the dates.96

The question is whether the Japanese soldiers committed these atrocities because their victims were Chinese. Would the Japanese have committed similar mass-crimes against, say, the Russians, whom they tend to regard as “westerners”? A Japanese historian, Akira Fujiwara, points out that in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-5) the Japanese humanely treated Russian hostages according to the Geneva Convention.97 But could one compare these two different wars in different historical contexts—one before the mode of mechanical reproduction and the other after the mode’s saturation of the world? A view on racism, sexism, and other corporatist desires for difference is important, which this dissertation has not ignored (see Chapter 3). But, a more important view to understand the war’s atrocities are desires for sameness, proliferation, and the massive scale, in which the atrocities and crimes were carried out. It is a view of this aspect of the war that seems to be lacking in the contemporary Japanese leftist discourses.98

This chapter has attempted to salvage these discourses, though, by focusing on their morality and ethics. The kind of morality in which the leftists seem to have engaged concerns itself with the process of apologetic and compensatory exchange with Japan’s victims. The kind of ethics that the leftists seem to exhibit manifests itself as their orientation toward the ideas of

98 While he does not thematically focus on the mode of mechanical reproduction, Takashi Fujitani acknowledges a watershed in the Japanese state policies concerning race and ethnicity. According to him, after 1937, the state developed biopolitical ideologies of equality and assimilation, which bore tense dialectics between ethnocentric ideologies and its ideological denial. See his “Right to Kill, Right to Make Live: Koreans as Japanese and Japanese as Americans during WWII,” Representations, 99 (Summer 2007): 13-39. He argues that the “anti-racial” ideologies in Japan should be framed in their intertextual relation with those similar policies that were simultaneously developed in the United States. Prasenjit Duara presents another view that the assimilationist policies in Japan were developed after the First World War, together with similar policies pursued by other “postcolonial” nations such as Germany, Italy, the U.S., and Kuomintang China. According to his terminology, these countries’ anti-racist ideologies were parts of what he calls imperial nationalism, versus civic nationalism of Britain or France. Duara maintains that imperial nationalism’s assimilationism opposed the racist exclusionism previously exhibited by civic nationalism. See his Sovereignty and Authenticity: Manchukuo and the East Asian Modern (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003).
justice and responsibility for theses victims. The leftist Japanese may not be able to completely
dissolve, or even consciously notice, the condition and possibility of fascism. Yet these leftists’
everyday efforts for new moral habits and ethical thoughts should be appreciated as such, i.e. in
their everydayness without completion, orientation without destination. The younger activists in
contemporary Japan have inherited moral and ethical thoughts and language from the remorseful
Japanese perpetrators and their families, but these inherited thoughts and language are always
incomplete—and thus becoming. And it is in this transitional, dynamic state that these projects
seem to have secured a concrete space for mourning other losses in the midst of the otherwise
forgetful times of postwar Japan. This chapter has ethnographically analyzed the generational
stretch of such a space, which constitutes another death-space for futures.
Conclusion: Anthropology of Fascism, Fascism of Anthropology

Back in New York City, I am sitting in a café that is chilled to the temperature of a meat locker. The café is crowded with college students. During the summer break though, apparently some students remain in this quarter of the city near a college—or perhaps the young customers in the café are incoming summer students. In tank tops, shorts, and “Longchamp” nylon bags, girls are well sun-tanned, as if they never heard of the danger of UV rays. Turning the brims of their “N.Y. Yankees” caps backward, boys similarly seem to care about carefree appearances—if they try to emulate anything, they emulate the classical body of blithe athletes. A few years after my fieldwork, the impression of Japanese boys and girls still linger in me, their bodies that show off the traces of their efforts to be as thin as humanly possible. Bihaku, or “beauty/whiteness,” is the mantra among the Japanese girls nowadays, somewhat off the “racist” context of the global fashion industry and more in tune with the neonationalist discourse of the domestic environmental industry. In this discourse, to be conscious about the UV rays and other environmental factors is to contribute to the industry, the industry that the Japanese state promotes as one of the saviors of the country’s recessionary economy. The recessionary economy might indeed be the ultimate signified that these thin and pale girls and boys are pointing at—the thinning wealth of the nation and fading spirits of its people. These girls and boys seem to be surely oppressed—under the pretext of the ecologism of downsizing, restaurants nowadays serve half-sized dishes for the same prices as before. The morality of thankfulness for the given context feeds these underfed boys and girls. But are they more oppressed than their protein- or steroid-injected American counterparts, their new focus on the muscular body in the midst of the variously imagined “terrorist” attacks? This middle-aged American male, who is sitting with me over my chapters, thinks so.
“Lord, it’s terrible,” he exclaims with big sighs, as he stops reading them. “‘Women are child-bearing machines’—I mean… Is it true? What do people say in Japan—do they even complain about it? If anybody in his position said anything even remotely close to that in this country, he’d have to quit his job.” He is talking about my description of the controversial remark made by the then head of the Health, Welfare, and Labor Ministry of Japan, Hakuo Yanagisawa. Despite the feminist and leftist objections, Yanagisawa did not take any kind of responsibility for his remark, which imaginatively mechanized female bodies as the sources of the labor force. I say I agree with him that the remark is terrible. Now, his eyes are mellow, even sympathetic in a somewhat condescending way, as he asks, “Is it because of the Japanese tradition that people sort of accepted it [Yanagisawa’s remark]?” That is, I suppose, the Japanese are conditioned by their “tradition” to meekly “accept” even the most controversial remark made by officials. Traditional Japan, democratic U.S.—here you go, I think in my mind, now seeing where our talk is headed. Living in the U.S. society, the destination is pretty familiar to me, the destination that I usually feel too weak or lethargic to reset. Travellers to this destination are often times as earnest and (condescendingly) sympathetic as this man in the café. Sympathetic, since I am a woman from Japan, I guess, the supposed victim of the country’s tradition. Condescending, since the U.S. society is supposed to have already overcome tradition-based oppressions, I also surmise. This man, who is sipping a certain kind of latté to compensate for my brief silence, is not even uneducated—supposedly, he has a social science master’s degree or two. Being at a loss, again, about what to say in front of the power of belief, I entertain in my mind the fresh memory of the then Republican Senate nominee from Missouri, Todd Akin, who has kept campaigning, despite his
pro-life statement on “legitimate rape.”¹ “Let me see my chapter again—didn’t I say there were some opposition movements against him [Yanagisawa]?” I say anyway.

Receiving the hardcopy from him, I ask in my mind if the point is Japanese tradition or its modernity. According to the minister’s trope, Japanese female bodies are machines—their function to digest inputs of energy, programs, and environments and to produce precisely appropriate quantities and qualities of outputs. Why is the kind of oppression that uses the trope of machines considered traditional? In the minister’s ideal, the country should consist of the standardized (“healthy,” according to him) unit of a man, woman, and their two children. This nucleus should then be repeated everywhere in the country to completely populate its territory with the proliferated standard of the nuclear family. The national space will infinitely extend with a calculated supply of the self-reproducing labor force; the national time will also stretch into eternity with the steady provision of the pension-premium-paying offspring. Presenting the futuristic picture of the machine-precise bodies and their quality-controlled multiplication, the minister’s remark should rather be criticized in terms of the specifically fascist, instead of generally modern, problematic. Avarice, envy, obsession, and other excessive factors of capitalist human interactions are carefully excluded from the picture. People who inhabit this picture are formed into the molds of the father, mother, and child, and as such, mechanically functioning for the moralized nation-state. Would this picture be shared by those outside Japan, who would similarly try to delimit females’ sexuality into the form of heterosexual marriage and females’ reproductive rights

¹ According to John Eligon and Michael Schwitz, “Senate Candidate Provokes Ire with ‘Legitimate Rape’ Comments,” The New York Times, 8/19/2012, the Tea Party-backed Akin remarked in a local TV interview that “If it’s a legitimate rape, the female body has ways to try to shut that whole thing down,” that is, to prevent pregnancy. The idea represented by Akin is supposedly well known among anti-abortion activists as the “forcible rape” theory, advocated most prominently by a medical doctor, John C. Willke—see Pam Belluck, “Health Experts Dismiss Assertions on Rape,” The New York Times, 8/20/2012. In the midst of wide-ranged criticisms against the remark, the National Republican Senatorial Committee withdrew its support of Akin—see Jonathan Weisman and John Eligon, “G.O.P. Trying to Oust Akin from Race for Rape Remarks,” The New York Times, 8/20/2012. The democrat candidate, Claire McCaskill, won the senate seat in Missouri.
into the form of nuclear family? Are not these forms ultimately good for capitalist (re)production? This dissertation has argued that fascism is a general problem.

My dissertation has started its endeavor by asking, should one refer to the theoretical category of fascism in discussing the physical violence and political oppressions that were exercised by the prewar Japanese state and its subjects? Is fascism a specifically European phenomenon appearing only during the two World Wars? How could a historicist position that focuses on material conditions of phenomena re-define fascism without resorting to such questionable concepts as “tradition” or “culture”? In an attempt to answer these questions, I have problematized the desires and anxieties of differences that seem to underline the ordinary association of fascism with Nazism or Fascismo only. These desires and anxieties feature the supposedly “different” parties as well, resulting in culturalist self-explanations of those phenomena that otherwise replicate the core features of either Nazism or Fascismo. In Japan, the oppressions and violence of the 1920-40s have been analyzed in terms of the supposed origin and embodiment of the country’s difference, viz. the emperor; the violence has been variously called “imperial absolutism,” “imperial fascism,” or “ultra-statism.” According to these theories, due to its cultural difference and historical delay, Japan has yet to be conditioned for fascism, for its bureaucratic systematicity and retrogressive savagery. Nazism (if not Fascismo) is a retrogressive rupture inserted into the midst of high modernity attained, these theories suppose; Japan’s “imperialism” is the manifestation of the highest possible stage of the country’s historical development. According to these theories, there is no retrogression or detour in the Japanese case. If one follows these theories, the Japanese and European kinds of violence met each other at the intersection where European fascism retrogressively caught up with Japan in the past of Europe, while Japan was trying to catch up with Europe in the future of Japan. In this culturalist imagination, what is truly prominent is nei-
ther the European civilization’s momentum to regress nor the Japanese culture’s specificity to remain different and delayed; the outstanding feature of the imagination is rather the degree of those desires and fears that have constructed the imagination to begin with. Focusing its attention on such desires for and fears of delays and differences, this dissertation has been fundamentally anthropological in its inquiries. My dissertation has attempted to locate the genesis of these desires and fears, which are responsible for the theories of Japan as non-fascist. The genesis that I have presented is modernity—I have argued that modernity generates both the theories and phenomena of fascism.

As for the phenomena of fascism, to argue their modernity is to attempt to see the contemporaneity of the kinds of violence that Europe and Japan experienced in the 1920-40s—cold mechanicity, mechanical repetitiveness, and intense massivity, with which persecution, deprivation, and extermination of different lives were planned and conducted. Both in Europe and Japan, these plans and conducts accompanied the perpetrators’ disinterests in their acts’ political and ethical consequences. The perpetrators were instead interested in their acts’ aesthetic consequences—how their acts could project an image of homogenized, unified, and aligned lives. Inverted temporality characterized both the European and Japanese kinds of violence, in which representation of acts was the end. The actors were embraced by a perverted sense of aristocracy—the sense of their omnipotence, license, and transcendence, with which the actors thought they could realize whatever they planned and represented. The aesthetic replacement of reality and the narcissistic inversion of temporality, both in the European and Japanese instances replicated and accentuated the modern primacy of appearances over their contents. Fascism as a perverted accentuation of modernity was and is a potentiality generally shared by any country or
region—as long as the temporality of these countries or regions has been determined by the modern issue of displacement.

Particularly in the phase of mechanical reproduction, the issues of abstraction and repetition deepened, so that these issues were discussed as the crises to be immediately and completely solved. What seemed to be particularly urgent was the phenomenon of the mass, the reified products of mass-reproductive technologies as well as the producers and consumers of mass-reproduced products. The masses appeared to replicate a given form, heedless of any organic distinctions; their replication seemed to contain a power, the power of dispersion over any boundaries. To the extent that the contemporary world is still conditioned in the mass-reproductive mode of production, fascist promises of an immediate and complete solution of the mass phenomenon are dangerously seductive—even if these promises are not real solutions but appearances of solutions. Perhaps it is we the modern capitalist subjects, who would rather see the cinematic and otherwise represented organization of the mass, as fascists represent it. Fascists are not equipped with the real power to materially change the condition of mechanical reproduction, but this inability might be what the middle-classed subjects of modern capitalism would like.

In an attempt to organize the phenomenon of the mass, fascists project an idealized image of commoditized equality among the mass. This projection effectively spotlights commodity logic, which is ordinarily buried in people’s everyday unconsciousness. Fascism is tautology, rhetorically speaking; its aesthetic quality is uncanniness. Look at how fascists geometrically patterned a monumental space in Nuremberg with the mass-reproduced Nazi Party members. Look at how they populate the equally monumental “shrine” of Yasukuni with standardized “spirits” of Japanese soldiers. These German and Japanese fascists then and now are the literal and sym-

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2 See Leni Riefenstahl, *Triumph of the Will* (Bloomington, Il: Synapse Film, 2001(1935)).
bolic movie-directors who project the deepest secret of the modern capitalist life, the mechanically reproduced self and world. A surrealistico arrest of the Real, fascist representations and fascism as representation command a strange allure, attracting both desires and anxieties of the mass-reproduced and -reproductive subjects.

This dissertation applied the thesis of fascism’s modernity and generality to contemporary Japanese society. The historical specificity of the instance of contemporary Japanese fascism is that it builds on the unsolved legacies of the country’s prewar fascism. The first chapter of the dissertation, entitled “The Emperor’s Infants Now,” has studied the way in which such legacies are inherited and advanced by unconsciously fascist actors. The particular legacies under discussion are the literal remains of the Japanese soldiers of the Asia-Pacific War (1931-1945), which are still widely strewn throughout the former battlefields. The petty bourgeois ideologues that I discussed in this chapter demanded these remains be recovered, according to the principles of democratic equality and equality among the state subjects. By not criticizing the war or modern wars in general, these ideologues unconsciously reveal the way in which prewar fascism and postwar democracy of Japan are continuous in the subjected minds. This chapter has analyzed this continuum by clarifying the structure of the subject, which underlies both the regimes of democracy and fascism. The subject structure in turn is predicated on the structure of the commodity. It is true that the ideologues are consciously making the moral claim of democratic or statist equality between the fallen soldiers and living Japanese. But unconsciously, they are presenting the aesthetic picture of formal equation between the fascist and democratic subjects. Not unlike the above-mentioned picture of Japan filled with childbearing machines, the picture presented by these ideologues represents the idea of equivalence by commodity logic. Theoretically, the uncanny appeal of this picture to the modern capitalist subject lies in the sub-
ject’s unconscious understanding of this equivalence—the unconsciousness that the subject needs in leading the everyday life.

The second chapter, “Theories of Delay: The Petty Bourgeois Formation of Postwar Fascism,” has thematized the category of class, which features the pre- and post-war ideologies and practices of fascism in Japan. Materially delayed in the country’s modern economy due to its strategically impoverished state, the petty bourgeois Japanese have been positioned to find their elective affinities with the fascist ideal of equality. This class of Japanese has also been ideologically “delayed,” made into the nationalized “folk”—the imagined delay that corresponds to the ideology of the delay of the supposedly ancient emperor. This chapter was an ethnographical study of how the petty bourgeois veterans of the Asia-Pacific War were materially and ideologically situated to maintain the ideal of equality among the Japanese emperor’s “infants” (sekishi). Introducing the Freudian theory of melancholia, I have argued that these veterans’ ideological maintenance is closely related to the veterans’ inability to mourn the other losses that Japan’s fascism caused. During the war, it was the ideology of the emperor’s infants which killed Japanese and other communists, feminists, and dissidents who were regarded as not fitting the idea. What is more, the lives of 20 million other Asians and Pacific Islanders were claimed under the same rubric of equality, equality among the infants, equality in death. To the petty bourgeois Japanese after the war, the memories of other victims have presented another chance of fascism. I have used the term, “second fascism,” to explain this new chance, the chance for aesthetically organizing these memories of others into a fantasy of the self.

The Yasukuni Shinto Shrine in Tokyo, where these veterans gather together, constitutes what I have called the “death space” in contemporary Japan. This is a catacomb underneath corporate Japan, where the fascist past of the country and fascism’s underlying logic of the com-
modity have grotesquely been exhibited throughout the postwar days. The dark space of death should be contrasted with the rest of the country, where peace and prosperity have been earned in exchange for the memories of these pasts and past ideals. Chapter 3, “Incorporating the Everyday: Or, the Corporatist Representation of War Machines,” has focused on the way in which the ordinary, bourgeois Japanese traded their wartime libido toward fascist ideologies with their postwar enthusiasm for economic activities. Ethnographically studying the suburban everyday, my third chapter has showed that the intensified division of gendered labor in postwar Japan has fueled the economic mania, motivating the conservative minds in the suburbs to problematize such a mania. It is not that the suburban conservatives are against the gendered difference per se. These bourgeois conservatives problematize the way in which the gendered division of labor is accomplished through unconscious acts of the everyday in mechanically compelled ways. The conservatives try to tame this compulsion by moralizing the gendered division. For this purpose, the conservatives rehabilitate the prewar ideology of the “emperor’s body” or kokutai. Mobilizing the ideology’s language of the bodily, the organic, and the sacred, the conservatives attempt to discursively hierarchize the newly gendered masses of postwar Japan. Corporatist in its orientation toward the idea of an organic hierarchy, the recycled ideology of the emperor’s body differentiates itself from the remnant ideology of the emperor’s infants. In contrast to the petty bourgeois ideology of the emperor’s infants, which aims at equality under the emperor, bourgeois corporatism aims at hierarchy under the same emperor. This chapter has demonstrated that Japan’s postwar fascism has developed in its dialectic with neo-corporatism. Together, these two projects’ agents, the petty bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie, have struggled to resolve the renewed issue of the mass and also to repress the voices of other victims of Japan’s fascism.
The fourth chapter of this dissertation, “Internet Fascism and Resurgence of the Grassroots,” shed light on fascism’s media. One of the contradictions of fascism is its accentuation of commodity logic in an effort to solve the manifestation of the intensified logic of the commodity, i.e. the mass phenomenon. In order to bind the distracted and dispersing mass, fascists project an idealized image of commoditized equivalence. Translated as equality, the image of equivalence intrigues the mass, yet the image merely reiterates the condition of the mutually identical and atomized mass. Media among the mass become an important issue to fascists, in order for them to solve the problem of the mass dispersion. The emperor, *führer*, and other figures of the leader are examples of such media. In 2006, visitors of the Yasukuni Shrine emphasize the mass media of the Internet and cell phones, in addition to the emperor. Earlier than the currently observable Internet movement of participatory democracy, which has been promoted since the Fukushima earthquake of 2011, those Internet users who gathered in the shrine in 2006 represented themselves as the “grassroots” (*sōmō*). The loaded term, the grassroots, showed these masses’ desires for equality under the symbol of the emperor. At the same time, the interactive technology of the Internet allowed the masses to imagine their mutual connectivity without any leader. In the impoverishing context of neoliberalism, the masses’ desires for participation and equality made a sharp contrast to the previously dominant tendencies toward centralization and hierarchy, exemplified through TV. This chapter has provided a certain history of mass media, in which I have argued that TV was a corporatist tool among the bourgeoisie. The temporality of simultaneity that the Internet promises is currently replacing the spatiality of stillness that TV has constructed. I have analyzed this transformation in terms of these medias’ affinity with fascism.

Chapter 5 is entitled “Disruptions: Other Voices and Mournful Responses.” This chapter has introduced critical movements staged by those Japanese activists who struggle to mourn oth-
er losses in other Asian and Pacific countries, those losses that Japan’s fascism caused and has left uncompensated. To these peace activists, to mourn other losses means to look at the effects of the fascist ideal of equality; and to look at these horrendous effects is to cut the loop of fascist formation in trans-war Japan. More than sixty years since the end of the war, the labor of mourning is a project transmitted over several generations. The first generation’s efforts are those of the perpetrator, starting from the attempts just to address their victims. Situating these former war criminals’ apologies in the modern capitalist everyday, I have abstracted two significant momentums in their apologies, viz. the ethical and moral ones. Pragmatically defined as consideration of others and considered exchanges with others respectively, the ethical and moral momentums of these apologies are then inherited by the second and third generation Japanese. Although these younger Japanese insist that they are not accountable for the actual violence of Japan’s fascism, they try to continue to consider other victims ethically and morally anyway. For, according to the younger Japanese, they are responsible for resolving the everyday contexts of fascist potentialities in contemporary Japan. According to my diagnosis, fascist potentialities and their roots in commodity logic are not something that could be resolved; these activists believe otherwise, since their historical materialism decides that wartime Japanese violence was caused by modern “racist discrimination.” Perhaps this decision of theirs exhibits the degree to which they are saturated with the logic of the commodity, which belongs to the realm of the everyday unconscious. No one (including myself) can step outside to see, which is what I have meant by the generality of fascism. However, this chapter has called these younger participants’ partial and incomplete attempts moral and ethical, appreciating these attempts as the first step toward non-fascistic futures.
This dissertation therefore submits the anthropological thesis that fascism is a general phenomenon among the modern capitalist nations, particularly in the mode of mechanical reproduction. The question that is to be asked next will be, “how can we conceive of the fascism of anthropology?” There are two prospective avenues toward the answer to this question, which have been partially explored. One problematizes the way in which the disciplines of anthropology and ethnology in Japan (both minzokugaku in Japanese) cooperated with the fascist state prior to and during the war. According to these studies, these disciplines were instrumental, particularly in ideologically defining the “race” (jinshu), “people” (minzoku), or “culture” (bunka) of Japan and other Asian and Pacific countries. After these categorizations, the disciplines are known to have worked for the “all-out” war state in the latter’s endeavor to “equalize” other Asians and Pacific Islanders as the same labor force as the Japanese.

Another avenue that future studies regarding the fascism of anthropology could explore is to reconsider “Japan” as it is anthropologically represented for the “western” audience. In classical anthropological texts, the country has been the champion of mimesis, a garbled, fun house caricature of western practices. According to these texts, Japan embodies either “alternative” modernity with a “cultured” inflection or a modern culture that lacks the western type’s rationality. Japan has adopted modern technologies, yet the Japanese minds are not fully modern, they say. The narrated contrast between Japan’s modern appearance and its non-modern spirit is supposed to feature other “non-western” countries as well, according to these texts. Japan merely

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represents the contrast in the sharpest possible way, they maintain. The question that future research on the fascism of anthropology should ask is, what is the essence or content of modernity, which Japan and the rest of the ‘non-west’ are said to have failed to adopt? Can one think that Japan in these texts is made to mimic the true being of modernity, which is technologies and appearances themselves and nothing more or deeper? Is not Japan textually made to uncannily exhibit modernity’s secret existence as appearances? Are the authors of these texts trapped by the allure of uncanny Japan that they have (probably) unconsciously generated? Of course the uncanny structure of the inside-outside reversal and entrapment in the allure of such a structure alone would not deserve the label of fascism. What I would like to suggest is different—fascism’s ubiquity, or rather the ubiquity of the condition on which fascism is predicated. Fascism and anthropology share the same condition of commodity logic, the everyday unconsciousness of which has been the thesis of this dissertation.
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