



# Tosaka Jun: A Critical Reader

EDITED BY

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Tosaka Jun





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AND ROBERT STOLZ



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# Preface

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Tosaka Jun (1900–1945) was one of the boldest, most creative theoreticians to come out of modern Japan. His critique of Japanism, *The Japanese Ideology* (*Nippon ideorogiron*, 1935), remains one of the most original theorizations of fascism ever written, certainly in the case of modern Japan. Yet despite this significant work, Tosaka has been almost completely ignored in Japanese studies and philosophy in the West. To date, the few pieces that have appeared in translation pigeonhole Tosaka as a minor materialist corrective to some of the more religious and idealist aspects of the Kyoto School of Japanese philosophy.<sup>1</sup> In direct contrast to this approach, the essays and translations here demonstrate that Tosaka's critique of Japan and Japanism in the 1930s was not the work of a mere materialist tarrying around the edges of Japanese thought and society: It was total. His project—at once a philosophy of science, a philosophy of history, and a cultural critique—not only explodes the traditional view of prewar Japanese thought, but also continues to shed light on the most urgent and persistent problems in philosophy and politics, especially the deep relationships between capitalism, nationalism, liberalism, fascism, and everyday life.

Like the groundbreaking debate on Japanese capitalism in the 1920s–1930s, this volume reveals Japanese criticism of the 1930s, of which Tosaka was at the lead, as a discourse that can stand beside classic Marxist social and cultural critics such as Antonio Gramsci, Siegfried Kracauer,

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1. This is the approach used in *Sourcebook for Modern Japanese Philosophy: Selected Documents*, where in their introduction the editors quote favorably Tanabe Hajime's dismissal of Tosaka as a mere theorist of science, a thinker who "as a philosopher . . . leaves much to be desired"; see David A. Dilworth and Valdo H. Vigliemo, eds., *Sourcebook for Modern Japanese Philosophy: Selected Documents* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998), 323.



Walter Benjamin, Herbert Marcuse, and Ernst Bloch. Beyond this resonance with contemporaries, Tosaka's focus on the global nature of the capitalist system further reveals his work as a powerful corrective to the Eurocentrism of what is commonly called "Western Marxism." Tosaka's writings on the deep connections between capitalism, liberalism, and fascism also stand in direct contrast to, and deserve to be debated against, the overly narrow theories of fascism such as Hannah Arendt's *Origins of Totalitarianism* or the pessimistic turn of the later Frankfurt School signaled by *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Like Tosaka's own desire to investigate the specific cultural effects operating in everyday life that make up fascist ideology, the translations and essays in this volume, too, are held together by his contagious and persistent hope that a rethinking of materialism in its everydayness can produce sharper revolutionary critiques of capitalism.

The revival of Tosaka's project represented by this book shows that despite the extreme physical and intellectual isolation he endured in his own time, today his work resonates with many contemporary anticapitalist thinkers. Prefiguring Henri Lefebvre's critiques of everyday life, Tosaka in the 1930s articulated the importance of thinking about revolutionary politics in Japan in relation to a critical analysis of the space of everyday life, showing with great rigor how, within those diffused spaces, the (liberal) ideology of the nation disavowed the social and class antagonisms effected by Japan's capitalist development, especially after its invasion of Manchuria in 1931. Originally a philosopher of science, Tosaka's melding of neo-Kantianism and Marxism led him to analyze the political and philosophical meanings of technology that went beyond mechanistic interpretations of the "mode of production," thereby anticipating contemporary theorizations of technology by Negri, Virno, and others on "general intellect." And with Tosaka's theorization of concepts such as "technical standards," he also prefigures many contemporary theorists in science and technology studies working on techno-politics. Most enduringly, however, Tosaka's understanding of what he called "cultural liberalism" and its relation to fascist ideology places him in the company of a line of anticapitalist thinkers from the past and the present—from Walter Benjamin to Gramsci to more contemporary thinkers such as Slavoj Žižek—who have tried to supplement Marxism's original critiques of classical political economy with a methodical critique of cultural production in the present.

Despite this interesting conjunction, the value of Tosaka's thought is hardly found merely in its resonances with radical thinkers in the European world. Rather, it is found in Tosaka's clear vision of how capitalist development in a time of imperialist war and chronic recession placed Japan as an important "link" in the world system of capitalist domination with specific effects on the level of cultural production. Thus, rather than treat Tosaka as a particular example from Japan who addressed similar questions related to culture, ideology, and fascism in Europe, it is best to read Tosaka as someone who understood how many of the capitalist world's contradictions condensed and were fused in the nation-state called Japan and in Japan's expanding empire of the 1930s.

As H. D. Harootunian's introduction to this volume shows, Tosaka's status as one of the few prewar Marxists who did not recant his leftist allegiances and convert to right wing or Japanist views (the *tenkō* phenomenon) meant that he possessed potentially tremendous moral authority in the chaos and possibilities of the immediate postwar moment. And so his absence from the postwar moment needs explanation. In fact, Tosaka's position as a thinker of the *global* nature of the crisis of the 1930s, the very thing that makes his resurrection so valuable to us today, is also likely the very thing that condemned him and his thought to isolation and neglect both in his own time and in the postwar era. In the case of the immediate postwar world Tosaka's critique was marginalized, indeed completely ignored, by the nation-bound thinking on both left and right.

On the left, Tosaka's critique ran afoul of the Japanese Communist Party's (JCP) allegiance to a Moscow-inspired Japan policy of two-stage revolution—one that must start with a bourgeois, national revolution. Partly a continuation of the legendary and epic debate on Japanese capitalism of the 1920s–1930s (*Nihon shihonshugi ronsō*), the JCP held that the Meiji Restoration of 1868 had retained too many feudal elements and thus failed to establish a properly bourgeois state. Moscow and the JCP could thus explain away Japanese fascism as a consequence of lingering Japanese feudalism. It followed from this thesis that the immediate postwar political task of the JCP had to be the completion of a Japanese bourgeois revolution.

Outside Marxist circles during the occupation (1945–1952), U.S. officials at the head of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP), too, sought to eliminate fascist elements of Japanese society in the name of liberal democracy—a political system, they argued, that had

been doing just fine until it was hijacked by ultranationalist militarism and emperor fanaticism. SCAP's position contributed to the widespread belief in postwar Japanese society that fascism in Japan represented a mere deviation from the liberal democracy and free market capitalism that flourished in 1920s Japan. SCAP moved to connect with 1920s capitalists to restart the process of Japanese capitalist development before the perceived false turn of fascism—a turn they located very late in the process: sometime in the late 1930s or even the early 1940s.

But the barriers to Tosaka's resurrection continued. His central thesis—an insistence on the immanent nature of fascism within capitalism and liberalism—was not only taboo for the SCAP fascist hunters, it was also more than a little inconvenient for postwar liberals such as Maruyama Masao, who, like SCAP officials, sought to ignore completely the critical period of the 1930s–1940s. However, instead of embracing SCAP's desire to return to the 1920s, Japanese liberals looked to return to the birth of liberalism in the Popular Rights and Liberty Movement (*Jiyū minken undō*) of the 1870s–1880s. Here, too, Tosaka was already ahead of them, having demonstrated how the very liberalism these thinkers sought to recover was actually the source of the fascism they thought they were escaping.

Unlike the newly ascendant JCP, SCAP, or postwar liberals like Maruyama, Tosaka refused to accept the nation-state as the essential, *a priori* ground of analysis. Here Tosaka's criticism of capitalism and culture must once again come to the fore because for him the feudal Japanist culture that suffused and supported the Japanese war machine of the 1930s–1940s merely expressed the deeper *cultural logic* inherent in capitalism itself, including the liberal variety. His masterpiece, *The Japanese Ideology*, is in fact split into two sections: Japanism and liberalism. The point is to show the inherent family resemblances between the two. Further, Tosaka saw ways in which the feudal past, far from being a barrier to a fully realized, modern capitalism, could in fact support, and even augment, capitalist development. In this theory, the imagined ethnic community of the Japanese past was detached from its socioeconomic base, becoming a free-floating cultural form grafted onto class antagonisms in the present and veiling these antagonisms behind a harmonious folkic capitalism. In his thinking on the positive and proactive uses of culture for politics within capitalism in *The Japanese Ideology*, Tosaka preceded Herbert

Marcuse's contemporary thinking on the same subject, especially his "The Affirmative Nature of Culture" (1937).

The key to Tosaka's disappearance then—and his reappearance now—is his insistence on locating both liberalism and fascism within and constituted by what he called cultural liberalism: a realm of idealism and religious consciousness originally established as a private space of freedom of conscience necessary for the production of the liberal subject. But in an inherently contradictory and unstable capitalist society increasingly rent by class struggle, this space of cultural liberalism cannot remain a safe, idealist harbor for apolitical individuals; in a crisis like the 1930s, it must eventually become the space not of individual freedom but of (Japanist) cultural freedom. In the essay "Just What Is a Crisis of Culture?" from his *Japan as a Link in the World* (*Sekai no ikkan toshite no Nihon*, 1937), Tosaka demonstrated succinctly and chillingly how individual freedom becomes freedom of the (national) culture and all progress becomes cultural (nationalist) progress.<sup>2</sup> Contrary to SCAP and all liberal opponents of fascism, the genius of Tosaka's analysis of his own present was to show how fascism is anything but a deviation from liberal democracy; rather, it is born in the crucible of liberalism and capitalism's endemic cyclical crises and wars.

Reading Tosaka today it is clear that the problems he so boldly took on in 1930s Japan still resonate with our present crisis, which is often referred to as the greatest since (Tosaka's own) Great Depression. From the financial crisis to new calls for a return to hard money, popular protest against austerity measures and the state violence that seeks to implement them, and renewed calls for "American exceptionalism" to the growing unrest and fragmentations on the left and right across the globe, it is apparent that our relevant historical conjuncture is not, as the neoliberals would have it, the heyday but more likely the collapse of the 1920s liberal figurations of nation, state, and capital. In Tosaka's time, this collapse led globally to the rise of a new, fascist figuration. At the same time, Tosaka's critique of fascism—as an everyday phenomenon linked inextricably to cultural liberalism—is more relevant than ever for an understanding not simply of past fascisms, but for a contemporary critique of the fascisms

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2. Tosaka Jun, "Bunka no kiki to wa nani ka?" in *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo, Keisō shobō: 1966), 5:62. See also Robert Stolz's chapter in this volume.

today around the world. In our own present, with its endless repetition of transhistorical mythologies, archaisms, and idealist notions of communal belonging, when multiculturalism is compulsively repeated in ways that would seem to make a farce out of how past forms of fascism succeeded in erasing world capitalism's class antagonisms, Tosaka's critique of cultural liberalism is more useful than ever for a contemporary critique of capitalism and fascism. Indeed, we have likely entered a new period that shares more than just a few ominous family resemblances with the 1930s. Of course, this repetition would not have shocked Tosaka—that it shocks so many contemporary observers left and right shows just how much we have lost and forgotten of the disaster of the 1930s. In our own still capitalist and crisis-ridden present, we can and should read Tosaka as a warning of the ever-present possibility of fascism, the ghost in the machine suffusing capitalist thought, ideology, and everyday life.

The translations and essays in this volume come from the critical period in Japanese history from the Manchurian Incident in 1931 to the outbreak of total war in 1937. This period matches roughly the years Tosaka was active as the editor of, and frequent contributor to, the influential materialism journal *Yuibutsuron kenkyū* (*Studies in Materialism*), which was published from 1932 to 1938, when it disbanded due to increasing police harassment. That same year Tosaka was arrested and imprisoned, largely ending his publishing career. In and out of prison between 1938 and 1944, Tosaka died in his cell in Nagano on August 9, 1945, the day the Japanese high command met to discuss surrender.

By bringing together both previously untranslated texts and original essays, this book reveals Tosaka as a major materialist philosopher and critic. The translations in Part I not only fill a great gap in available primary sources of Tosaka's writings, but also reveal the depth and breadth of this extremely important and original thinker to English audiences. Here we find some of Tosaka's most important essays and excerpts from his masterpiece, *The Japanese Ideology*, as well as *Thought and Custom* (*Shisō to fūzoku*, 1936) and *Japan as a Link in the World*. In these texts we can see how Tosaka strove to extend Marxist critiques of capitalism to the realm of culture and expand the possible points of radical critique to science, space, everydayness, the police, journalism, film, and the critique of liberalism. The first translations, "The Principle of Everydayness and Historical Time" and "On Space," immediately immerse the reader in Tosa-

ka's fundamental philosophical materialism, the basis from which he developed his later critiques. The focus on the everyday is furthered and deepened in "The Academy and Journalism" and two important texts on film, "Film as a Reproduction of the Present" and "Film Art and Film." "Laughter, Comedy, and Humor" contains Tosaka's thoughts on the politicality and the possibility of humor as a critical tool, especially when written, as many of these texts were, under the constant threat of censorship. Three essays from *The Japanese Ideology* ("Liberalist Philosophy and Materialism," "Theory of the Intelligentsia and Theory of Technology," "The Fate of Japanism") develop the connection between cultural liberalism and its fate in an increasingly technocratic and fascist organization of capital accumulation. And from *Japan as a Link in the World* comes "The Police Function," which examines the role of police repression in terms of a blurring of the concepts of public and private.

The seven critical essays in Part II demonstrate the robustness of Tosaka's critique not only by deepening Tosaka's analysis, but also because they expand its application into new issues. The point is not merely to introduce Tosaka's thought, as important as that may be, but to use Tosaka as a critical resource for our own time. The essays here do this by fruitfully reviving Tosaka's categories and logic with issues Tosaka himself did not address, such as the intractable problems of immigrant day laborers and the environmental crisis. Robert Stolz's "Here, Now: Everyday Space as Cultural Critique" demonstrates how Tosaka's basic philosophical materialism and its intense focus on "everydayness" not only was the basis for his more famous cultural criticism, but also remains a useful way for thinking through our present problems of capitalist society, including the environmental crisis. Through a comparison with similar work from Frankfurt School writers, Fabian Schäfer's essay illuminates Tosaka's prescient insight into journalism's key ideological functions and how these can be emancipatory or reactionary. Katsuya Hirano, writing on the "dialectic of laughter," explores Tosaka's thoughts in relation to Henri Bergson and Louis Althusser in an important discussion of customs (*fūzoku*). This leads to a critique of the bourgeois ideology of individualism that hides the workings of popular custom and morality as a primary regulatory and normalizing force enabling the reproduction and perpetuation of social order. Takeshi Kimoto examines Tosaka's engagement with the prewar debate on technology, analyzing his critiques of a "mechanistic" approach to technology within Marxism. Demonstrating how Tosa-

ka's notion of the "technical standard" anticipates many contemporary theories of "general intellect," Kimoto argues that Tosaka's reflections on technology help contemporary critical thought move beyond simple binaries of idealism and materialism.

Using a wide array of contemporary and current thinkers, Gavin Walker shows how Tosaka's project centered on the epistemology of the everyday—and especially the social position of film. Tosaka developed an original notion of matter irreducible to physical materiality but linked instead to a concept of matter as "custom" or everyday social practice. Walker argues that this crucial innovation, extending and deepening the concept of matter at the core of Marxist philosophy, points the way to a desperately needed rethinking and rehabilitation of historical materialism and the possibility of revolutionary critiques and practices in the present. Ken C. Kawashima's essay on the "police function" traces a shift in the sociopolitical role of the police—from protector of the regime of private property to, following the Russian Revolution in 1917 and the rice riots in Japan in 1918, a new form of cultural police that mobilized the whole population to become a police of the public and even private good. Kawashima contends this cultural policing to be an essential element of capital-state relations with deep consequences for understanding everyday life in capitalist society. Katsuhiko Endo's essay, which closes the section, goes the furthest of all in showing the truly catastrophic result of the intimate relations between capitalism, liberalism, and fascism. With help from Uno Kōzō's similar thoughts on political economy, Endo pushes the analysis to its end point in the new Japanist figuration of nation, state, and capital, all the way to the horror and atrocities that mark Japan's Fifteen-Year War in Asia.

In conclusion, the editors wish to dedicate this volume to Harry Harootunian, who introduced and taught so many of us about both Tosaka and the possibility, indeed the necessity, of constant, vigilant criticism.

# Introduction

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## *“The Darkness of the Lived Moment”*

*H. D. Harootunian*

Not long after the formal surrender papers were signed in September 1945, ending Japan’s war in the Pacific and Asia, the philosopher Kakehashi Akihide recalled how he had learned of the death of two prominent thinkers who had been imprisoned earlier: Miki Kiyoshi (1897–1945), who died in prison six weeks after the war ended, and Tosaka Jun (1900–1945), who died a month before, on August 9. Shocked by how slowly the news of these two deaths had become public, Kakehashi was even more shaken by the thought that Japan was now deprived of two of its leading thinkers, whom many believed would have played dominant roles in shaping forthcoming discussions on the crucial question of how to envision a new political, social, and cultural endowment for the defeated nation.<sup>1</sup> Both had been modernists. Miki, one of the most powerful philosophers out of Kyoto and surely the most ambitious, had traveled a dizzying intellectual trajectory in which he tried to master all of the principal philosophic perspectives of the twentieth century. His purpose was to bring together the vast diversity of ideas into concourse with each other in a

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1. Kakehashi Akihide, “Rōgoku to guntai,” in *Kaisō no Tosaka Jun* (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1976), 35–72.



theory called conceptual power, almost as if this immense staging would possess the magical power of an amulet. For Miki, the logic of conceptual power and its promise to pull together diverse intellectual strands like the dialectic—but claiming also to include it—was, as he put it, a “philosophy of action.” By the same measure, Tosaka, who shared Miki’s intellectual ambition but in a Marxian register, had already distinguished himself as the leading philosopher of materialism before the war and as one of the few who consistently rejected the state’s efforts to elicit from him a renunciation of progressive thinking (*tenkō*). Kakehashi was particularly dismayed by the personal loss of his friend (and comrade) Tosaka and wondered why there seemed to be so little information concerning his fateful incarceration and the last days of the most original and brilliant Marxist thinker of the prewar years, one whose accomplishments remained unparalleled in the postwar period. Tosaka’s death and the way news of it trickled out raised the question: Why was the most determinant philosopher of materialism of his day forgotten so rapidly while Miki was immediately restored to a privileged place in public memory in 1945, effectively overshadowing his activities in Konoe Fumimaro’s policy-oriented research apparatus (Shōwa kenkyūkai) and his wartime service to the fascist state? Miki’s last days won widespread sympathy from a war-weary population: In his prison death it undoubtedly saw its own tragic sacrifice. Unlike Tosaka, Miki composed what came to be regarded as his last philosophic testament, *Philosophic Notes* (*Testugaku nōto*, 1941–1942), published in 1946. A permanent reminder of the war, brutality, and senseless destruction, like the “autobiography” (*Jijoden*, 1946) of the older Marxist Kawakami Hajime, Miki’s “Philosophic Notes” became an instant bestseller.

It may be that these texts, and others, enabled postwar survivors to turn away from a prewar moment that had deposited the residues of its reckless course on the present and look to the possibilities offered by an as yet unenvisioned future. But such an act would have required mobilizing a national amnesia on an immense scale to imagine a better future-present than the past-present that had shaped their immediate moment. The success of these two works—by a pioneer of Marxism in Japan and by one who had a brief but influential encounter that produced a number of remarkable readings in which Marx’s humanism and conception of history were rethought—attests to how sacrifice, suffering, and survivorship, in one form or another, were able to capture the popular imagination in a time of despair and hopelessness surrounded by signs of ruin and destruction. These particular examples represented by Miki and Kawakami may

have been also enhanced by expressions of religiosity, which both thinkers embraced.

In subsequent narratives of the postwar period and its preoccupations with the prewar past produced in Japan and elsewhere, no mention has been made of the solitary figure of Tosaka, whose conditions of imprisonment led directly to his death at the age of forty-five and constituted nothing less than an act of state execution and premeditated murder. Unfortunately, Tosaka left no last testament of imprisonment, only his prewar writings; there were no final, enduring meditations on religious solace or even the consolations of philosophic reflection given that incarceration had been meant to silence him by preventing him from writing. The proscription against reading and writing had started earlier, before his final imprisonment, when in 1937 he was forced to stop writing and then a year later, when he and the group at the Society for the Study of Materialism (Yuibutsuron kenkyūkai) were arrested and found guilty of violating the Peace Preservation Laws. Tosaka's prison history recalls the example of Antonio Gramsci rotting in an Italian fascist jail. But Gramsci was permitted to read and write, which he did prodigiously and for which the posthumously published *Prison Notebooks* remains a monument to his spirit and intelligence.<sup>2</sup> Still, perhaps owing to the late development in politics and economy experienced by Japan and Italy, Tosaka and Gramsci shared a kinship in two respects: Both were unable to escape the preoccupation with culture that had further narrowed Marxism in the 1930s to its Western horizon, prompting both to search for a broader, global perspective; and both privileged what Gramsci named praxis and Tosaka called actualization—immediacy, immanence of the moment, and the necessity for action. Since it was already evident he would not recant like so many of his contemporaries, Tosaka was put in an airless cell not much larger than a cigar box, his inhuman internment designed to silence him completely. The state's aim was to obliterate his memory altogether from the past he had lived as present—and which his work constitutes a painful but indelible record of struggle. In the end, Tosaka saw his fate resembling Rosa Luxemburg's, as indicated by his decision to name his place of final detention after her.<sup>3</sup>

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2. In English, see, for example, Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (New York: International Publishers, 1971).

3. Rosa Luxemburg (1871–1919) was murdered by the right-wing paramilitary group Freikorps while in the custody of Social Democrats after the failed German Revolution in 1919.

What appears so astonishing in the prewar fascist state's effort to silence Tosaka is that it succeeded beyond all expectations, exceeding its own moment and extending well into the postwar period. This alone forces us to note the interesting symmetry between the prewar state's desire to silence Tosaka and the erasure of his memory and powerful critique from postwar historiography and discourse. The act of official silencing worked to actually eliminate his powerful and original presence in the 1930s—his brilliant rethinking of Marxism as a philosophy of the everyday, his scorching critique of the collusion of liberalism and fascism, and his fearless assessments of the “current situation,” comprising the crisis of capitalism and contemporaneity and his tireless leadership of the *Yuibutsuron kenkyūkai*. The irony of his presence after death was the continuity of the prewar state's determination to still his critical dissembling of “Japanism” and “archaism” as the twin forms bolstering fascist ideology that prevailed in Japan with the postwar order's success in repressing his account of how liberalism had been implicated in producing fascism before the war. It is apparent now that the postwar state's valorization of *Nihonjinron* and its variants was nothing more than a transformation and thus a repetition of the Japanism and archaism Tosaka struggled to disclose as expressions of fascist ideology in his time.<sup>4</sup> If the prewar state managed to finally silence his voice, its postwar successor destroyed so thoroughly the memory of his critique in the interest of a “second start” for liberalism and a “second enlightenment” that it is as if it had never existed. This was as true of the left as it was of those liberals associated with modernism (*kindaishugi*). In the several postwar discussions seeking to lay the foundations for a new liberal democratic order, Tosaka's name or critique never surfaced. Not even a renewed Japan Communist Party (JCP), which came out of the war with its status momentarily authoritative, was prepared to resuscitate the critique of its most original thinker and committed martyr. The reason for this derived from Tosaka's long-standing critique of the nation-form and nationalism, which many contemporaries had simply taken for granted as an unproblematic category. In postwar Japan, the JCP would enthusiastically embrace the nation in its campaign to win popular support, especially after the Hungarian Uprising of 1956, abandoning

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4. *Nihonjinron*, literally “A Discourse on the Japanese,” is often translated as “A Theory of Japanese Uniqueness,” referring to a long tradition of cultural chauvinism in the postwar period. The Bubble Economy in the 1980s led to another boom in such thinking.

both the international division of labor and the idea of internationalism itself.

What I am proposing is a direct relationship in the immediate postwar years between a determined desire to resuscitate the figure of prewar society by distancing it from explicit military and imperial association and the removal of Tosaka as a principal casualty of this drive to reconfigure the past for an “enlightened,” “rational,” and liberal past in the present. Yet this coupling entailed diminishing the memory of what Ernst Bloch once described as the “darkness of the lived moment,” superscripting the very conditions of the world Tosaka and others had inhabited and had sacrificed their own lives trying to prevent the fascism that finally plunged the country into a ruinous war.<sup>5</sup> Hence, the darkness that veiled the “unmastered Now and its unopened future,” which the postwar sought to define as futural expectancy, appeared closer to a repetition of the past.<sup>6</sup> The much-heralded “second start” of modernists like Maruyama Masao was in reality an attempted rescue of a prewar liberalism that had been aborted—repetition with a difference pledged to improving upon the past or subtracting from it its regressive and “irrational” elements. Instead, postwar society ignored the warnings of Tosaka’s critique: It was liberalism itself that had made prewar society what it had become. With American help, Japan retained the emperor and the imperial house to maintain a fictional “historical community” between the national present and its past.

What the repetition and its reliance on the analogy signified by the call for a “second start” managed to conceal was the vast difference between the conjunctures of the 1930s that “interpellated” Japan into global events from its postwar successor that was in the process of making the country into a faithful client of an emerging American imperium. We know from Tosaka’s diverse accounts of newspapers, radio, and film<sup>7</sup>—the favored optic through which to gain access to the current situation for analysis—that he and his generation faced a complex context that combined world depression, militarism, and fascism at home and imperialism and colonialism abroad. Throughout the ill-fated decade of the 1930s there appeared widespread agreement persuading people they were living in a time of historical crisis set into motion by accelerated capitalist accumula-

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5. Ernst Bloch, *The Principle of Hope*, trans. Neville Plaice, Stephen Plaice, and Paul Knight (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1996), 1:295.

6. *Ibid.*

7. See also Fabian Schäfer’s and Gavin Walker’s chapters in this volume.

tion. World depression supplied the momentary occasion to combine the diverse political, social, and economic forces that would constitute a new conjuncture and its identification of the contradictions unleashed by capitalist accumulation. That is to say, conjuncture was the lens through which to think about the historical reality of those moments when a diversity of circumstances from different sectors confront each other to “present a world, torn between powers in collusion and the ‘crises’ which unites them in a circle.”<sup>8</sup> Tosaka’s last major work, *Japan as a Link in the World* (*Sekai no ikkan toshite no Nihon*) expressed precisely the role played by the conjuncture’s structuring force in combining different elements into a momentary configural unity and Japan’s relationship to it in the historical reality of the 1930s.

As early as 1927, Tosaka, responding to an economic recession in Japan that prefigured the final collapse into a world depression, was already turning away from the attractions of Miki Kiyoshi’s humanistic Marxism and its Hegelian dimension mediated by Georg Lukacs’ *History and Class Consciousness* (which informed Miki’s Marxian forays). In a later essay on Miki, who was his senior (*senpai*) and remained his friend and mentor, Tosaka proposed that Miki’s Marxism never aspired to materialist philosophy but rather to a “materialist view of history,” driven by a concern for meaning and hermeneutics. At this time Tosaka began to move toward the materiality that clearly was driving modern life into the depths of financial failure. Shortly after, this perception was reinforced by his reaction to Japan’s decision to send a military force to Shandong.

We know that the high watermark of the contemporary crisis was the proliferation of discourse on culture (art) that sought constantly to reshape its relationship to politics in such a way as to displace the figure of the masses altogether for the folk. It was also at this juncture that Tosaka turned to ideological critique and the promise of practice. These cultural discourses sought to white-out the complex differentiations that were already showing signs of social conflict for the implantation of an image of a more culturally unified and integrated social order no longer divided by class, gender, sexual differences, and such. They aimed at those temporal and spatial zones where the lived contradictions seemed to be more sharply etched into the fabric of Japanese life. So much of Tosaka’s criti-

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8. Louis Althusser, *Philosophy of the Encounter*, ed. Francois Matheron and Olivier Corpet, trans. G. M. Goshagrian (London: Verso, 2006), 188.

cal practice showed awareness of this heightened turn toward cultural discourse and how it had failed to conceal its grounding in an ontological view of the world. In this conceptualization of culture, existence was replaced by its derivatives and ontology stood in for philosophy.<sup>9</sup> By the early 1930s, Tosaka had already designated a new vocation for philosophic reflection as the recovery of the everyday as it was being lived in capitalist Japan rather than transcendental preoccupations that bracketed social reality. The critical program he envisaged concentrated on explaining the forms of ideological mediation inscribed in the evidence and experience of everyday life. Ideological critique corresponded only to Marxism, he insisted, which was dedicated to grasping ideology as idealist forms, not to the application of social scientific formulae that was implicated in producing ideology. This meant that critique elucidated the ideological character of thought and logic at its deepest internal and abstract level. This explanation was concerned with showing how “historical and social existence determined logic,” constituting its reality, the “process of extracting historical and social existence” that would ultimately disclose the social form of class consciousness. What Tosaka recognized was the way ideological “truth character” appeared as a “fictional character.”<sup>10</sup> It first grasped “truth” in relationship to “form and content” and subordinated content as raw material to its shaping, which made it—the content—a “formalized fiction.” Tosaka considered “form” to be that which “grasped and unified the content as content.” The reason for this is that a form/shape (*keitai*) filled with content differs from form as such (*keishiki*) that excludes content because it (*keitai*) is weighted by a “realistic, substantive principle,” which is the character of content.<sup>11</sup> Accordingly, this standpoint determines the adequacy of logic by placing the motivation for it in “sentiment or faith,” in what is its “characteristic logic.” Hence, the reality of logic in this way mediates the idea of practice down to the “political” character as a “realization of historical movement.” Thus Tosaka argued, a logic based on a historical and social ground is situated as a true logic from one separated from this basis, which makes it a “fictional form” by way of a “stagnant logic.” Eventually, a logic not grounded in history,

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9. See “Rekishi to benshōhō,” in *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1966), 3:51–77 (hereafter cited as *TJz*).

10. Yoshida Masatoshi, ed., *Tosaka Jun no tetsugaku* (Tokyo: Kobushi bunko, 2001), 302.

11. *Ibid.*

indifferent to “historical necessity,” is one that possesses, in principle, a “fixed fictional form.”

Here, Tosaka unfolded his critique of a conception of the world founded on the search for fixed meaning, which always comes last (*saigo*), and consciousness that sought to identify life with a sense of interiority (*seimei*), with “a conscience that must not be doubted, indeed a freedom from all other things.”<sup>12</sup> Why this sense of interiority comes last and itself constitutes the character of existence stems from the human capacity to “symbolize the autonomy of such things as self (ego), speculation, conceptions of consciousness according to an interior life. Humans become aware of a truly lived interior life within the autonomous, free, and absolute activity of consciousness. These are unavoidably the last reality.”<sup>13</sup> In other words, “existence is consciousness.” This life philosophy (vitalism), whereby existence—Being—is produced by consciousness, pursues the last guarantee of existence, which is found in feeling (*kanjō*) or clear reason. For Tosaka, this privileging of emotion and universal reason was nothing more than the substance of phenomenology, Bergson’s intuitionism, the “universal pertinence of Kant.” But reality cannot be explained without proof and surely not by positing it within the clarity of an interiorized life or “consciousness.” Here, Tosaka’s distrust of interiority and consciousness resembled the Soviet thinkers Bakhtin’s and Volosinov’s dismissal of the autonomy of consciousness for a conception of interior speech and conduct rooted in external social relations.<sup>14</sup>

The reality that produces the character of Being shows itself within the material substance, the matter of existence itself, which is its historical character. In this regard, Tosaka proposed that for history’s character, historical time is the last principle beyond which there are no other principles to rely on. Time can only rely on history itself and not on any other principle of temporality such as the eternal, which comes from nowhere. History is its own time and cannot employ the time of phenomenology, metaphysics, or even science. In another text, later on, Tosaka named this

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12. TJz, 3:71.

13. Ibid.

14. See, for example, M. M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982); and V. N. Volosinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986).

principle of historical time the everyday.<sup>15</sup> Hence, the principle of history itself is the character of the real. Reality is not the expression of the law of identity (if a, not b) but rather the way the ultimate totality of the concrete is connected. But the material substance forms the ultimate principle and history must avoid any dependence on principles outside of it. The historical principle imparts history itself. The representative work of actual ideological criticism, where Tosaka appealed to the materiality of historical and social grounding, is the *The Japanese Ideology* (*Nihon ideorogiron*), which disclosed the substance of “Japanism” and “liberalism” *tout court*—the central ideology of the “golden age of fascism before the war.”<sup>16</sup> In actuality, bourgeois liberalism formed the “foundation of society’s common sense” in Japan, whereby the philosophy of liberalism produced the ideology of Japanism as a “Japan-style fascism” through the instrumentality of a hermeneutic method that identified fixed meaning.

We often forget that when Tosaka wrote the preface to his book, he confessed that it was modeled after Marx’s *The German Ideology*, even though he recognized it was composed a hundred years later and in a different political location and historical circumstances. What Tosaka perceived in Marx’s presentation of historical materialism was a critique of the several philosophies in Germany that had delegated to themselves the task of solving society’s troubles, comparable to the problems he was recognizing for his critique against an idealism that already was holding certain elements of Japanese society in its thrall. But it would be wrong to conclude that Tosaka’s *The Japanese Ideology* was simply a superscripting of Marx’s critique rather than a crucial rethinking and reworking of its principal logic in order for it to speak to a different place and historical moment. What Tosaka managed to take from the *The German Ideology* was the operation of the inversion and the identification of philosophy’s complicity in installing the misrecognized order of hierarchy whereby spirit (culture) occupied the place of material life, as the heavenly reigned over the earthly. He could agree with Marx that Kant was the bourgeoisie’s “whitewashing spokesman” because both he and the class had failed to notice that the theoretical ideas attributed to the class had as their basis

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15. TJz, 3:72. The text is “Nichijōsei no genri to rekishiteki jikan,” in TJz, 3:95–104; it is translated as “The Principle of Everydayness and Historical Time” in this volume.

16. Yoshida, *Tosaka Jun no tetsugaku*, 304.



“material interests” and “will” conditioned and determined by material relations of production. Kant thus succeeded in separating these theoretical expressions from the very interests informing the making of “materially motivated determinations of the will of the French bourgeoisie into *pure* self-determinations of ‘*free will*,’ of the will in and for itself, of the human will” and thus managed to convert it into ideology and moral postulates.<sup>17</sup> Tosaka perceived that Japanese liberalism, in this respect, suffered from the same defect of illusion dogging the German version, inasmuch as both refused to recognize the “correlation” of liberalism with the “real” interests from which it derived and thus disavowed its reason for existing by fixing its attention on “ideological reflections about real liberalism.”<sup>18</sup> In Marx’s criticism of Max Stirner, the transformation of the final separation of the bourgeois liberal from the empirical figure is completed and the “middle class” (as the dominant class) is converted into a “thought, nothing but a thought,” and the state comes forward as the “true man.” In this way, an understanding of liberalism reverts back to its “sublimated” Hegelian forms, which means belonging to the sphere of the sacred and the relation of the bourgeois to the modern state is transformed into a holy relationship, a “cult.”<sup>19</sup> It was this particular itinerary that explains how liberalism became identified with the sacred, spiritual, cultural, and transcendent—and provided Tosaka with the principal point of his critique.

Tosaka saw in Japan’s incipient liberalism the same flight from economic considerations, indeed from liberalism (*jiyūshugi*) itself and the interests informing such theoretical expression, which explained its easy embrace of both cultural freedom and the religious. Although the origins of liberalism derived from a recognition of the centrality of the economic—capitalism—and its thinking reflected a reliance on political liberalism, Tosaka argued that “liberal philosophy was not limited to having a system faithful to liberal thought in general. Why this has been the case is because the content of idealism has crawled into it entirely,” and there is no guarantee that it any longer values the name of liberalism. “To this extent, the ideal of liberalistic thinking has become a miscellany of

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17. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, 1845–47 (New York, International Publishers: 1976), 5:195.

18. *Ibid.*, 196.

19. *Ibid.*, 196, 197–198.

freedoms.”<sup>20</sup> Elsewhere, Tosaka proposed that liberalism had become like a large *furoshiki*, wrapping up a diversity of ideas in one bundle.<sup>21</sup> Liberalism’s declaration of freedom from politics has become solely a problem for cultural freedom. “This,” he charged, “is manifest in the liberalist ideals of contemporary liberals. One of the positions associated with this ideal of liberal freedom has been to elevate it to the level of religious consciousness.” Its presence is visible in a number of religions while both Buddhism and Catholicism, he observed, were beginning to show signs of cooperation with the state. Buddhism and especially its philosophy were already identified with the “Japanese spirit.” “Today,” Tosaka continued, “the way of the cultivated intelligentsia that has reached the (register) of religious ideals is a special product of one kind of liberalist consciousness.”<sup>22</sup> But what it showed above all else was the extent to which liberalism had departed from its original vocation, no longer determined by political and economic interests and the social reality of contradictions it has been forced to live and negotiate. Its identity with the religious meant that it had now become a form of absolutism at the conceptual level of aligning with contemporary emperor-centered absolutism, even though Tosaka never went so far as to make this connection explicit. In exchange for an understanding of contemporary reality and its structure of contradictions, liberalism turned to the promise of idealist philosophy and its offer to grasp the contradictions either as an *interior aporia* and disregard the force of the social or simply dismiss them altogether. For Tosaka, a religious consciousness that moves toward exceeding the bounds of liberalism constituted an accommodation with Japanism. Pure religion or “only” religion did not exist, apart from residing in some recessive Jamesian precinct of “private affairs.”<sup>23</sup>

The purpose of this account of how liberalism had shed its political and economic vocation to become aligned with cultural freedom and of how the religious itself had been enlisted to provide it with a transhistorical authority was to show the extent to which the “basic component of its system [liberalism] was refined” (*seiren*) into a “philosophy of hermeneutics” that easily diverted explanation from the order of things to an unseen

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20. Tosaka Jun, *Nihon ideogōron* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1977), 19.

21. A *furoshiki* is a large Japanese handkerchief often used to wrap and carry items.

22. Tosaka, *Nihon ideogōron*, 19–20.

23. *Ibid.*, 21. Philosopher of pragmatism William James (1842–1910) is most famously the author of *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902).

order that produced fixed and unchanging meaning. In Tosaka's reckoning, hermeneutics, in its search for the source of ultimate meaning, avoided the encounter with the earthly order and its materiality for an illusory reunion with a transtemporal realm. Its most prominent result was to accord privilege to what he called "literary liberalism" or a form of "literary-ism" in its apprehension of social reality. In this regard, Tosaka linked the formation of hermeneutics with the cultural freedom liberalism had embraced after its abandonment of political economy. The most notable methodological production of hermeneutic philosophy was found in its disciplinizing of philology as the principal instrument for the extraction of meaning and the interpretative enterprise it was made to serve. This servitude of philology to hermeneutics constituted a form of colonization. "If the principle of the literary [*bunkashugi*] is the hermeneutic method, which adopts literary categories based on the real, philology is based only on literary-like interpretations and the study of the origins of languages, derived from old texts and documents."<sup>24</sup> Tailoring the ideal of method to explicating words and their etymologies, Tosaka reasoned that its explanatory results were invariably constrained by a reliance on old textual materials, namely the classics.

This procedure inevitably resulted in reworking the content of national history (and indeed became indistinguishable from it) according to the classical templates since its aim was to replace the way contemporary problems were understood and resolved under the authoritative imperative of philological interpretations derived from explicating the textual traces of antiquity.<sup>25</sup> In this way, a philologically based philosophic hermeneutics was reduced to a preoccupation with securing access to, and scouring the recesses of, a hidden order of meaning rather than engaging the immediate requirements of contemporary material reality. With this shifting of domains of discourse, the interpretative impulse meant moving away from the temporal demands of the present to an atemporal and indeterminate zone of archaism—Tosaka's analogue to Marx's "ghostly" non-place or "spiritual history" rooted in heaven rather than earth.<sup>26</sup> "That philosophy," Tosaka stated, referring to hermeneutics, "became the perfect instrument of Japanism the moment it was applied to national history."<sup>27</sup>

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24. *Ibid.*, 24–25.

25. *Ibid.*, 25.

26. Marx and Engels, 5:160ff.

27. Tosaka, *Nihon ideorogiron*, 26.

For rescuing the order of meaning and exchanging it for immediate reality, philosophy was guilty of committing a “trick,” a conjuration. For liberal thinkers philological interpretation of classic texts imparted a knowledge of national history that observed no real division of time to supply the occasion for ignoring the actual problems of contemporary society. It is interesting to observe, in this connection, that the historian Hani Gorō had already shown how bourgeois historians had assiduously avoided confronting a history of the present for a fixation with a static past, signifying their fidelity to the bourgeois idea of studying history for its own sake.<sup>28</sup> Elsewhere, Tosaka, in a text specifically concerned with hermeneutics, referred to its operation as a “camouflage” (*gisō*) because he was convinced that philology was not necessarily fated to exclusively provide only the grounding of a timeless order of meaning to reinforce some form of fascist cultural ideology (like Japanism) since examples were plentiful to testify to its broader explanatory use.<sup>29</sup> But the decision to utilize classical studies to understand the problems of the present constituted a sleight of hand and exemplified how philology had become “philologism” (*bunkengakushugi*).<sup>30</sup>

For Tosaka, this ideological use of philology recalls for us, again, the critique of Volosinov and Bakhtin produced a few years earlier, which puts into question philology’s obsession with dead languages and their claims to authority over living speech in a way that resembled the domination of dead labor over living labor. Where philology foundered, despite its putative explanatory neutrality, was in providing the ground to support “various forms of reaction on an international scale necessarily derived from the content of capitalism itself.”<sup>31</sup> Philology’s defects were multiple: The effort to explain words for things eliminated the necessary space between them, making the referent and the referred one and the same thing. This identification was made possible by removing philology from the historico-linguistic substance of language, whereby etymology becomes a poor and inadequate example of historical investigation. Tosaka insisted that the classics could not perform as a substitute for history and offered no basis for determining the problems of the present-day. The disjuncture

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28. Hani Gorō, *Hani Gorō rekishiron chosakushū* (Tokyo: Aoki shoten, 1967), 2:150–160.

29. See “Gisōshita kindaiteki kannen ron,” 211–233, and “Fukkō genshō no bunseki,” in *Tosaka, Nihon ideorogiron*, 172–185.

30. Tosaka, *Nihon ideorogiron*, 26.

31. *Ibid.*

between classical categories and current logic has meant only that the ethics of an earlier time cannot be resituated in the present. Here, he was clearly targeting Watsuji Tetsurō and indeed the whole structure of morality in contemporary Japan, which had been invested in installing the contradictory claims of a timeless ethics exempted from history to curb the social excesses of capitalist modernization. Finally, Tosaka was convinced that while the translation of classical categories is a necessity for the modern present, it must always be informed by the full recognition that neither the original form nor the content will ever be exactly reproduced. And nor should it because history is never completed.

What caught Tosaka's attention was the logic that drove the philosophical ideology into the domains of an ahistorical archaism. Because "the history of the present developed from what would come before," the figure of the archaic was positioned in such a way as to supply the means with which to interpret and account for the (distorted) forms of contemporary reality.<sup>32</sup> A necessary presumption accompanying the imperative toward archaism was the belief that the present represented a degraded departure or lowering of standards achieved in an earlier time. At this point, archaism joined Japanism and its project to expropriate national history and colonize its terrain into the domain of an eternal spiritual history, which Tosaka aligned with comparable developments in Mussolini's Italy and Nazi Germany because Japanism "shares (with them) a certain common interest."<sup>33</sup> Moreover, archaism embodied the principle of "primitivism" (*genshika*), which resided at the heart of the modern state and guaranteed its claim to irreducible and exceptional uniqueness. This principle of primitivism ultimately authorized the appeal to restore older social forms like the family system and "feudal" social relationships that presumably had managed to surmount history to become the unwavering model for both the family and the state in Japan's modern society. But the plea to primitivism was an escape hatch, a philosophic *trompe-l'oeil* promising an illusory way out of history that opened the way to elevating family and nation to the level of a politically absolute and transhistorical existence. The importance of archaism lay in its reliance on mysticism and apparition, whose effects all of its current and contemporary forms

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32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

inadvertently conspired to display, time and again, how the timeless religious presence constituted both the mark of the modern and its thoroughgoing political nature. In Tosaka's understanding, archaism, spiritualism, mysticism have all been colored by the tint of Japanism, just as contemporary forms of Asianism, Orientalism, and Imperial Wayism (*ōdōron*) reflected the imperative of spirit. Its absolutism is nothing more than the application of a hermeneutic method employing the instrumentality of philology to establish the dominion of a spiritual national history that observes no real temporal break between past and present. Even though Japanism and its authorizing archaism revealed nuanced differences from European versions of fascism, qualifying it as the cultural expression of a "Japanese type," it still constituted an inflection of the form of fascism itself. If, as Tosaka suggested, its content actually emerged from the humus of an archaic native history and the philological ideology serving it, its archaic form and its rejection of time for duration shared a family resemblance with cultural fascism and the "logic of a holistic society" in Italy, Germany, Romania, and elsewhere in the world of the 1930s. But by the same token, Tosaka recognized how hermeneutics had opened the way to securing a broader-based kinship between diverse national fascisms to constitute a representative philosophy of the times, as affirmed by the "undisguised philologism of Martin Heidegger."<sup>34</sup>

Hence, archaism, driven by the principle of primitivism, emerged from the social contradictions of capitalism. For Tosaka its appearance signified a moment of crisis when capitalism sought to think itself explicitly as transhistorical to overcome the contradictions it had produced in the crucial interwar period. The way out it offered was to eternalize the past into an eternal duration that no longer observed the markers of historical division—the "mincing of time" Tosaka elsewhere described as the condition of history. By superimposing a timeless archaic presence on the present, capital and its state sponsor had found a way to regulate contemporary society. However, there was nothing uniquely Japanese about this "solution," according to Tosaka, which in the interwar conjuncture was clearly visible throughout the industrial and industrializing world in the conduct of many other nation-states. Even though there was a sharing of this kind of nation-state form on an international scale, Tosaka warned of

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34. *Ibid.*, 27.

its “chauvinistic” and exceptionalist excesses: “A number of people have seen that the archaic phenomenon in contemporary Japan is connected to various chauvinistic attitudes.” But, he continued, it was impossible to separate the requirements of contemporary imperialism from those animating the “primitivistic ideal” fueling this “archaic phenomenon.”<sup>35</sup> It was this fearful imagery of the worst impulses of nationalistic exceptionalism and its imperial aspirations in the world of the 1930s that prompted him elsewhere to call for a true “universalism,” by which he meant a form of thinking and culture that “cannot do without translating on a worldly scale in the broadest sense of meaning. Similar to that true literature that has to be a ‘world literature,’ a philosophy or theory that merely is understood only by a certain nation or people is without exception a fraud.”<sup>36</sup> Here, it seems, is a glimpse of that world history Marx once claimed that had yet to be written.

In *The German Ideology*, we know that the target of Marx’s withering assault was philosophy, especially its idealistic avatar in Germany in the 1830s and 1840s. Prevented from living a modern history in reality, Germany had to live it in thought. Hegel’s modern state applied only to England and France. Germany’s backwardness substituted philosophy for an engagement with lived social reality and a romanticized feudal past for the present. With Tosaka, writing a century later, the perceived circumstances of Japan’s development as a late-developing nation permitted a continuation of the parallelism but in a different historical register. The need for philosophy derived from the exigencies of contemporary bourgeois society as much as from any characteristic of bourgeois history. What he meant by making this distinction is that while bourgeois history already embodied a necessary relationship between the middle class and the act of representation—as Marx had affirmed and dramatized in his critique of philosophy accompanying the inauguration of capitalism in Germany—Tosaka’s immediate present and the conjunctural circumstances challenging it necessitated the urgency of articulating a distinctively bourgeois philosophy positioned to address and account for the current situation. The problem he faced was trying to discern in the formation of a decidedly modern philosophy the silhouette of fascism that relied on neither appeals to the fantasy of feudal pasts nor the exotic lure of an

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35. *Ibid.*, 185.

36. *Ibid.*, 153.

imagined Oriental world. Targeting philosophy meant disassembling the hermeneutic ambition to find and fix meaning and its desire to instantiate the archaic as the means to collapse the temporal divide between past and present. While the Japanese bourgeoisie was probably more evolved than its German counterpart in the mid-nineteenth century, it had never really been given the opportunity to carry out its supposed historical task and achieve its own political revolution. Its historical task was easily transferred to the world of philosophic idealism, which, for Tosaka, embodied the ideology of contemporary bourgeois society represented best by thinkers like Watsuji Tetsurō and his teachers, Tanabe Hajime and especially Nishida Kitarō.<sup>37</sup>

Even though Nishida's philosophy gestured toward mysticism and religiosity, it was less the sign of a feudal mentality or an atavistic Orientalism since his philosophy was modern.<sup>38</sup> While Tosaka acknowledged that mysticism belongs to German romantic thought and reflects the historical circumstances of backwardness, it is, nevertheless, still linked to "what today must be called the 'religious situation,'" which is possible to detect in the content of Nishida's philosophy.<sup>39</sup> Tosaka agreed that Nishida's philosophy was not cloaked in religion and mysticism in the usual sense, but rather its traces were manifestly inscribed in his method—especially in the way he justified even those who opposed it. "The method rested on the standpoint of nothingness" as against a philosophy of being, even though Tosaka rejected this claim. Despite attempts to associate Nishida's philosophy with the "new theology" that had contributed to uniting fascist ideology in Germany and elsewhere, Tosaka was persuaded that no evidence demonstrated a direct relationship. Nishida's philosophy was nothing more than a proper academic philosophy of a bourgeois society with an explicit method arising from a concentration on the determination of particular epistemological goals it seeks to employ.<sup>40</sup> The connection he wanted to make was between class and politics (i.e., fascism) and this explains why he argued so strenuously to show how Nishida's philosophy (and Kyoto by propinquity) represented a proper academic bourgeois philosophy. In this regard, there is more than an echo of Marx's attack on Stirner and Bauer as spokesmen for the German petit bourgeoisie. Yet

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37. *Ibid.*, 235–239.

38. *Ibid.*, 248.

39. *Ibid.*, 237.

40. *Ibid.*, 239.



inscribed in the methodological rigor of Nishida's philosophy lurked a nagging romantic impulse, consciously directed to resolving the problem of how to know, order, and systematize in thought the diverse categories and the fundamental ideas related to existence.

According to Tosaka, there was a genealogy for this effort to interpret the world as a categorical system, beginning with Fichte and threading its way through Schelling to Hegel: It was a genealogy that represented nothing more than the life and death process of German romantic philosophy. In Tosaka's judgment, Nishida completed this philosophic trajectory (whose lesser acolytes Marx had already demolished), taking it as far as it could go, "down to its purest and most self-conscious form."<sup>41</sup> This "completing" was the characteristic standpoint of Nishida's philosophy, inasmuch as it, like one of the earlier stages in the itinerary completed by Hegel, was "a natural phenomenon issuing from the self-conscious goal of the romantic categorical systematization of the world." As a result of the "completion" of the philosophical genealogical tableau, Tosaka conceded that Nishida's philosophy must become the problem and advised turning attention, once again, to explaining its construction of a methodology committed to grasping existence. The resolution of the problem at hand, he warned, was not easily captured by simply determining whether existence is substantial (material) or spiritual. Rather the resolution must distinguish between the category of existence and existence itself and understand how the idea is completed.

Tosaka wondered how a philosophical method, founded on the logic of nothingness and that therefore presumed the operation of a dialectical law, resulted only in "clarifying meaning of that which had become dialectical."<sup>42</sup> In spite of operating under the sign of the dialectic, he was convinced that the method never really employed it. Instead, the method was driven by a logic concerned only with "interpreting how to consider the meaning of dialectics (itself)." Even though it appeared to be concerned with apprehending the meaning of what calls itself dialectics, it has never managed to rise above the act of fixing meaning to actually consider it dialectically. Whether it was addressing the dilemma of "continuity of discontinuity" or the "rationality of irrationality," the method

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41. *Ibid.*, 240.

42. *Ibid.*, 245.

has never passed beyond revealing its reliance on “one kind of transdialectical mysticism.” Apart from employing the “logic of nothingness,” Tosaka charged, “it was nothing but a denial of the dialectic of existence” that resulted in a “dialectics of nothing” for its failure to “treat existence.” “The logic of nothingness was nothing more than a deformation [*wai-kyoku*], which exchanged the management of things [*jibutsu*] for the meaning elicited by the facts.”<sup>43</sup> Tosaka reasoned that Nishida’s logic, with its momentous exchanging of things for interpretation, was actually undermined by virtue of the impossibility involved in “sufficiently managing the meaning brought to facts, because it is not possible to manage things themselves.” But the real question relates only to how meaning is made independently from these facts and things. Specifically, the predicament he discerned was deciding not what things are in actuality but rather determining how what conveys meaning is “valued in the name of these things.”<sup>44</sup> It is important to recognize in this move the inversion demanded by commodity exchange of an exchange of the concrete—the thing for an abstraction, undoubtedly calling attention to the operation of commodity exchange. Yet it revealed in condensed form the whole inversion from material life to spiritual existence, which, according to Tosaka, was initiated the moment liberalism abandoned politics and economics for religion and culture. The most important consequence of this inversion was to replace a history of the present—a history responsive to the immediacies of contemporary social reality—with the history of an indeterminate past, a bad history for a good one. Moreover, he continued, it is not what society, history, and nature are but what meaning the idea of society, history, and nature possess, what position they occupy in the categorical system of meaning. As an example, Tosaka offered the following: “Society doesn’t only possess meaning for the I-and-thou relationship.” When you begin to pick out and choose words and phrases from within the capacious “self-conscious determination of nothingness,” it is no different for countless readers who will invest diverse meanings with their own usage. The point he wished to emphasize is that the presumed authority claimed for the archaic precedent could offer no ground for fixing a singular meaning for all times. Hence, the “logic of nothingness” has made only the “logical

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43. *Ibid.*, 246.

44. *Ibid.*

significance' of things and facts the problem."<sup>45</sup> With its method, steeped in a hermeneutic philosophy dedicated to illuminating meaning, it is impossible to escape the approach to being and existence as if it were simply an idea.

Tosaka reported that Nishida's great colleague at Kyoto, Tanabe Hajime, resembled Hegel insofar as both were idealists who shared a rigorous antimaterialism, a description Tanabe might have welcomed. But Nishida, he continued, inverted this position and made it into a negative logic. Why the theory of nothingness fails as a logic is because it has no capacity to think through existence, which, for Tosaka and materialism, started with the production of material life and the satisfaction of needs. It was always stopping short of taking this step to remain captive to the endless search for "logical meaning." Owing to this pursuit, Tanabe was emboldened to portray Nishida's philosophy as a "gothic temple" and withheld "prais(ing) this attitude because it had failed to consider that late romanticism had retreated to the darkness of the middle ages."<sup>46</sup> Yet, Tosaka concluded, Nishida had no taste for the feudal, it was not his style. His thinking rather produced a modern philosophy that supplied a "thankful spiritual offering to the bourgeoisie."<sup>47</sup> As for the cultivated contemporaries (*gendaijin*) of modern capitalism in Japan, it was now possible to discover in the precincts of Nishida's philosophy a habitat for the homeless, culturally free consciousness of the bourgeois self. But we must remember that the cost for this cultural freedom was enabled by the flight of political liberalism, which had opened its doors to welcome a diversity of ideas, often clashing with each other. Such a veritable witches' brew of ideologies made possible its fateful encounter with the religious and hermeneutics that prepared the way for fascism in the form of an archaism empowered to replace the exemplars of national history with a new spiritual history called Japanism. "It was for this reason that (Nishida's philosophy) became the representative of cultural liberalism (as opposed to economic, political liberalism)" and explains its "popularity" with a class—the bourgeoisie—that fought for self-definition through cultural authority and won.<sup>48</sup>

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45. Ibid.

46. Ibid., 248.

47. Ibid.

48. Ibid., 249.

The question still remains: What did the postwar era forfeit by consigning Tosaka and his critique to forgetfulness and silence? The answer is probably far more important than any of us can imagine. Yet the translations and essays collected in this volume, the first of its kind in English, will provide both the necessary dimension of diversity denoting the remarkable range of interests and engagement exemplified in Tosaka's writings and a beginning to grasping the power of their potential for envisioning the new in a present already committed to the regime of repeating its failed past.



# The Principle of Everydayness and Historical Time

*Translated by Robert Stolz*

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“The Principle of Everydayness and Historical Time” (Nichijōsei no genri to rekishiteki jikan) first appeared in 1930 in the journal *Risō*, no. 21. It was reprinted in Tosaka’s edited collection *Gendai tetsugaku kōwa (Lectures on Contemporary Philosophy)* in 1934. In this essay Tosaka takes great care to establish historical time as a philosophical, and ultimately political, category itself—one not dependent on or reducible to other theories, neither idealist versions of phenomenological, intuitive, or psychological time, nor the empty homogeneous time of the natural sciences. Tosaka’s displacement of the site of praxis from consciousness and culture to historical time crystallized in the present as a fundamental “everyday-ness” has many implications for criticism and politics and, together with his theory of space in “On Space” (Kūkanron), formed the basis from which Tosaka launched his cultural critiques of the 1930s.

“The Principle of Everydayness and Historical Time” is translated from the 1934 text in *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1966), 3:95–104.

I think it is necessary to draw the reader’s attention to the principle that may be fairly called everydayness. It is a principle that governs an extremely wide field, but my use of everydayness is different from the one heard in everyday speech. In this essay I want to problematize this principle.

The problem of everydayness is connected to the general, which is to

say abstract, structure of history. The problem concerns the principle of history. Now, if we say things like the principle of history, or the general structure of history, we find that our problem returns to a theory of time—historical time. So what is the nature of historical time? In answering this question the existence and character of the principle of everydayness will come into relief.

If we do not confine ourselves to history we find that any attempt to represent time clearly (evident) results in merely a more conscientious re-presentation of a representation of time.<sup>1</sup> This means that time can only be *represented temporally*. Because of this, the representation of time becomes a question of the *temporal representation* of things. But this makes time first and foremost a problem of consciousness. We are then faced with the situation that time seems to belong to consciousness, and that it is first uncovered in consciousness.

But if we continue in this line of thinking, things like *historical time* become mere appendages of the time of consciousness; let's tentatively call this *phenomenological time*. If this is true, history, its own principle and the general structure of that principle—that is historical time—must be borrowed from the phenomenon of consciousness. Which is to say the principle of history must be borrowed from a phenomenon outside of history. Thus the principle of history becomes something not of history itself; historical principle becomes nothing more than the application of some ahistorical something or other—and the specificity of historical time disappears. It becomes nothing other than ahistorical time, and our problem—historical time—is conveniently erased.

Already it is clear that for our problem to become a problem at all, and for it to have a resolution, time cannot be thought of as *first and foremost* belonging to consciousness. This means that the problem of historical time can in no way be a subject of phenomenology.

It is usually said that the natural sciences have made time quantifiable. Putting aside whether or not this is true, we must be wary of this explanation. If making something measurable means merely making it quantifiable or spatializing it, there is no problem. But while natural science may make time divisible within a generic representation of time, are not people in the habit of thinking about this uncritically? Parsing time, that is, mak-

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1. "Evident," written in Roman characters, is Tosaka's own gloss of *meihakuteki* (clearly).

ing it measurable, seems to mean quantification and spatialization. But it is the parsing itself that makes time possible. This is exactly the opposite of what most people think.

Now, if we imagine a “pure” (?)<sup>2</sup> time that does not have, that cannot have, any parsing, this is a *pure duration*.<sup>3</sup> (Why? Because if the continuity were to slacken even a little bit it would become impure; it is then that a gap may be made in it and it may be thought that this is where a rupture may occur.) Such a pure (?) time, a ceaseless flow, is probably the flow of consciousness. But first we must ask: Does consciousness, in the general meaning of the word, in fact flow? I do not want to say that consciousness stops. Clearly it is fine to say that consciousness progresses—but is that a *flow*? If the *continuum* of consciousness—and this means the flow—were like a continuum [*renzoku*] of real numbers in mathematics, we could never *problematize* the *qualitative* difference between two points of this flow. There is no space between the numbers. It can never become an object of inquiry. So, in order to problematize this issue, consciousness does not flow continuously but, as it were, moves only in *quantum leaps*—which is to say, it *does not flow*. So I declare: Time in the consciousness, phenomenological time, and what is thought of as pure duration, even these, if undivided, are not really time.

If there are people who cannot accept that time must be parsed, most likely those people are thinking of *temporality* [*toki*] rather than *time* [*jikan*]. Actually, the phenomenological time of the consciousness and the relation between the *conscious* and the *unconscious* is always dealt with by the category of temporality. But if treated in this way, time—meaning *parsed temporality*—has already become not time and, importantly, temporality maintains a solid relationship with the representation of eternity. *Eternal* things are the *exact opposite of temporal things*. At the same time

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2. Tosaka often includes a parenthetical question mark, and occasionally exclamation marks, when he is using language that his own philosophy does not allow—or he thinks is absurd in the given context. Here he is rejecting the language of purity that will be shown to be a mere idealist pretension (see below).

3. The main interlocutor here is Henri Bergson (1859–1941) and his theory of *durée*. See, for example, Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. N. M. Paul and W. S. Palmer (New York: Zone Books, 1991). Beyond this immediate context, this concept of pure time, or *durée*, is central to the phenomenological concept of the “eternal now,” a kind of temporality that brackets the past and is characteristic of many Kyoto School philosophers such as Nishida Kitarō and Tanabe Hajime.



*temporality* is the shadow of eternity (Plato, Plotinus, St. Augustine). The way of thinking that treats time as temporality by ignoring its divisions originates in thinking that historical time is firstly an example of phenomenological time. This is none other than the device we called the *purification* of time. But time, in order to be time, absolutely must be parsed. In Aristotle, for example, it is parsed by means of the breaths in physical exertion (in broken movements and at different junctures; i.e., it is necessary to rest at each breath). In other words, by means of the pauses in motion, because divisions enter into the temporality of the whole activity, time becomes defined by the number of separate motions. In this limited sense, by inserting divisions, we may talk of making time measurable and *quantifiable*.

Yet in the natural sciences the method of inserting divisions itself is so completely accomplished that people have made the divisions independent; the division replaces time itself. Time is defined by its divisions (*hours* and *time frames*). But exaggerating the division in this way (*in the method of division*) means the natural sciences have made time completely homogenous.<sup>4</sup> That is to say, though it is true the natural phenomenon of the earth's rotation is taken as a standard of measurement, once established, that unit breaks free and may be placed anywhere in time. Oddly, the notion that it is acceptable to insert any division in any place—this is what is meant by homogeneity—also means that, *regarding temporal units*, it is equally fine to insert or not to insert a division. If this is done, this time, this division, is an empty placeholder. Thus the result of exaggerating the division is that divisions of time in the natural sciences transform into the opposite of divisions of time. In other words, divisions become *superficial* and *arbitrary*; they have no relationship to the content of time. This is part and parcel of the measurement and spatialization of time.\*

\*In the natural sciences the concept of non-spatializable—irreversible—which is to say pure time, is entropy. Yet even an increase in entropy is divided into packets of energy quanta.

So if we exaggerate the removal of the principle of divisibility from the concept of time, time becomes temporality and temporality is made

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4. Here Tosaka's use of "exaggerating" with respect to the independence of the time frames in the natural sciences comes close to the Marxist term "reifying" or even "fetishizing," but these are not terms Tosaka will use in this essay.

eternal, as with the phenomenological concept of time suggested in expressions like “time stops” or “the eternal now.”<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, if we isolate and exaggerate the principle of divisibility, time is spatialized and is no longer time (as in the natural sciences). In the end, these two concepts of time are nothing more than caricatures of two kinds of time that come from totalizing partial aspects.

Both of these concepts mean the complete denial of *historical time*. Such is the result of two lines of thought united in their consideration of time as something that cannot be first and foremost *historical time*. In reality making time into temporality is the same as making history eternal; it is making history circular. And here history becomes *eternal recurrence* (see Nietzsche). Thus history is already something other than history; it becomes some sort of a *cosmology*. Indeed, it is said that Dante’s cosmography is an expression of the Christian philosophy of history. Viewed in this light, natural-scientific time parallels those eternal cycles that use heavenly bodies as a standard. Just like the return of the spring equinox, Christ, too, must surely have a second coming. Something people must recognize is that both thinking of time as temporality and spatializing time are part of the same tendency. Both the mythologizing of time and its vulgarization have the same result. And just what is that identical result? It is the neglect of historical time, the forgetting of the proper parsing of time—though just what that means we have yet to see.

Historical time is the fundamental concept of temporal things. And within that—without overemphasizing or understating it—is the division. But what is a division of historical time?

It is period (*Zeit*). A time frame with its divisions and endpoints established according to historical compartmentalizations (*époque*) means a period. But this period is not the period of the natural sciences. (In fact, it is closer to the grammatical meaning.) If we ask why, it is because this parsed time—historical time—comes from the *contents* of that time itself. This is already different from the arbitrary and external way of the natural sciences (see above).

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5. This refers in general to the phenomenological reification of the “now” at the cost of all other temporal senses and actualities. It also specifically targets much of the Kyoto School philosophy of Nishida and Tanabe that often referred to this sense of temporality. Below Tosaka will argue that the now is a specific moment within historical time, and the implications of this inclusion in historical time have fatal consequences for the phenomenological theory of temporality as applied to history, politics, and practice.

Historical time is divided into periods according to its own contents. Contents are probably endlessly diverse due to the simple fact that they culminate not in form but in content. At the same time, when these contents are viewed as belonging to some kind of *modality*, what is important is the concept of *character*. After all, this is because character is the category that grasps content with respect to content and not form. In historical time, the unity of various characteristics made into a modality is differentiated and parsed into periods possessing various characters. Character differs from individuality or individual (*in-dividuum*, *a-tom*): something that cannot be further divided because it is already an indivisible thing. In fact, quite the contrary, character is itself the standard by which one establishes the division. (A principle that divides without this kind of determinate standard based in content—meaning one that divides formally—is the *principle of individuation*.) Periods have various characters. Furthermore various characters give us periods. So the duration (quantity) of a period changes depending on the nature (quality) of the *character*, not the reverse. For this reason, it is the opposite of periodization in the natural sciences. This difference originates solely in the fact that historical periods come from their own historical *contents*—and the means to grasp those contents is the category of *character*.<sup>6</sup>

Character can also be seen as the extremely elastic, robust atom of history. An even better example might be a monad which, with its windows open and freely breathing in the air, expands and contracts.<sup>7</sup> It may be thought that in this way history is *heterogeneous* and in this limited sense history is *continuous*. This is most likely what it means to say history is particular. History is that which is drawn out by the shape of historical time and by the existence of these characters in history. This means it belongs to exactly one kind of quantity—the division. This division is both a qualitative thing and a measurable quantity. It is not the period of the natural sciences.

We said character is the concept and means to grasp the content of history. But this means is not something anyone can just think up or cre-

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6. For a discussion of the implications for history and criticism of this relation of quantity and quality of historical periods, see the essay “Here, Now: Everyday Space as Cultural Critique” in this volume.

7. This is likely a reference to Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz’s *Monadology* (1714), but contrary to Leibniz’s theory where the monad had no window by which to take in influence from the outside, the fundamental condition of Tosaka’s monads (modalities) of historical time, or periods, is that they necessarily receive their own status from such interactions.

ate; it is produced by history itself. Character is like the fruit that when ripe, on its own, drops from the tree of history. When it does fall, people must catch it without fail. It is best to say that people merely *discover* certain characters within history. But it must also be said that in what manner people faithfully receive this fruit depends on the character of the people themselves. The question of how their character is connected to history's—the period's—character is also determined by this character that has ripened. The problem thus returns to the question of people's historical sense.

People's characters are not the character of their isolated selves alone; they are determined by and implicated in the general character of their contemporaries. The general character of their contemporaries, by the way, is merely one part of a pair of things, which also includes the character of the period itself. This pairing is the relation between the character of the period and the character of the people who discover that character.

But this alone is not yet a true explanation of character. Just what causes character to fall from the tree? (Note: In historical time the word "cause" is entirely adequate.)

In reality, what is it that attaches a character to a period? It is politics. (A thing like cultural history [*bunkashi*], which does not periodize by means of politics, cannot even be considered one piece of a *total* history.) But *in the last instance* (to enable a total recognition of existence itself), where does the modality of politics originate? It is in the *material relations and forces of production*. Because of this "in the last instance," the various characters in history begin with and originate in the material relations and forces of production resulting in a determinate modality. This is the genealogy of character in history. It is by means of these sorts of characteristics that a character is attached to a period.

So if we return to the correlation between the character of a historical period and the character of the people who receive it, we must incorporate the very powerful concept of class as a mediation between contemporaries—that is, society—and the individual. This is because taking the material relations and forces of production as the origin inevitably results in questions of class and results in questions of class in a specific way—oppositionally. In collecting the fruit, the basket of class is essential.

In this sense history is about character. Historical time (historical principle made manifest by becoming a period) and character are of equal value. Historical time, period, and character all interrelate in this way.

Historical time comes from the series of individual kinds of various periods. The various periods all have their own *unities*, *unitary measures*, and *totalities*; we may say each period is, as it were, organic (this is not to say that society is organic but that the period and character of society are organic).<sup>8</sup> The single, organic quality of the period—it occupies a certain, particular position—corresponds to the origin of the series of periods that is historical time itself. Through the process of constructing its own modality (*Formbildung*), the period itself alters that modality (*Formwesche*). This means that even as a certain form of life exists, it is approaching death, and that in death the seed of a new form of life is created. Because of this, the series of periods in historical time can be considered especially *dialectical*. A period then is none other than the dialectical development of various stages of historical time.

This does not mean that the period is the foundation from which the historical series is constructed. Quite the contrary, the period is first defined by means of the totality of the periodizations of historical time. Stages are attached to particular periods by means of their relationship to the totality of historical time. Because a period depends on just what kind of totality that period is placed into, even though the method of attaching stages may differ, this relationship is not so strange. Against the whole of historical time the period is given a configured orientation.<sup>9</sup> This is because in a certain sense, the period freely expands and contracts. It goes without saying that this gestalt quality expresses the equal value of both historical time and character. Fundamentally, the character itself is the principle of configuring [*Konfigurieren*] the dominant and subsidiary characters in relation to each other.

Again, an example from the natural sciences: The phenomenon of the earth's rotation is a taken as a standard period. But because the standard is

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8. Tosaka is making sure that his use of the word “organic” cannot be confused with the rightist theory of “organic society,” a key aspect of the fascist ideology of the state based on the natural, harmonious, “organic community” of the folk.

9. Tosaka uses the German words *Konfigural*, *Konfiguralität*, and *Konfigurieren*, written in the Latin alphabet throughout this paragraph and the next. He takes these terms from discrete mathematics which is the study of objects that have distinct values—such as integers and logical statements—that do not flow into one another forming a smooth continuity but maintain their distinctness. These terms are also used in Gestalt psychology to say not merely that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, but that a historical period's very *status as a part* is dependent on the whole and vice versa. This use comes close to Tosaka's rejection of cultural history as even a part of a total history (see above).

*given as fixed* by the totality of the earth's rotation, in determining the particular period [*shuki*] there is, as it were, no gap between the totality and the particular. This use of the word "period" means both *the piece* cut out from the whole and, at the same time, it also means the totality. Because of this, there is absolutely no room for our gestalt quality to operate. Both of these "periods" fall on the same plane. In this sense a natural-scientific period is *two-dimensional* [*heimenteki*]. Historical period, however—that is, one where there is a configured quality—in a different meaning of the term, may be said to be three-dimensional. Crucially, it is the concept of character that prevents the three-dimensional contents of historical time from being flattened into a two-dimensional plane.

The equal value of historical time and character is again made clear. Yet, despite all that has been said to this point, the most important feature of historical time remains to be expressed.

Indeed, the motivation for making historical time a human problem is clearly justified: There is no escaping the fact that people *live* [*seikatsu suru*] within historical time. It is the *time of our lives*; we must now remind ourselves of this fact.

Obviously we all live in the *present*; so where in historical time do we place our present?

Certain people expand the present all the way to eternity in phrases like "the present in the past" or "the present in the future" or "the present in the present." In other words, the present equals a generalized past, present, and future, which in turn equals a generalized time, which equals temporality, and from there we're off to eternity—behold "the eternal now." Then there are others who think of the present as a point in geometry, as something with no length. The instant that the present is thought, it is already the past, and so on. But both of these extremes are merely the flipside of the same mistaken conception of the present. Pushing the issue we find it is because neither conceive of the present as a period into which a division has infiltrated. Eclectic explanations perhaps consider the present as not having a point but a "fringe" or perhaps in terms of *differential calculus*.<sup>10</sup> But it goes without saying that all eclectic explanations are in the same situation as the previous two extremes. In both differential calculus and the "fringe" view, it seems that there is temporal parsing when really there is none. This kind of present is not a historical period.

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10. "Fringe" is written here in Roman characters.

I want to caution that all these conceptions of the present come from the phenomenological concept of time. Our *consciousness* may indeed live in the phenomenological concept of time—but it is equally obvious that our *bodies* cannot.

The place where we actually go about our lives is a present [*genzai*] that exists in historical time, a present that is part of a certain period, indeed, the *present period* [*gendai*]. To say that we live in the present period of course does not teach us anything especially new. What I wish to say is merely this: This present period is a particular period brought into relief through the parsing of historical time. That is to say, the present period has a *limited* duration (neither infinitely short nor long), but this duration is not like that of *ordinary numbers*; it is a unique, particular period influenced by the character of historical time that acts like a *dependent variable*.

Why is the present a unique, particular period? It is because here in the present is the *accent* of the totality of historical time. It is because here is the core, the focal point of the character of historical time. It is because the three-dimensional nature of historical time is *concentrated* here.

Now the reader will surely notice that with all of the various regularities of historical time, here, for the first time, emerges the crystallized core. Historical actions, and narratives even, must take the present period as the point of origin; it seems necessary to state this anew.

The important thing is that this present period is freely expandable and contractable *within the bounds of necessity*. Depending on the situation, the present period may be reduced to “today” or to “now.” Nevertheless, this “now” has the same quality—the same *presentness* [*genzaisei*], the same *reality* [*genjitsusei*] of the present historical period. At the level of principle this means the principle of the present period is the principle of today. This is the *principle of today*—the *principle of the quotidian*.

In this way, historical time comes to be governed by the “principle of everydayness.” In the principle of the day-to-day—the principle of the quotidian—in the constant repetition of the same act though it is a different day, in the common activity of drinking tea, in the absolute inevitability of the principle of everyday life—in these things dwells the crystallized core of historical time; here lies the secret of history. The concept of character that we said has equal value with historical time in reality now appears as the principle of everydayness.

We said the present is governed by necessity and reducible to “today”;

but what sort of necessity governs it? It is governed by the necessity of the life of *practice*. Most likely for *postulated* individuals, people impossibly rich in leisure time [*seikatsusha*], for them, there are probably many presents and present periods as well. This is because, for them, the present, one in which the concept of today is necessary, really never impinges on their lives. If today is bad, tomorrow or the day after will be better. Opposed to this, in a broad and practical sense, for the “worker” [*rōdōsha*], the work absolutely must be done today. And so, for them, the present is *brooded over* and becomes the concept of today—with history thus confined to the level of practice, the present draws ever nearer until it is “today.” And thus the principle of today, the principle of everydayness, uniformly governs historical time. Precisely this is the spirit of history.

The principle of everydayness is the principle of presentness. It is the principle of *reality*, the principle of *factuality* [*jijitsusei*]. Accordingly, it is the principle of *practice* [*jissensei*]. To sum up, the principle of everydayness is the principle of reality and factual truth. In other words, it is not the principle of *possibility*; this we must not forget.\*

\*It is usually thought that talk of principles comes under the aegis of possibility. It is therefore imagined that the principle of possibility is all there is. But if done in this way, history becomes something without any principle at all. Is it not true that there are many occasions when people think of history irrationally?

I will explain the contents of this principle a bit more. The reader will no doubt permit me to relate a story about myself. If I have no *work* to do, I cannot find any legitimate, ethical justifications to worry over my limited lifetime confined by this famous idea of *death*.<sup>11</sup> This is truly a luxurious privilege. But if I do have work to do, because my time is limited, I can no longer waste even a single day. The reason is if my life is without end, I can always safely put off my work from one day to the next. I will always have a chance to recover lost time. Without the risk of wasting time, I may calmly spend my days sleeping and relaxing. But because someday death will indeed come, my work must be completed within a definite time period. This final death is even the ultimate reason for the existence of a deadline for this manuscript. Perhaps even more than writ-

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11. Translator's note: This is a reference to Heidegger's “being toward death” (*Sein zum Tode*), a way of being that through the realization of one's own mortality is supposed to bring a human being's existence (*Dasein*) into authentic perspective.



ing this manuscript, under the same circumstances, my reading some book has value for me. But if I were to put off reading the book until tomorrow, it seems likely that the contents of the book will not have changed much in that time. Opposed to this, there is danger in putting off to tomorrow the writing of this manuscript because tomorrow a friend may call on me. So, no matter what I write, I must finish this manuscript today. Under the aegis of today's circumstances, the previous *valuation* of the two jobs *collapses*. The sense of vision that comes from the presentness of today, from the character of the now, constructs an independent *priority of values*. Because of this, I cannot be allowed to measure the value system embedded in the reality of today with the categories of tomorrow. In accord with my limited lifetime, it is absolutely unavoidable that today's work be tended to today, and tomorrow's tomorrow. Speaking from the standpoint of *planning* a work, the present of today imparts this kind of *law of perspective* to the construction and organization of what to do before and what to do after. Thus this principle of the quotidian is the principle of everydayness. (Of course, if left uncorrected this is an insufficient model of the relationship between my individual self and society—or as a member of a class, or again, a single day of today and a single day in world history.)<sup>12</sup>

Historical time is governed by the principle of everydayness. Furthermore, the exchanging of today for tomorrow or yesterday for today cannot be allowed. This is because doing so confuses the actual with the possible and this ignores the principle of factual reality.

In the end I will show the real world applications of this principle. But here I will confine myself to problems of *logic*.

A characteristic of what is called formal logic is that it mediates things that fall on two identical planes. Things that move and act within these planes are fundamentally contradictory. For example, on one plane, "A" is  $\alpha$  and, at the same time, is not something else like  $\beta$ . However, on the other plane, "A" could very well be  $\beta$ . (But if so, it is already not  $\alpha$ .) And

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12. Though only hinted at here, Tosaka has a complex theory of a given historical period's reception by that period's people who have their own historical sense—a relationship that is neither a simple determination from base to superstructure nor one determined by objective or subjective class position. For an example of the complex relations between history and the present, see the example in Chapter 10 of *The Japanese Ideology*, "The Fate of Japanism: From Fascism to Emperorism," translated by John Person in this volume. A more formal examination of the topic appears in "An Outline of Ideology" (*Ideologii gairon*, 1932).

so in the *vertical* relationship between these two planes, the law of contradiction is not played out. On the first plane, the object “A” is  $\alpha$ , but if “A” has a *concrete mutability*, on the second plane it is of course not  $\alpha$ . (It is  $\beta$  or something else, for example.) Rather than displaying “A’s” contradictory nature, this situation demonstrates “A’s” materiality. Thus, this so-called formal logic is merely a kind of *three-dimensional logic* of different planes. It goes without saying that this just-illustrated three-dimensional logic is none other than *dialectical logic*, but what does this three-dimensionality mean?

If we *deal with objects practically*, the development of successive regularities is, one after the other, revealed to us.<sup>13</sup> This seems to be a succession for our own convenience but in reality it is a matter of principle. It is part of the peculiar character of objects themselves. Accordingly, it corresponds to the successive development of the various regularities seen when matter is *in motion*—meaning, *historically*. Because of this, the gap between the previous first and second planes—its three-dimensionality—must be said to correspond to an object’s historical changes. Logic is three-dimensional because it corresponds to *historical time*.

Now, for things that are especially historical—in other words, for historical, social things—in order to deal with these things *practically*, logic must be completely unified with this just-illustrated historical time (not simply correspond to it). In other words, logic must be governed by the principle of everydayness. And so, temporal perspective—the distinction between earlier and later, foreground and background—this kind of law of perspective means the difference between the *values stemming from logic*. In the end, aligning the *reality* given by the present with the *possibility* of the future (ideality, imagination, anticipation, fear, anxiety, and so on)—in a non-everyday, formalistic manner—is necessarily a fiction that renders any of our practical actions impossible. This fiction is called a *utopia*. For this utopia to be exposed as such, the principle of everydayness that governs logic should be made clear. But in fact, today this utopia almost completely dominates the philosophies of idealism.

The real world applications of the principle of everydayness are not exhausted by the above example. Indeed, it is a fundamental principle of every historical and social object. This is because it goes without saying

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13. “Regularities” here mean the fundamental things that act upon an object and help determine it. Space and time are the most basic of these; see, for example, Plato’s *Timaeus*.

that historical time and the equally important “character” make the principle of everydayness.

If I may be permitted a rather bold comparison, does not the principle of everydayness occupy a place in the historical imagination just as Einstein’s Theory of Relativity and Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle do in physics? People could very well discover a number of similarities between the nature of these principles. If, in the end, this principle proves the validity of the *doctrine of historical materialism* and the equally important dictates of logic, the comparison may no longer seem so unjust.

# On Space (Introduction and Conclusion)

*Translated by Robert Stolz*

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“On Space” (*Kūkanron*) first appeared in *Iwanami kōza: Tetsugaku* (Iwanami Lectures: Philosophy) in 1931 and was later reprinted in Tosaka’s own 1936 edited collection *Gendai yuibutsuron kōwa* (*Lectures on Contemporary Materialism*). “On Space” is a continuation of Tosaka’s earlier university study in the history and philosophy of science, particularly concepts of space, in the late 1920s. But this text is also a confrontation with the question of Being (*Seinfrage*) of German philosophy, especially the Heideggerian philosophy of Being popular in Japanese philosophical circles, which included Miki Kiyoshi, Watsuji Tetsurō, Kuki Shūzō, and many others. The main word for Being in this text is *sonzai*, which may just as easily be translated as “existence.” To maintain a sense of debate with Heidegger—begun in “‘Busshitsu’ no testugaku gainen” (The Philosophical Concept of Matter), the essay immediately prior to “On Space” in the 1936 volume—this translation uses Being or being(s) to translate *sonzai*, *aru*, *yū*, and others. It maintains this translation even for passages clearly influenced by Lenin’s *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* (1909) when the word “existence” might be more appropriate, as in Lenin’s famous phrasing: “Nature may be infinite, but it infinitely exists.” Section 1, “The Problem of Space (Introduction),” and Section 4, “Everyday Space (Conclusion)” are translated here. Sections 2, “Intuitive Space,” and 3, “Geometrical Space and the Space of Physics,” are not translated. For

summaries of these two sections, see the essay “Here, Now: Everyday Space as Cultural Critique” in this volume.

“On Space” is translated from the 1936 text in *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1966), 3:239–266.

## 1. The Problem of Space (Introduction)

Space, or the concept of space, has emerged as a specific problem in practically every philosophy and every field of thought. Space has become an issue even in theories of painting and sculpture and in theories of the theater and cinema. Indeed, our sight, touch, and hearing, this *world*—the actually existing world [*jitsuzaikai*]<sup>1</sup>—cannot be separated from some spatial determination. For us, every day of our lives is spent under the governance of this space. Given this, it is really not so strange that space has been taken up as an object of inquiry by nearly all theories and sciences or that the problem of space has permeated every field. Yet despite all this interest in space, every approach to the problem is undertaken independently with no relation to others and so a piecemeal approach to the problem of space has won out. No matter from what direction theory or science may approach it, with respect to space, instead of approaching the problem head on, it is treated as a merely partial, particular problem. An illustration: We simply have no knowledge of some actual thing called “spatial theory” [*kūkanron*] as a *discipline* of science or philosophy passed down to us through history; we hear no talk about the existence of an object of a spatiology [*kūkangaku*] as we do in the study of consciousness by contemporary psychology.

From this *particularistic* vantage point—a particularization not seen as a problem by many people—everywhere one looks, space is seen as merely a single, particular problem. Insofar as theory and science are specialized, as far as they are textbook-like, space as an object of philosophy is no more than one issue out there on the margins. Even on those occasions when space is taken up as an issue, the presentation of the problem nearly invariably is from some dilettante curiosity or is thought of episodically.

In contrast to mere science, theory and philosophy do not stop at a *particular* perspective. Theoretical or philosophical approaches must come from a *unified* perspective. In a manner of speaking, they must first

three-dimensionally dismember the various problems of the sciences and, having done so, reorganize them. In place of a textbook approach, what is required is an encyclopedic eye. In the case of the problem of space—since the specialized approach of space was more dispersed than anywhere else—if a single, unified perspective were used, all the more, an exceedingly striking issue will rise to the surface. The problem of space is not an issue that comes from the partial musings of the hordes of casual philosophers: Our saying this here is based in history.

Ancient Greek philosophy, especially pre-Socratic philosophy—people usually call this natural philosophy but we must not forget that at the time it was considered philosophy itself—the entirety of it can be seen as revolving around the issue of *space*. On this point we offer here three historical moments. The first is Parmenides (fifth century BC) who, we can say, was essentially the first person to theorize the category of Being [*sonzai*]. According to Parmenides, *Being* meant “to be” [*aru*]: “Only being is, nothing is not.” This is not a simple tautology. For Parmenides, to be meant to be *spatially*. In this case Being was considered as one with *space*; it was *spatial Being*. Parmenides was by no means the only one who anticipated a spatialist theory of Being [*kūkanrontekina sonzairon*]. Indeed, his view was merely the most characteristic example; it expressed nothing more than the contemporary Greek worldview, one that was to remain in place for a bit longer. As for the second moment—if looked at from the perspective of the main current of so-called Greek natural philosophy, with Parmenides being the most brilliant transmitter of this tradition—if viewed this way, more or less the next in line in this tradition is Pythagoras (ca. sixth century BC), or the Pythagorean School. That said, if viewed from a slightly different way of thinking, the Pythagorean School is not at all a branch of the tradition, but rather a reconstruction of Greek philosophy’s religious origins. For Pythagoras the fundamental principle of Being [*sonzai*] was *number*. But this number itself—including its mystical characteristics and associations—was absolutely understood as a spatial determination. For example, the number one defined a point, two a line, three a plane, and so on. Contrary to expectations that would divorce Pythagoras from so-called natural philosophy, even here, Pythagoras maintained the fundamental system of ancient Greek philosophy’s association of space and Being. But when we come to the third historical moment, we should look closely at this view of Being as space or as spatial existence; we must acknowledge that a difficulty has sneaked up on us.

Literally, space means emptiness [*munashii*], and in this sense, it is not Being [*sonzai*] or being [*aru*]. It is far from it; it is the void [*mu*]. Being may be spatial, but it is not space itself. Thus, between space and Being there is separation, opposition, and antagonism. So to be a unity—meaning for Being to become *spatial Being*—we must make this relationship concrete. And this is Democritus’s *atomic theory* (fourth century BC). But we must not forget this point: In this theory as well, just as before, to the end Being is *spatial*.

In ancient Greek philosophy the concept of Being revolved around the concept of space. And as everyone knows well, this ancient Greek philosophy is the origin of all of our later philosophy. If we do not forget this point, surely we can all agree that our problem—space—had been in no way treated as a particular or piecemeal problem by philosophy.

But alas, all this is merely limited to the early historical period of philosophy. Already, from Socrates on, existence cast off its spatial determination; indeed existence became formless [*mukeitekina*] or spiritual [*seishintekina*] existence. In modern and contemporary philosophy space is only a single and particularistic attribute of Being. And so it is likely that today people would say that it is simply no longer possible to make space a straight up central issue for philosophy as it had been for the ancient Greek natural philosophers. In one sense, this is correct. Having developed from post-Socratic philosophy, which itself had passed through numerous extremely complicated twists and turns, in early modern and contemporary philosophy space does not constitute a line of descent in this tradition—far from it. In most cases it is time [*toki*] that is problematized. Time is the beginning and end of philosophical inquiry, and space is at times never even discussed. Even if we look deeper into those cases where space seems to be taken up as a real problem, the majority of those philosophers have considered space something of a chore [*gimuteki*] or as some unavoidable consequence of their organizational structure. It cannot be denied that the number of philosophers who genuinely problematize the problem of space, who genuinely work out a resolution, and who promote and advance a philosophical consideration of the problem, are so few that they can be quickly enumerated. In a word, when compared with other various important problems—such as consciousness, value, spirit, or culture, and even further back God or angels—consideration of the problem of space has been surprisingly rare in the later philosophical world.

However, the problem lies precisely here. Why is it that when we look

at the main line of philosophical inquiry through history our problem of space is so slighted—indeed, must be so slighted? If this trend all started with Socrates, then what sort of philosophy did it start together with? While we are on the subject, casting off the determination of Being, *natural* Being [*shizenteki sonzai*] (and in a suggestive and significant sense *material* Being [*busshitsuteki sonzai*])—more on this later) leads directly to immaterial and therefore, to that extent, spiritual, nonsensuous, determinations. It may fairly be said that the kind of philosophy that slighted space began together with this sort of philosophical system. Instead of thinking about Being as *material*—and it is necessary that people understand the productive ways that this category is used in contemporary philosophy—Being becomes determined by some sort of *idealist* thing. This is the theory of Being we today generally call *idealism*. It was together with this idealist theory of existence that the problem of space began to be treated so coldly. Socrates (399 BC) was the greatest pioneer of that system. It was Socrates who, true to his name as a Sophist, slandered the fundamental problem of natural philosophy, the problem of spatial Being.<sup>1</sup> This mistrust was finally removed only in Plato's later, mature work *Timaeus*, in which again, space—Aristotle (322 BC) later changed this word to “Platonic *matter*”—ascended to the womb of Ideas. The denigration of space began with the adoption of *idealism*. On the other hand, we can also understand how respect for the problem of space, from the very beginning, began with *materialism* [*yuibutsuron*]. So really, for ancient Greek philosophy—speaking of its fundamental system—in a significantly meaningful way, space as a problem goes hand in hand with materialism. Those who do not accept this historical truth likely are misled by limited or partial connotations of words like materialism or idealism and in the process lose those words' essences. To people who use such superficial or even arbitrary terminology, Democritus himself (because he was a forerunner of Plato's idealism)—he, too, can be seen as an idealist, thereby rendering him no obstacle whatsoever to us today. (See, for example, Hermann Cohen.)<sup>2</sup>

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1. This is not the generally or historically accepted usage of Socrates in his debate with the Sophists, but it is nonetheless what Tosaka states here. It is likely an attempted play on Socrates's position by suggesting it was Socrates himself who, in regard to space, was behaving as a Sophist.

2. Hermann Cohen (1842–1918) was a philosopher of religion and member of the Marburg School of Neo-Kantianism.



The problem of space ebbs and flows together with *materialism*. Space can be made a problem and be viewed *from the proper angle* with the establishment of a materialistic worldview or from within a materialist philosophical system. From the truth that there is a thing called space (though if this means things, a thing, or a relation, we do not yet know)—from this basic point that space exists, no matter what position people may take, at least provisionally, either from obligation or from choice—this thing called space must be problematized. But merely being able to problematize something and being able to problematize *from the proper perspective* are not the same thing. Indeed, to approach any problem squarely and head on—to merely flank it can be said to be a cheap expedience—in order to resolve a problem, that problem must be taken up by virtue of its own necessity [*jihatsuteki ni toriageta*]. And if it is a question of philosophy, the philosophical system must already traverse [*yokotawaru*] the entire issue. In this, the problem of space is no exception. For space to be made into a proper problem, which is to say for the problem of space to have a meaningful resolution, only a materialist standpoint will do. This is the lesson of our look at the problem to this point. At the same time this will be the policy that will guide our analysis and judgment going forward.

From our adopted standpoint in materialism, should we wish to quickly investigate the special characteristics of various other philosophies—limiting ourselves to those that are sufficiently theoretical—we would do well to look at what attitude they display toward the problem of space, and further, what sort of resolution to the problem they offer. For what is called idealism, though we may include numerous decidedly incompatible examples beneath this word, we must note that for all the nearly unlimited diversity, difference, and separation among the various philosophies, they all, really without exception, stumble over the problem of space. In this way, when one adopts a materialist vantage point, the problem of space becomes a useful touchstone for philosophical criticism. This possibility for criticism is one of the added benefits of this approach.

Obviously, the problem of space is a *particular* problem; it is not every problem. But precisely because this is the case, it is a problem that for the first time can have significance for *every case* [*zenpan*]. All problems are particular. A *general problem* [*ippanteki mondai*] is one in which a problem's own particularity itself may become the fulcrum to move the

totality [*zentai*]. From theory to science, there is no other sort of general problem. Problems are always particular, and they are always concrete.

Since the early modern period, the problem of space has been aligned with the problem of *time*. Because of this people have accepted the thesis that, in a sense, holds time and space to be parallel. And this thesis makes it seem as if space cannot become an independent problem on its own or, further, that the problem of space may be displaced into the problem of time. And sure enough, in one meaning of the parallelism of time and space [*heikōron*], there is a good reason for seeing the two problems this way. Space belongs to the treatment (or mode) of things, time to the treatment of mind (*kokoro*)—spirit or consciousness would do just as well. And so just as the issues of mind and matter are seen as parallel, space and time, too, are thought to have a corresponding parallelism. In terms of their unknown essences there is only a singular space and a singular time. Therefore, the space and time that we are able to present when we consider any problem directly will only be various *phenomenal forms* of an essential space or time. And so in these cases we will only be able to conclude that some *single* phenomenal form of space and some *single* phenomenal form of time have a parallel relationship. Without examining all other instances on a case-by-case basis we cannot say anything at all about whether all or any other phenomenal forms of time and space have a parallel relationship or not. Nature has a spatial expansion, and together with this, in parallel to this, it is said it has a temporal expansion. But because the space and the time of nature are merely various single phenomenal forms, from just this case we are not justified in extrapolating out to say that this parallelism is true for all phenomenal forms. In our consciousness inner and outer senses parallel each other, and so time and space, respectively, too, seem as though they may be treated as parallel. But it is not necessary to consider the issue to the extent that Kant did to see that these two things are put in a relation that is difficult to even make some comparison, let alone declare they have a parallel relationship.

Space and time are of different dimensions. They develop and organize the various phenomenal forms. So even if they are made to be two things in parallel one could not paint them with the same brush. If one were to do so, it would be the same as rendering the problems of time and space as no longer parallel, and even if space is provisionally dealt with as parallel to time, the problem of space cannot have any real resolution. If

space and time are seen as parallel, is it not necessary to show just where the problem of space and the problem of time are made parallel? For our purposes the problem of space must be made provisionally independent of the problem of time. We will neither unify it nor lump it together with the problem of time. Doing so would result only in an extremely superficial version of the problem of space.

But, of course, space itself [*kūkan sonomono*] is obviously not independent of time itself. Indeed, it is a long way from being independent of time, for space especially is part of a strong, intimate union with time. It is no longer a question of parallel problems, but a problem of the *fraenum* of the union between two things.<sup>3</sup> To say two things are parallel is never anything more than a convenient and lazy concept for talking about their relationship. So how are space and time associated?

In the world of physics, matter is determined by time and space: Matter moves. Here space's association with time is mediated by matter and motion. Of course, it goes without saying that this is one example showing the associations of time and space. But for what we want to say about the relations of time and space is in no way yet made clear by this example. Indeed, the synthetic association just mentioned is only a single instance of a unified relation between the phenomenal forms of the *space of physics* [*butsuriteki kūkan*] and the *time of physics* [*butsuriteki jikan*]. And so, too, the work of mediation by matter and movement, that is to say both matter as seen by the phenomenal form of physics—the matter of physics [*butsurigakuteki busshitsu*—and motion in the phenomenal form physics (we could call this spatial motion), this matter and motion are still only single phenomenal forms. But the matter dealt with in physics can be distinguished from the wider category of *philosophical matter*. (See Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*, 1909.) And spatial motion can be distinguished from the wider category of motion = change. (See Aristotle's *Metaphysics* and others.) Beyond the time of physics there are other phenomenal forms such as the *time of consciousness* (psychological time) or *historical time*. In the same way, space has various other phenomenal forms beyond the *space of physics*. In the conclusion we shall see that it is likely that running behind all these various phenomenal forms there is space, the essence of space, space itself [*kūkan jitai*], and further that this

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3. Fraenum is a biological term for the thin membrane linking two elements, such as that connecting the bottom of the tongue to the lower jaw.

space and time (time itself) can be associated through the mediation of motion and matter (the categories of philosophical motion and philosophical matter). We shall see that when talking of this essential space, to say that it is *parallel* to time does not say too much but too little.

But we cannot think about space itself. Ultimately, does not space itself determine the form of appearance for the essence—the thing in itself? Is not space something without essence? Is it not a phenomenal form? A form of intuition? Or so would many readers object here. But why is it that so many so quickly come to stand with Kant's thesis? Moreover, why is it that they must do so? In fact, later we will have to make Kant's spatial theory itself an object of criticism.

In our analysis of the various phenomenal forms we will need to recognize this space itself—the space that unifies the various phenomenal forms. To do otherwise, that is, in an immediate and unmediated manner, would never allow us to sufficiently grasp space. Of course this means it goes without saying that space possesses a side that may be grasped within its immediate form [*chokusettai*]. (We will deal with this presently.) But that immediate form is, in a word, just one side of the thing; it is not concrete. And again, what does it mean to talk about the *various phenomenal forms* of space? Or an *immediate form of essential* space?

All contemporary theorists of space would likely agree on one point: that space is broken down into various examples. Many divide space into three kinds. The first is *intuitive space* (the *space of psychology* or *spatial representation*); the second would be *geometric space* (*mathematical space*); and the third would be the *space of physics* (from the *space of physics* to *physical, actual space* [*jijitsuteki kūkan*]). These three areas are the phenomenal forms of space. Incidentally, the concepts of space for these three disciplines must be produced through the work of specialized sciences: psychology, geometry, physics, and so on. Yet each of these efforts is linked to something that is not a specialized science at all but to our common sense [*jōshikiteki*] in our everyday lives: an everyday, commonsensical concept of space. The space that accords with this *everyday* and *commonsensical concept*—*everyday space*—is an abstraction of space itself in its immediate form. In contrast, the concepts of space in the three areas above are abstractions of the mediated forms of space—they are mediated by the construction of concepts within the specialized sciences. The truth of space, the true determination of space, is found only in the general synthesis of the mediated and immediate.

The problem of space permeates the various sciences of psychology, geometry, physics, philosophy, and so on. Using the particular viewpoint of a particular science prevents us from seeing it clearly. Therefore, only a unified vantage point can result in a resolution of the problem. Materialism generally takes up problems of such (synthetic) nature.

Intuitive space, geometric space, the space of physics, everyday space. We will now take up these different forms of space to try to synthesize, as much as possible, the results.

## 2. Intuitive Space

## 3. Geometric Space and the Space of Physics

## 4. Everyday Space (Conclusion)

And so, finally, we come to the problem of the essence of space. But before we take this on, we must first explore the ways in which space has been explicated as a *philosophical* category. We do so because we are in search of a particular and independent single phenomenal form of the essence of space—and this space is something people have not paid attention to.

So far we have looked at intuitive space, geometry, and the space of physics—all of them merely single phenomenal forms of the unified essence of space. If we are to truly take on our problem of space, if we are to truly grasp space as a concept, we know that we must overcome the perspectives of the particular sciences of psychology, geometry, and physics, and insist on a general theoretical—philosophical—perspective. We would not be able to notice this if we did not have beforehand a singular and independent concept of space that would be common to, and probably underlie, these three phenomenal forms of spaces. Before people construct the concepts of space in psychology, geometry, or physics they must first have a single, general concept of space. Because this concept of space is not one built from the knowledge possessed by the *specialized sciences*, it is a nonspecialized, *everyday* concept of space. And so we call it *everyday space*.

If the previous three spaces are *partial* phenomenal forms of space itself, this everyday space is the *general* [*zenpanteki*] phenomenal form. If

the former spaces are *indirect abstractions* of space itself, everyday space can be said to be its direct abstraction. The concept of everyday space (we will look at just what this is below) is the space used by people in their *everyday lives*—and this in one sense is not specialized knowledge, but *commonsensical*. As such it is a decidedly direct conception of space. All of the other conceptions of space are born of some *disciplinary* interest and developed in a partial manner centered on the particular focus of a particular *specialized sphere* of inquiry. In contrast to this method—adopting from the very start a focus on universal theory, a philosophy departing from a *unified* interest—we may say that many of these theories of space are circling around this central everyday space. And so for this reason we call this space *philosophical space*.

As for this concept of space (*Raum*; this is the original, everyday concept of space), philosophers have replaced it with various concepts that resemble it. For example, in place of space there are theories of *spaces* (*Räume*; though Kant got it right when he used this concept of space for the space of physics), theories of “the spatial” (*das Räumliche*) [*kūkanteiki naru mono*] (F[rantz] Brentano, *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt*, 1917), and theories of *spatiality* (*Räumlichkeit*; M[artin] Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, 1927). The first of these confuses the concept of matter with that of *space*; the second confuses the concept of *spatially represented* objects with the concept of space itself; and the third confuses space and spatial analogies, such as, for example, the *geometry of color* (*Farbengeometrie*) or the *geometry of sound* (*Tongeometrie*). Errors follow from all of these substitutions. But why even risk it? Why is it that people feel they must substitute another concept for the concept of space? It is because they are attempting to *explain* the concept of space in terms of some nearby, similar concept. As this desire to explain grows worse space comes to be explained in terms of *God* (Henry More, 1687, or Newton, 1727) or in terms of *light* (for example, the thirteenth-century natural philosopher Vitello<sup>4</sup>). Throughout history these kinds of explanations are not rare. But before the concept of space (everyday space) can be *explained* from without, it must first be *analyzed* from within.

What is discovered through and by analysis of the concept of everyday space is a singular *Being-ness* [*sonzaisei*]—a spatial being.<sup>5</sup> Beings or

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4. Polish philosopher Erasmus Ciolek Witelo (Vitello), born ca. 1230.

5. Translator’s note: existentiality.

entities in space [*sonzai suru mono*] are not directly space. At the very least, that beings are [exist] in space is space [*sonzai suru mono ga sonzai suru koto ga kūkan na no de aru*]. An everyday conception of space is not a concept of (spatial) beings [*sonzaisha*], but a concept of (spatial) Being-ness [*sonzaisei*]. And so, throughout history the concept of Being-ness or existentiality in everyday space has been expressed by various terms. The first way to express this is *where* (*ubi*); second, *place* (*locus*); and third *location* (*situs*). But whichever of these we choose to look at, we see they mean where *in space*, a place *within space*, and located *in space*. As such are all merely terms that only partially express space. The term that can express the totality of space is none other than a fourth term, “spatium” [*kūkan*].<sup>6</sup> But this fourth term, which comes from scholasticism’s theory of space—much of it from Aristotle—is confined to scholasticism, which is to say it is merely a *term*. As such, from the outset what this term should express, namely the *actual structure of space*—Being-ness, existentiality—is absolutely unclear. We will now drop the historical debate over the structure of space (according to the everyday concept) in favor of a simple analysis.

The existentiality of space is first established in *extension* (*extensio*). Descartes (1650) and Spinoza (1677) thought of extension as an attribute of bodily [*buttaiteki*] or material [*busshitsuteki*] objects. Extension is built up from the three parts: *dimension* (Dimension), *continuity*, and *length*.<sup>7</sup> The first, dimension, generally means in the process of uniting diversities these diversities continue to possess an independence both in relation to the whole and to each other. Dimension is a unification of diversities. For example, the diversities of the deployment of length, weight, and time are unified as given by physics’ definitions (the CGS system<sup>8</sup>); in the deployment of all three—length, weight, time—each has an irreducible independence, and in this sense they make up a *single dimension*. Now we are dealing with the problem of space: extension. A particular characteristic of space according to the everyday conception, in other words, space as the dimension of extension, is its three-dimensionality. These three dimensions must include *commutability* (*vertauschbar*)—*isotropy* (*Isotro-*

6. Here Tosaka himself glosses the Latin *spatium*, written in Roman characters, with *kūkan*.

7. *Jigen* is glossed as “Dimension,” written in Roman characters in the original.

8. The Centimeter-Gram-Second system of physical units was an earlier version of the modern International System of Units (IS).

pie)<sup>9</sup>—as well as homogeneity (*homogen*) and *linearity* or *planarity* (*eben*). These are characteristics of *dimension in extension*.

Second is *continuum* [*renzoku*]. Continuum, like dimension, is not limited to being a discovery of extension. Continuum is also established in numbers, time, and movement. But a continuum in extension possesses certain characteristics. Which is to say that while originally continuum is tied to the concepts of the *infinite* or the *indefinite*, a continuum in extension is not simply infinite or eternal—it is especially something not *closed* (*geschlossen*); a continuity in extension means that it is *open* (*offen*).<sup>10</sup> Here we can discover the particularity of a continuum in extension.

The third determination of extension is length (*separation* or *interval*). Normally, when speaking of length, what we mean is: What is the length of something as *measured by* some fixed unit of measure? But prior to this sort of measurement, and with no relation to some unit of measure, first surely there is the general determination of length in the sense of: Does something *have or not have length* at all? And from here, if it does indeed have length, then the problem of determining just how long it is can proceed. If we were to express this in terms borrowed from mathematics, length in this case is not a length founded in *measurement* (*Messung*), but as it were, we can say it is a length founded in *order* (*Ordnung*): If A is to the left of B, and B is to the left of C, the length AB is included within the length AC. In this case, left and right as a locational relationship is what we call order.

And so, in proceeding in this way, we see that space as understood by the conception of the everyday—or that which can signal all of the fundamental determinations—all traces back to extension. Extension is the actual structure of everyday space. The reader may notice that this analysis of everyday space is very close to Kant's analysis of *intuitive space*. Is, in fact, our everyday space the same as Kant's intuitive space? But notice, too, Kant analyzed intuitive space without problematizing the everyday. If it is not derived from a *concept of the everyday*, it cannot be called everyday space. It is thus wholly accidental that Kant's result resembles ours. The spirit of the analysis—that is, its site and goal—are totally different. Kant's method never escapes *psychological* and *phenomenological* cate-

9. Uniformity in all orientations. Wood grain is an example of a non-isotropic object.

10. For more on the application and implications of this claim, see the essay "Here, Now: Everyday Space as Cultural Critique" in this volume.



gories. Instead of analyzing space from and *according to the concept of the everyday* (this means the concept of everyday space), Kant merely analyzed space *as intuition*. We have analyzed *space as a concept of the everyday, within the concept of the everyday, according to the concept of the everyday*—we could call it a *conceptual analysis*. It has not been our course to analyze space *as intuition* or *within intuition* or *according to intuition* (which would be analyzing intuition—the essence of intuition, *Wesensschau*). As for space understood according to the concept of the everyday (this is everyday space), the *phenomenological* method (taking Husserl as representative)—and in search of what is characteristic of Kant’s theory above—offers us no guidance. For only with a categorical analysis and a philosophical method can an object of study be made clear.

It is only because we have taken up this method of analysis that the *character* [*seikaku*] of Being-ness [*sonzaisei*] according to the concept of the everyday may be correctly grasped. On the subject of everyday space we have already seen its *terms* and its *actual structure*, but, really, these two determinations only come to have *meaning* when oriented toward the third determination, that of the character [*seikaku*], the specificity [*tokusei*], of space. And so, the character of space—*existentiality*—according to the concept of the everyday means *Da*<sup>11</sup>—a *certain objectivity*. We really cannot explain the specificity of objectivity meant by this *Da-Charakter* [*Da-seikaku*] in terms of any other concepts. That is, there are no other ways of explaining it other than explaining it in terms of itself; this fact makes it a fundamental determination. This *Da* = “there” [*soko*]<sup>12</sup> is precisely the character of the concept of everyday space. Space is none other than the *Da-Charakter* of things.<sup>13</sup>

While we are on the subject, as a result of being split into specializations and to the extent that space no longer possessed the concept of the everyday—to the extent that the existence of this concept of the everyday was lost—philosophy of the non-everyday was already specialized and

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11. *Da*, the German word for “there,” is written in Roman characters here and throughout the rest of the essay.

12. *Soko*, meaning “there,” is Tosaka’s own gloss of *Da*.

13. In this case the whole of *Da-Charakter* is in the Roman alphabet, using the German spelling. I will use this German spelling from here on to highlight the specificity of the concept and to preserve the typographical shock of the original, where *Da* is invariably written in Roman characters—even when *charakter* itself appears as *seikaku* in kanji.

non-commonsensual. And so philosophers of this specialized, non-everyday sort graft some kind of *logical* character onto space. (In Hermann Cohen, 1918, space is only a “category.”) For others it is a character derived from some sort of theory of *intended objects* that is grafted onto space. (For Alexius Meinong, 1921, space is subsumed within the category of being-such, or *So-Sein*.) We have already seen the case of space having the character of some sort of phenomenological thing (Kant and Husserl). But logical things have the *character of judgment and validity* (see E. Lask, 1915). And in contrast, the being-such in the theory of intended objects has the character of *presupposition (Annahme)*—that is, it occupies the space between affirmative and negative judgment; in other words, it is a preliminary stage that does not reach validity. Phenomenological things, then, have the character of *consciousness*.<sup>14</sup> Judgment, validity, presupposition, consciousness, (and likely countless others): That none of these truly possesses a *Da-Charakter* is characteristic of them. And so space does not belong to these other things, and the character of space is replaced by some other character. Space, therefore, disappears. These philosophers thereby clean up space with decidedly erroneous methods. The cause of their offense is, without question, that across the board they fail to consider space from the concept of the everyday. To the extent that they do not recognize the concept of everyday space, they will never consistently or correctly grasp the concept of space. And so space is the leftover bit that is explained according to the dictates of their philosophical systems, and in the end it is only some expedient construction. Herbart’s *intelligible space (intelligibler Raum)* is an extreme example of such a *philosophical construction*.<sup>15</sup>

So finally, this concept of *everyday space* is that which people make direct use of in their daily lives, a space of the *Da-Charakter*; it is that shared foundation underpinning the concepts of intuitive space, geometrical space, and the space of physics. But, of course, the space that appears by means of this concept is not the whole of space. This is so because it

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14. As opposed to everyday space’s *Da-Charakter*. Tosaka further problematizes the idealism that results from a reliance on consciousness as a fundamental concept in “The Principle of Everydayness and Historical Time”; see the translation in this volume.

15. The post-Kantian philosopher Johann Friedrich Herbart’s (1776–1841) *intelligibler Raum* is a complicated concept, but it boils down to a conception of space that is objective but nonetheless dependent on a thinking subject to establish that objectivity. Tosaka will criticize this use of the term “objectivity” as mere pretense below.

cannot substitute for or do all of the work of these other three examples. Everyday space, too, is merely another phenomenal form of space itself.

So, we come now to the thing called *space itself*. But just what is it? With this problem we are entering into the conclusion of our theory.

The *Da-Charakter* of space is revealed in the most direct phenomenon of everyday space. It is thanks to this *Da-Charakter* that one is able to think about the other various phenomenal forms and, accordingly, it is this *Da-Charakter* that unites the various phenomenal forms under the same concept of space. Space itself, from the beginning must be the unifier of the various phenomenal forms.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, the *Da-Charakter* of everyday space must relatively, but still faithfully, convey the character of space itself.

The *Da-Charakter* of everyday space has a certain *objectivity*. Here, we are not thinking of, say, an anthropological (*ningentekina*) Being (*Da-sein*)—Heidegger.<sup>17</sup> If we were to do so, in one meaning, this would likely give it some sense of being *subjective*. No, we are saying that it indicates an objectivity—that is, space cannot be explained other than in terms of itself. This points toward a way of being *outside of subjects* and *independent of subjects*. In its most significant meaning, we call this objectivity *matter [busshitsu]*—philosophical matter [*busshitsu, shitsuryō*]. Philosophical matter is not some sort of special name for Being; it expresses the being [*sonzai suru koto*], the Being-ness itself [*sonzaisei sono mono*], of all beings that are. In actuality it is this matter that each of us relies on in our everyday lives. Obviously, people are able to go about their daily lives relying on this matter without having first to pass through the structure of the atom as described by physics' theory of physical matter. This means everyday space is none other than the field of practice. In this

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16. For Tosaka, this unification of the various forms is also a requirement for space to be considered philosophically; see the introduction of this essay on “the problem of space” and the discussion immediately following.

17. “Anthropological” here is *ningentekina*, or “humanistic.” It likely refers to the belief that the world is dependent on humans and human consciousness criticized by Lenin in his discussion of the findings of sciences such as astronomy, geology, and others that showed the world older than human beings themselves. It is less likely an anticipation of Heidegger's own self-critique in 1946 of the “humanism” in his earlier work *Being and Time* (1927); see Martin Heidegger, “Letter on Humanism,” in *Basic Writings*, ed. David Farrell Krell, trans. Frank A. Capuzzi and J. Glenn Gray (London: Harperperennial: Modern Thought, 1993), 213–265.

sense, then, the concept of everyday space lies within one conception of matter—that is, philosophical matter, not necessarily that of physics. It is from this matter that the *Da-Charakter* comes.

It is from everyday space's *Da-Charakter*—materiality [*busshitsu-sei*]<sup>1</sup>—that finally, we can retrace back to that which lies behind it all, *space itself*. The specificity of space itself must be precisely, from the very start, this *Da-Charakter*, this materiality. And it was only by passing through this *concept of the everyday* that everyday space's *Da-Charakter* appeared. Still, this *Da-Charakter*—that is, the materiality that comes from matter—no matter what we say here, when compared with space itself, is a fuzzy shadow. Actually, in people's everyday lives, philosophical matter (though it has the *Da-Charakter* at its root) is only vaguely conceptualized in a *commonsensical* way. A commonsensical concept of matter, though it is matter, cannot be thought of as one that clearly and consciously belongs to the philosophical and universal category. Thus, though the materiality of everyday space is the foundation of the other various phenomenal forms, this relationship is eventually lost, and everyday space is confused with the concept of matter in physics. Contrarily, the materiality (*Da-Charakter*) of space itself must be clearly and completely, to the very last, made explicit. The character of space itself is this primal, ultimate *materiality*—matter understood as a philosophical category; it is a materiality that comes from *matter itself* [*busshitsu jishin*].<sup>2</sup>

When thought about this way, we can understand how the sort of thought that would place the character of space within *ideality* is done so from some desire to put the cart before the horse. First, and most importantly, space must be objective. But in the idealist telling, it is an objectivity that is grounded in a pretense. In this telling, space's objectivity retreats to the objectivity of a *subject*, and the presentation of the problem is a tale told in precisely the reverse order. In this case the problem is neither the problem of space itself nor is space chosen as a way to problematize space itself, but rather it is chosen to fulfill some aim of *idealism*. From the start it is a problem of idealism. The *entire system of idealism* was said to have been motivated by means of the *discovery of the ideality of space*; Kant himself said as much in reflecting on the problem. But in reality is not the opposite the truth?

So, if we are to properly confront the problem of space head on, only a resolution on the basis of *materialism* [*yuibutsuron*]<sup>3</sup> will do. At the start of this investigation we indicated the actual history of philosophy on this

subject. The essence of space originates in (philosophical) *matter*. (Kant unfortunately understood this in terms of the concept of the unknowable *thing-in-itself* and necessarily evaded the problem.) The *problem of space* is traced to the *problem of matter*. A *theory of space* [*kūkanron*] returns to a *theory of matter* [*busshitsuron*]. And is it not obvious that a theory of matter can only be resolved by materialism [*yuibutsuron*]?

*Matter* in physics, it goes without saying, occupies a *spatial* extension, and in accordance with *time*, it *moves*; these are its fundamental determinations. (As for movement, it can be thought that the concept of *force* is also necessary, but force, too, can be counted among the fundamental determinations of matter.) Matter in physics has *physical space*, *physical time*, and *physical motion* for its moments [*kikai*].<sup>18</sup> These moments, because they are moments, are separated from and opposed to both other moments and the whole (matter). But at the same time, and because they are all triggered by this initial moment of matter, they each enter into an unbreakable relationship between the other moments and the whole. Therefore, physical space enters into an inseparable mutual relation with the other moments of physical time and physical motion as well as matter. Physical space is a *dialectical moment* of physical matter. We touched on this earlier. And so, physical matter is one phenomenon—for materialism [*yuibutsuron*] it is the first phenomenon—of philosophical matter; again, what for Kant was unfortunately the unknowable thing-in-itself. Therefore, in the same way we provisionally moved from everyday space to space itself, it is not difficult to imagine that these relations of *physical matter* may, more or less just as they are, be traced back to philosophical matter.

Actually, the particular characteristics of the content of the concept of philosophical matter are imparted by *objectivity* and *mobility*. The latter, philosophical motion—change [*henka*]—is necessarily one of a pair of moments together with time (philosophical time). The former is without question none other than the *Da-Charakter* moment of space itself. Space itself is the moment [*momento*]<sup>19</sup> ruled by the *Da-Charakter* of philosophical matter. Actually, the character of space is originally a single character

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18. Literally, this means “moment” but can also mean “aspect”; see Frederic Jameson on this point: “The German word ‘Moment’ is ambiguous: when masculine, it has the temporal sense of the English ‘moment’; but when neuter, it simply means ‘aspect’” (Jameson, *Valences of the Dialectic* [London: Verso, 2009], 76).

19. “Moment” is written as “*momento*” in katakana in the original.

of matter itself, and space is nothing more than an instance of abstraction of this single character. So we may safely say that philosophical matter is the dialectical moment of space itself, philosophical time, and philosophical motion. And, therefore, space itself enters into a dialectical relation and unity with time, movement, and philosophical matter; that is, it is definitely analogous to the case of physical matter and physical space.

And so, at last, by following the dialectical thread running through space, we can for the first time establish space's relationship to *time*—two things the majority of people have assumed to be parallel. Had we not proceeded in this way, the problem of space could only have been aligned in some vague relation to the problem of time.

Running through—or behind, so to speak—the various phenomenal forms of space that we know, there is *space itself*, or the *essence of space*. Space itself is what appears in the phenomenal forms. It is none other than the good graces of this essential space that enables the mutual relations and unification—and this includes both distinctions and restrictions—of the various phenomenal forms of space. This ultimate space is a single dialectical moment of *matter* (and this must be understood in the philosophical sense, not the physical). It is this space that is an expression of matter's sheer, objective Being-ness. Space traces back to matter. And the theory of space—*kūkanron*—traces back to the problem of matter. That is to say, it traces back to the problem of *materialism* [*yuibutsuron*].

# The Academy and Journalism

*Translated by Chris Kai-Jones*

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“The Academy and Journalism” first appeared in 1931 in the academic journal *Shisō*, no. 111, and was reprinted in the edited volume *Gendai tetsugaku kōwa (Discussions on Contemporary Philosophy)* in 1934. Its publication has to be seen within two contexts. The first of these is Tosaka’s appointment as professor of philosophy at Hōsei University, where he succeeded his friend Miki Kiyoshi. Miki had been fired for his alleged support of the Japanese Communist Party in the same year and this, along with other attacks on leftist scholars and radical students in the 1920s, served to highlight the vulnerability of academic freedom and the role of the academy as an “organ of the state,” as Tosaka puts it in the essay translated here. The second important context is that of the 1920s debates between Japanese Marxists of the *Rōnō-ha* and the *Kōza-ha* over the role of the press and the way to achieve a politically transformative class consciousness. Tosaka’s analysis of—and indeed his hopes for—the ideological activities of modern journalism may be considered highly original against the background of the rather dogmatic approaches of the two aforementioned Marxist intellectual factions.

“The Academy and Journalism” is translated from *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1966), 3:145–153.

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Recently, journalism has often taken itself as a topic for consideration and so it may look as though there’s no great reason to take up this matter yet

again. Yet in fact journalism itself is a problematic issue, and one that's a long way from being resolved. To the extent that journalism remains only the inevitable expression of print capital, it will continue to carry the consuming forces of capital first into one domain and then another; consequently, journalism is not only a problem internal to itself but the most outstanding problem for the rest of us as well. And while its examination of itself may perhaps already be over and done with, the investigation of journalism from an external vantage point is by no means at an end. In undertaking this task here we should note at the outset that originally journalism was in conflict with the "academy" and yet journalism itself appears not to have thematized this conflict with sufficient perspicuity.<sup>1</sup> We, however, view this as the urgent matter at hand.

It is not only from the side of journalism that there has been an inadequate examination of this conflict; also, in a different sense, there has been inadequate attention paid to the problem by the academy. In Japan, journalism was most conspicuous and influential outside the university in the arena of the "literary arts" [*bungei*]. In the past, while "literary groups" [*bundan*] formed in this milieu, there also appeared superior individual authors who were both outside these circles and in conflict with them. And these few, it should be noted, were most certainly not members of the literary academy.

In contrast to journalism, we can certainly say that from the outset the academy has been dominant in the fields of "science" and "philosophy." The imperial "universities" had already been established by the time journalism and the like came along and so the latter could not compete with former in terms of their work on various scientific and philosophical theories. As a result, the imperial universities and literary groups came to mutually determine the respective identities of the academy and journalism. And as long as the empty independence of each is maintained, the real relationship between the academy and journalism will inevitably remain

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1. Tosaka sometimes adds acute diacritical marks to his key terms. I have translated these diacritics using either quotation marks—in those instances when Tosaka is suggesting caution with an as-yet ill-defined term—or into italics, when he is emphasizing an alternative but already somewhat prefigured reading of a particular word. Occasionally I have left the diacritical marks unreferenced because the foregoing context has already made Tosaka's semantic intention clear enough and to italicize again might cause unnecessary confusion in the translation. Please note that in this translation any English terms that have been italicized or placed in quotation marks were originally written with acute diacritical marks in the Japanese.



invisible. The fact is that we can still clearly see traces of the cool indifference that the academy and journalism exhibited toward one another at their point of origin. And this is evident regardless of the fundamental transformation of the universities and the changes in the structure of the literary circles—in other words, the promotion of former specialist schools to private university status; the growing conservatism of the universities themselves; and the formation of left-wing literary groups—and is clearly visible irrespective of either the tremendous developments in scientific and philosophical theories or the critical advances made in the literature of the public domain.<sup>2</sup> Observing these traces of original indifference today, it's hardly surprising that neither journalism nor the academy has become an issue for the other.

It has become a matter of urgency to begin to break down the self-sufficient identity of these two spheres and dismantle their heretofore presumed independence. For the first time the necessary conditions have arisen upon and through which this must take place; it's as if today these conditions are being realized.

Let us limit the current problem to the domain that ranges from science to philosophy. Given the various theoretical positions evident within this delimitation, the question becomes the following: Which objective conditions can help us in our consideration of the problem and can demonstrate the relationship between the academy and journalism? The answer is none other than the societal phenomenon of the so-called “fall of the university” [*daigaku no tenraku*], or rather this as a symptom of a more fundamental occurrence.<sup>3</sup> Various universities, by throwing certain kinds of professors and associate professors out onto the street, have consciously or unconsciously produced a certain kind of theoretical force that is in conflict with the academy: *theoretical journalism*. The latter is not just another form of academic theorizing but rather by deploying theory in a journalistic manner, it stands in opposition to academia in a qualitative

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2. The University Ordinance of 1918 upgraded a number of state technical colleges to the rank of university while also recognizing the private universities as having an equivalent status to that of the imperial universities.

3. In referring to the “fall of the university,” Tosaka is drawing attention here to the purging of leftist professors and radical students from Japanese universities in the late 1920s. For a contemporary analysis, see Morito Tatsuo's seminal article “Daigaku no tenraku” in the September 1929 issue of *Kaizō*. For a broader discussion of the events and issues involved, see Byron K. Marshall, *Academic Freedom and the Japanese Imperial University, 1868–1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), especially pp. 137–144.

sense. In other words, the academy's established authority and prestige are being ignored, and we have even reached the moment where its productions are being appraised and critiqued from all directions by journalism.

We might say that through the press publications of these talented individuals working inside print capital itself, theoretical journalism has taken on an intercollegiate [*inta-karejji*] dimension. Such individuals were the only driving force in journalism, and steadily theoretical journalism's quantitative output has been increased. Nowadays, the academy has been forced to recognize itself as challenged by theoretical journalism in both a quantitative and qualitative sense. And to the extent that academia has lost its particular theoretical power, journalism has come to possess a heretofore absent theoretical significance. In short, both have had their established particularities challenged, and both have lost their putative independence from each other. Precisely now, both for the academy and for journalism, the problem of their conflictual relationship can no longer be avoided. And it is this problem that we will examine in this paper.

The key to understanding this issue is not to be found in the standpoint of the so-called academy itself or indeed of journalism itself. But this is not to say that the key here is some just and judicious halfway house that combines academy and journalism. What kind of standpoint, then, is required? This is what we will begin to see revealed in the analysis below.

## 2

It goes without saying that the real nature of the academy and of journalism that are being pursued in this essay are not identical to the respective forms in which they are manifest today; neither of them in their present form represent the only possible manner in which journalism and the academy may be actualized. That said, we must take our lead from the current state of academia and journalism and give an account of their respective histories or there will be no way to determine our practical stance toward them. In other words, if we move away from the current situation then we will surely be unable to grasp their essence; thus it is from the academy and journalism that we see today that we must begin our analysis.

From their inception journalism and the academy have been no more than ideological existences arising from society's material foundations.

Because of this we will be unable to determine the essential relation between the two unless we dig down as far as the material base that constrains and delineates them. Conversely, if we relate them *immediately* we will mistake a very superficial relationship between the two phenomena for the real one. At the same time we must remember that this determination by the material base doesn't prevent two separate ideological existences from entering into a specifically ideological relationship that is itself not wholly reducible to their material bases. As is always the case with the question of ideology, our current challenge is precisely to pass from this specific ideological relationship that is separated from the material, down to the material base and formulate what is, in fact, the essential relationship. Given the current state of journalism and the academy, what will give us the most proximal, most judicious but also the most certain understanding of their connection, is to grasp the fact that their respective ideological operations are distinct. This distinction, while it is not yet the whole of their relationship, is an essential key to comprehending it. Let us say that the distinction we are talking about here is *conceptual* and that it's certainly not merely linguistic; in other words, the academy and journalism are to be analyzed (or distinguished) conceptually. We must make the latter the heuristic regulative principle of the fundamental analysis of the academy and journalism. How, then, can such an analysis be carried out?

Journalism, as the word itself suggests, belongs to the day-to-day (*jour*) and this has become its fundamental principle. Connectedly, the word "journal"<sup>4</sup> can subjectively indicate a daily record [*nikki*]<sup>4</sup>—as in Amiel's *Journal Intime*—or objectively as in the pages of a newspaper. In short, journalism is related to the everyday of this day's and that day's lived life; it is rooted in people's everyday life. This everyday life, however, is already some kind of social life. In this sense the light of the sun is not just something that strikes the top of one's head, flickers, and fades; on the contrary, it is something that marks the opening and closing of one day in the social negotiation of people's lives. It is through entering into communal societal life that the day begins; through departing from it, the day ends. For simply individual and separate internal lives, day and night are perhaps not so very different; after all, people can work during the daytime or at night. But because journalism has this connection with com-

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4. Here Tosaka writes the word "journal" in English instead of using an equivalent Japanese term.

munal societal life, it already has some kind of *sociality* at its root. Therefore, and to that extent, journalism must be thought of as a sort of “external” [*gaibuteki*] phenomena, and indeed our private internal lives are of no great importance for it. Conversely, if it is supposed that there is value and meaning to be found in people’s internal lives and that the external life that opposes this is assumed to be little more than a fiction, then journalism, in this religious [*shūkyōteki*] sense as well, is again a mere *everydayness*. In such cases journalism must be thought of as something related to kinds of “familiar” and “trivial” everyday occurrences.

The world that journalism lives in is everyday, social, external, and sometimes vulgar. Accordingly, matters that are extraordinary, personal, interior, and the high and lofty, are leveled out. Because of this, the driving force that carries journalism is thought to be leveled-out knowledge, an everyday knowledge or common sense. Sometimes this means superficial or immature knowledge, sometimes it means people’s healthy good sense. Either way, according to this way of thinking specialist knowledge is unnecessary or at times even positively harmful. Common sense can be “popular” even in the senses of “common” or “the well-known.” In this way journalism is maintained by the *public*.<sup>5</sup>

The general public is always interested in those things that qualify as the current topics of the day. Only these issues are thought of as being common problems to be judged through common sense. In this way current topics are generally, as the words suggest, not eternal problems; the public always forgets. Journalism, in the main, deals not with the eternal but with just such current matters. Yet the affairs of the day always have a *political character*. In the end political concepts are above all *practical* concepts, perhaps because, generally speaking, everyday life possesses a practical character. In this way journalism is concerned with political issues in the widest possible sense.

However, these political problems are always tied to what is called “thought” [*shisō*]. On the assumption that people’s social practices are most conspicuous when they are political, we can say that so-called thought is that consciousness that conspicuously reflects on practice. Now, thought always has a *philosophical character*. Which is to say, thought is none other than the content of a relatively unified worldview. (Politics as well possesses a philosophical character—the theory of politics was an im-

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5. Tosaka adds the word “public” in English after the Japanese term *kōshū*.

portant component of philosophy in ancient times.) The contents of journalism must be one kind of direct expression of this view as held by the members of society. In this way, *the current condition of society* [sesō] is vividly portrayed. In practice, even when journalism takes up scientific theories that happen to concern only the most non-everyday, non-commonsensical, non-common, non-current, non-political divisions of science (e.g., mathematics and physics), there is also at the same time a giving of some kind of intellectual [shisōteki], philosophical, and worldview-like meaning. If that were not the case then there would be no reason for these perhaps difficult scientific theories to appear on journalism's daily agenda. Because of this, journalism—in a surely journalistic and not completely academic sense—has almost reached the necessity of grasping the relational unity of the various scientific worldviews. Of course we are not talking here of only the various sciences, but also of the various cultural fields; in other words the entirety of people's cultural relational unity. In this way journalism comes to have the character of an “encyclopedia.”

So, how then can we distinguish between journalism and the academy? The word “academy” derives from Plato's Academy, which, in turn, was built upon the Greek *academia*. In the same way, the modern academy presupposes and is founded upon the “teachings” [kyōdan] of particular socially existing conditions.<sup>6</sup> And this, it must be understood, has been from the very beginning a deviation from people's everyday life; it is *un-everyday*. Because of this, its teachings limit, in a particular way, the sociality and externality that the academy possesses. These teachings are sometimes even thought of as having a certain kind of nobility wherein common sense as *doxa* is distinguished from “true” knowledge. However, this true knowledge is only a limited form of knowledge arising from the training of certain schools of thought related to certain matters. As a result, this knowledge can surely be neither common nor well known and so the academic sometimes comes to mean the obscure and the pedantic. The academy has no connection with the everyday current problems of general society and deals with matters more fundamental and eternal. Through inheriting these problems one after another it ploddingly demands resolu-

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6. Here Tosaka plays on both the pedagogical and also more material meanings of *kyōdan* as podium, platform, or teaching.

tions to them; for the academy, problems are not current matters but *traditional* problems. It does not support research on a certain kind of science for its accepted political, sociohistorical, or practical importance but because of a consciousness that the sciences have a value in themselves; the academy's perception of the sciences in terms of research methodology is one of pure science.

As a consequence of this, irrespective of how political and intellectual [*shisōteki*] the science it utilizes may be, the academy pulls it away from an immediate relationship with thought itself. The sciences are not treated intellectually but rather in *technical* terms. This is why the academy divides into its respective technical specializations and so comes to be comprised of many different academic podiums [*kyōdan*]. Moreover, such podium scholars barricade themselves into their particular fields and so are able to forget their mutual theoretical ties, though not their administrative or social ones. They no longer feel the need to link their technical specializations with a wider world view; even academic philosophy has come to give up the latter along with its own philosophical pretensions.

In summary then, the above argument outlines the distinction between journalism and the academy on the basis of concepts.

### 3

Journalism and the academy are two completely contrary attitudes; they each represent a different position with respect to people's conscious, ideational [*kannenteki*], and ideological activities concerning things. Moreover, since each is an ideological, ideational, and conscious existence grounded in material existence, it is now possible to explain the necessity of their conflictual opposition.

Journalism is a phenomenon that has a necessary role to play in the essence and movement of historical society. As such, it mustn't be forgotten that it follows the course of development pertaining to sociohistorical existence. Thus with the fast flowing of time journalism doesn't have the luxury of sending out ideas and waiting around for their return. In fact, in trying to be too loyal to the fundamental movements of sociohistorical existence, journalism thereby becomes an external thing and so in princi-

ple it loses its independent power to act as a guide. Because of this, journalism comes to be seen as opportunistic and inconsistent. Conversely, it's the academy that undertakes to independently guide sociohistorical movements and in reality, were it not to do so, the movement of these forces would be blind. Yet in excessively protecting the principle and integrity of the academy, the academy itself, instead of propelling these sociohistorical forces, becomes an obstacle; the motion stalls and it falls into a state of inertia. The result of this is that the academy comes to be viewed as a conservative, self-satisfied institution. We can see, then, that both journalism and the academy are two kinds of necessary dynamic forces and are also two kinds of braking machinery [*seidōki*]; and both arise from the developing forms of sociohistorical existence. In the end, through its self-development, being produces not only the agents propelling the development of this sociohistorical existence, but conversely also gives birth to agents that act as an obstacle to its progress. Both journalism and the academy are at one and the same time the agents of change as well as its enemies.

The deficiencies of either journalism or the academy correspond to the strengths of the other and vice versa. The academy will happily check the easily superficial world of journalism and direct it to quite fundamental painstaking work; journalism, for its part, will cordially stimulate the easily stagnating realm of the academy and pull its attention toward the concerns of the day. The academy provides *foundations* and *principles* while journalism gives the actual of the present. Our conclusion here seems obvious: We should take the good points of each and throw away the bad. However, things are not that simple. We must now apply actual conditions and look again at the conceptual and essential regulative forces determining journalism and the academy. If we fail to do this, we will not be doing justice to their reality.

The real academy is directly implicated in the *political system*, that is, the university system. In Japan this means that all the different types of universities—whether they be imperial, national, public, or private and whether they be directly or indirectly, in name or in practice—are organs of the state. The nature of what we call the academy is regulated by this fact on a fundamental level. Those who haven't forgotten what the essence of the state means today will perhaps understand why it is that in the end the various private universities, now managed by the *zaibatsu*, func-

tion as state instruments.<sup>7</sup> And this despite the fact that they were once all too aware of how their roles conflicted with those of the imperial universities. Since the founding of the Meiji system, those universities that were originally state institutions were, at the same time, established for the purpose of training bureaucrats. They were also research centers—operating without restriction—for the philosophical, historical, and social sciences, as well as for other fields. At that time, research in these areas was extremely unsophisticated. However, through the theoretical advances made by the universities themselves, and particularly in the results obtained in these philosophical, historical, and social sciences, the universities reached the point of no longer being in accord with the exigencies of state. Looking at the universities as part of the political system, one could no longer see any simple correspondence between their material economic foundation and the academy as ideological activity. In other words, a distortion appeared in the link between the university’s material base and its conceptual activities. As a result the academy’s operations and its function as a state institution came to be at odds with one another. How, then, was this divergence dealt with? In addressing this particular question, it is important to remember that it is not the academy’s place to determine the function of the university-as-state-organ, but rather it is the university’s function as a state organ to determine the role of the academy. Because of this distinction, it is not surprising that the university academy (as ideological activity) has skewed away from its own conceptually regulated and essential character. So, what have been the consequences of this?

The first thing that happened was that the ever-present possibility of academic stagnation and inertia was increasingly realized. And whenever this occurred it didn’t take very long before the university’s essence as an organ of the state quietly began to exert its influence. Of course, for the academy that had sunk into such inertia this political intervention was a real boon; more than it could have wished for in fact. In other words, it is because of this political intervention that the academy has gradually taken on a “reactionary” character and through this it flaunts its so-called “aca-

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7. Tosaka is suggesting here that since the essence of the capitalist state lies in domination by the bourgeoisie, the fact that the private universities are now run by the *zaibatsu*—Japan’s immense financial and industrial business conglomerates—means that they no longer offer an alternative to the state, i.e., imperial, Japanese universities.



demic values.”<sup>8</sup> (Look, for example, at the recent antics of the University Association or the University Teacher’s Association.) As it stands this means the loss of even the most fundamental and principled possibilities of the academy. And this, in turn, implies the total loss of the academy’s ability to positively exercise the aforementioned influence on journalism. In fact, this loss has come to be an inevitable subject of appraisal and criticism for journalism, although of course even this is probably no more than a fleeting fashion and before long journalism will lose interest in its unworthy opponent. Such things are the essence of the academy today, at least in Japan.

Just as the academy is built directly upon the political system of the university, so today’s journalism is directly constrained by the economic leviathan that is print capital. Now, it is often said that capital exists only to pursue profit. Consequently, journalism—an activity with a certain kind of conscious, ideational, and ideological attitude toward things—finds itself constrained by print capital, and in this sense we can say that *from the very outset* divergent forces have always and already been operative within it. To put it another way: The purpose of capital is the accumulation of material capital that can be converted into money, whereas the purpose of journalism is a certain kind of production, distribution, and consumption of ideological activity. They are directed toward different goals.

In contrast to journalism’s inherent tensions, the state itself with its ideological character and particular purpose was, for a while at least, able to harmonize with the academy’s goals of ideological research and output; in other words, the possibility of a *state of culture* [*bunka kokka*] was there. But with journalism and print capital, however, from the very beginning no such accord was possible. Yet in saying that, we should remember that without the print industry’s capital it’s certain that journalism would not have become the success that it is today. In fact modern journalism is absolutely the offspring of the publishing industry. So although it is in conflict with capital, journalism must go hand in hand with it, which makes it ill-fated from the outset and for most of the course of its development. In this way the distortions and falsifications that arise from the capital dependency of today’s journalism are inherent. This is journal-

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8. The word “reactionary” (*handōteki*) expresses here both the conservative and responsive dimensions of the term.

ism's lot, and to a great extent this probably explains the lack of trust in journalism that is evident the whole world over.

Very soon people will confuse contemporary journalism for journalism itself. This is an easier mistake to make than, say, confusing the current academy for the academy itself because, in reality, the history of journalism is too short in comparison with that of the academy. But we must remember that the current form of journalism is most certainly not the *only* form that journalism may take. (And it must not be forgotten that present-day journalism is no more than a simple corruption produced by the effects of capital.) In fact, certain critics see journalism's essence in a critical, revolutionary "conflictual social consciousness."<sup>9</sup> According to that thesis, the current bourgeois journalism is something of a reversal of journalism itself. Needless to say, such assertions don't mask the fact that current journalism has taken on the warped form we see today.

Journalism has been distorted through the force of capital. So, what have been the effects of this? On the one hand, the potential inconsistency journalism harbors in its essence is sometimes driven by capital so that it takes things in an extremely superficial way. Through its being at the forefront of things, its commodity value is thereby created. At the same time, in the other direction, the *immediacy* and *practicality* at the heart of commodity journalism has in certain senses been limited, and to a significant degree journalism has already lost its ability to fulfill its immediate and practical social function. That is to say, in journalism's innate particular immediacy and practicality, a non-immediacy and non-practicality arises. In this way journalism, irrespective of the rapid coming and going of events, falls into a kind of self-satisfied stagnation just like the academy. At times such as these the social function of journalism, in a very real sense, can become even more reactionary than that of the academy.<sup>10</sup> Such is the essence of today's journalism.

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9. Tosaka puts the expression "conflictual social consciousness" (*tairitsuteki shakai ishiki*) in Japanese quotation marks.

10. Tosaka's Note: The newspaper is the most representative medium of journalism and after that come magazines and the book form. The process of stagnation and increasing reaction in what was formerly a progressive journalism are ably demonstrated by statistics published by the Home Affairs Ministry. The difference in the publication-to-censorship ratios between newspapers—the representative organ of journalism—and other forms of published material shows this all too clearly. Comparing 1921 and 1930 we see the following approximate figures:

## 4

We have seen in the above how today's academy and journalism have deviated from their essential nature. That said, the latter still appears to have some merit when compared to the current state of the academy. Until now we have simply set them out next to each other but truth be told they are not to be placed on the same level. The academy of today is already approaching the end of its role, whereas today's journalism is still right in the middle of playing its part. In fact, it is undeniable that the academy is being slowly displaced by journalism, both quantitatively and qualitatively, and this is a matter of the difference in their historical stages. Now, this difference is not really a matter of the long history of the academy compared to the newer history of journalism; in reality, the difference arises out of the foundational *historical structure of their respective social bases*. In other words, as long as Japan's universities remain as organs of the state they will probably contain *feudal* moments, whereas the publishing industry is perhaps purely and representatively capitalist. Consequently we can say that the relationship between journalism and the academy corresponds to one example of the complicated relationship between feudal and capitalist moments that we find in contemporary capitalist society. And it is already well known which of these two moments are active and which are passive.

As today's academy approaches its final destination, almost everything has revealed itself, including that which has determined its various historical moments. That said, the journalism that is now attempting to follow on from this has still not objectively arrived at the point where its historical moments have been sufficiently disentangled and exposed.

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Number of publications in book form: approximately a two-fold increase

Number of banned/suppressed books: approximately a ten-fold increase

Suppression to publication ratio: approximately a five-fold increase

Number of publications in magazine form: approximately a two-fold increase

Number of censored/suppressed magazines: approximately a five-fold increase

Suppression to publication ratio: approximately a two-and-a-half-fold increase

Number of publications in newspaper form: approximately a two-and-a-half-fold increase

Number of censored/suppressed publications: no increase

Suppression to publication ratio: a decrease to approximately two-fifths of the previous ratio

Even though the general essence of journalism has been determined, in reality there are many possible directions it could go in. Until just recently, in one area of bourgeois journalism at least, it looked as though there might have been the possibility of producing a proletarian journalism; and today we might even go as far as to say that it has become the provisional common battlefield for the vanguards of ideological activity. So how is this front to be organized from now on? Or rather, how must it be organized from now on? To ask this is to ask for no less than the rebuilding of the currently corrupted spheres of academia and journalism and a restoration of their essential natures. This means asking ourselves how we may call forth the latter without retarding their original social function. This is the most pressing problem. It is also the final problem, and I would like to return to this matter again on another occasion.

# Laughter, Comedy, and Humor

Translated by Christopher Ahn

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These three brief essays, written in the early 1930s, were included in *Shisō toshite no bungaku* (Literature as Thought), published in 1936 during a period when censorship laws made direct criticism of the government difficult, if not impossible. In his preface to the volume, Tosaka wrote that literature (*bungaku*) differs from philology (*bunkengaku*) and *belles-lettres* (*bungei*) because it is a form of “living, beating truth that not only permeates *belles-lettres* and is realized in a wide variety of styles of artistic expression, but also must be linked to philosophy and science.” In other words, literature embodies the “true meaning” of thought. Thus, although posed in largely theoretical terms, the sly purpose of the essays may well have been to show why and how humor can serve as a form of political critique. In the third essay, which itself bears the mark of censorship, Tosaka states that humor has an intrusive, essential aspect, and he concludes by noting the existence of an active type of humor that takes on the form of “critical discourse.”

“Laughter, Comedy, and Humor” is translated from *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1966), 4:74–79.

## 1. The Theoretical Significance of “Laughter”

*Laughter* is one of the expressions of primitive emotion; but even as a primitive emotion, it is the most highly developed, complex, and refined among them. That is to say, relatively, *intellectual* primitive emotion be-

comes visible as laughter. One hears that most animals can show anger but only primates can laugh.

Just as the source of laughter is said to depend upon an inappropriate incongruity between cause and effect, laughter is the source of a kind of computational—intellectual—rationality. This brings the expression of primitive emotion into view as something refined. I would like to note that the phenomenon of laughter is none other than evidence that primitive emotion also possesses a *logic*. For example, a famous French literature scholar attempted to explain this in terms of “the logic of absurdity.”<sup>1</sup>

When the backside of a thing is pulled in toward the frontside of a thing, and *this frontside and backside are forced to confront one another*, we are compelled to laugh. People laugh when unnoticed weaknesses or restraints belonging to the backside of life are retrieved and then observed, juxtaposed in perfect conjunction with or in clear opposition to what is presently being recognized on the frontside. In this sense, just as things outside of one’s expectations are funny, so, too, are things that realize one’s expectations.

The frontside and the backside are thus forced into confrontation as affirmation and negation. If a judgment is made that one of these is the true nature [of the thing], then it is no longer funny. What is funny is the indeterminacy of the gap between affirmation and negation; moreover, this must be an indeterminacy that has already been *resolved*. This is because unresolved indeterminacy is nothing more than skepticism or anxiety (and it is, of course, natural that skepticism and anxiety, in order to achieve mock resolutions, lead to sarcasm and scorn). People, being who they are, tend to laugh in answer when they do not understand something. It is also natural to laugh in shame. Shame is a mock resolution to the problem of fear.

Thus, to begin with, two definitions arise from this logical structure of laughter. One is *humor*, one is *irony*. Although humor is situated in the contemplation of the synchronous, interim indeterminacy of the affirma-

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1. Tosaka may be referring to Theophile Gauthier, mentioned at the beginning of Chapter III, Section IV, in Henri Bergson’s essay *Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic*. Tosaka may also be referring to Bergson himself, who proceeds in that section of *Laughter* to qualify the kind of absurdity that is entailed in such a logic. Bergson’s essay is in the public domain and appears in many versions. References here are to the authorized English-language edition: Henri Bergson, *Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic*, trans. Cloudesley Brereton and Fred Rothwell (New York: Macmillan, 1911).

tive and the negative—a thing’s frontside and backside—it takes the affirmative side in attempting to regulate its relationship with the negative. Irony, in contrast, takes the negative side in attempting to regulate its relationship with the affirmative. Thus, a person who engages in the former is thought of as *good-natured* and a person who engages in the latter is thought of as *ill-natured*. But whether they take the side of the affirmative or the negative, neither one ever forgets the original attitude of interim indeterminacy. If not, humor ends up becoming nothing more than a defense; and irony becomes nothing more than an attack. Therefore, humor must, on the contrary, pretend to take the side of the negative; irony, on the contrary as well, must appear on its face as if it favors the affirmative. Disparagement is thus for the sake of praise, and praise for the sake of disparagement.

However, a third definition is derived from the logical structure of laughter. When negative and affirmative become identical and people can arbitrarily put forward either one, a *paradox* occurs. In this case, the frontside is expressed by the backside, the backside is expressed by the frontside. The flying arrow does not fly;<sup>2</sup> the white horse is not a horse.<sup>3</sup> In these instances as well, if the affirmative and the negative become truly identical, then because the two are indistinguishable, either the affirmative or the negative alone should be sufficient; but then the paradox would disappear. It remains necessary for both things to be in existence *at the same time*.

In the so-called logical structures of *laughter* and *humor*, the pressure of the backside of something—negativity • wickedness—against the surface of the thing is completely passive. The betrayer is enveloped in a peaceful ambiance. The betrayer plays the role of nothing more than the fool. But even so, in *irony*, *paradox*, and so forth, the perspective associated with the backside of a thing cannot easily be deceived. The negative is tinged with an aggressive quality. The logic of laughter gradually makes plain the viciousness, negativity, and criticalness that is inherent in its logicity. Thus, ultimately as a consequence, from within the affirmative, a thing must come to contain the negative. This is what constitutes *criticality*.

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2. One of Zeno’s paradoxes.

3. A famous paradox of Chinese philosophy; see Kung-sun Lung’s “Discourse on the White Horse,” in Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, trans. Derk Bodde (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952), 203–205.

Having come this far, people recognize that the true essence of thinking about the logical structure of laughter is, in fact, dialectical. In actuality, superb dialecticians such as Hegel, Marx, and Lenin were invariably superb critics. These superb critics were the virtuoso discoverers of paradox and masters of irony and humor; and it is also probably true that they were superb theoretical *writers of comedy*. It is a characteristic of established theoreticians that, along with a skill for metaphor—which is one level of dialectical talent—they excel at banter.

We have discussed the logic of laughter. But as Bergson said, we must not forget that laughter has a social meaning.<sup>4</sup> Comedy (*Komödie*) is the anthem of the village. It is a logic that cannot be grasped solely in terms of the interior of the individual consciousness. We must speak of it, instead, as a social logic. In fact, the living—dialectical—logic is none other than a social logic.

This logic carries a clear meaning in literature. Comedy = humor = irony = paradox = critique, and dialectic as well. Thus, is there anyone who thinks that there is no relation between logic and literature?

(September 1932)

## 2. The Logical Connection between Comedy and Tragedy

I've identified the logical significance of "laughter." In laughter, a fixed prior idea and expectation are presupposed, and this idea and expectation are fairly precisely regulated within the unconscious. On one hand, the laughter is elicited when consciousness is surprised by the successful betrayal of this expectation; at the same time, conversely, consciousness is spurred to laugh when this expectation is completely satisfied. However, if the expectations presumed in this case are not precisely regulated but are merely aimless, then the result is probably mere dissatisfaction or satisfaction. Expectations that are regulated in a suitably precise way are a necessary condition for laughter. This occurs not only in the case when laughter arises because expectations have been overturned, but even more so when expectations are fulfilled. We all know that when we begin to

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4. "Laughter must answer to certain requirements of life in common. It must have a SOCIAL signification" (Chapter I, Section I, *Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic*).



laugh—spontaneously, freely—everything becomes funny; and this is evidence that laughter anticipates the seed of laughter. In contrast, with just a little analysis, we understand that this is never the case with sadness. Laughter thus arises through scientific foresight as a kind of calculation [*keikaku*], so to speak. We generally think of absurdity and nonsense as bound up with laughter, but considered from the present perspective, it follows that all that is needed for laughter is that something meets a *precise* expectation.

But this alone is not yet a sufficient condition for laughter. Another necessary condition, it is often said, is that within the consciousness something large immediately becomes something small. For example, the detonation of dynamite is spectacular, but the pop of a balloon is comical (in this lies the absurdity or nonsense). What makes children's imitations of adults funny is that the adult becomes infantilized in them. The comicality of cats and dogs comes from their unexpected resemblance to grand-as-can-be humanity and so on. One can say that a condition in these cases is a consciousness in which something that seems large is in essence small (the reverse of this is only admiration and wonder). However, we must be aware that this (uni-directional) size comparison does not signify merely a substantively inert, proportional relation, but that it signifies an *action* that, in terms of its qualitative significance, reveals the simple essence that is distilled from an enormously complicated outward appearance. This mechanism of *revelation* and, equally, the mechanism of *criticism* are the most important conditions for laughter. Humor, and irony as well, all invite laughter because of these—as the locations in which the contrast is tested by means of calculation [*keikaku*]*—characteristics of revelation and criticism. The function of theory is to summarize a phenomenon that has been considered historically and then to abstract its essence; if this is so, then from what has now been said we ought to be able to infer the extent to which laughter is logical. In fact, many people have already identified the “logical character” of laughter.*

Because *comedy* is the existential form that laughter objectively takes, comedy has its own idiosyncratic logic. We can grasp this from the fact that much of comedy is intellectual or serves as social critique. But what about *tragedy*?

If comedy is bound to logic, in contrast to this, *history* is that which is

bound to tragedy. First, in tragedy, history is taken up in terms of *destiny* (classical *tragedies of fate*). The word “history” (*Geschichte*), as well as the word “destiny” (*Schicksal*), are related to things sent (*Schicken*)—things conferred—by the gods. Second, history is taken up in modernity in terms of character (*tragedies of character*). Of course, in this case, character is taken up only in terms of *biographical* development. In any event, the framework that structures tragedy must be history, *historical necessity*. This might appear as fatalism or libertarianism, or again as the natural law of cause and effect. Within tragedy, what could be referred to as a sense of reality, earnestness, or perhaps gravity lies inside this historical necessity. If tragedy is separated from this historicity, then it has already lost the pressure that makes it tragedy. If this historical necessity is completely replaced by theoretical necessity, then in the domain of literature, it becomes the world of comedy. In escaping the constraints generated by the historical necessity of tragedy, and attempting to place destiny and character on a more unrestricted chopping block, it seems that tragedy becomes comedy. In *Hamlet*, the *comedy*, Hamlet’s character must be freely critiqued. Just as history generally is transformed into theory, tragedy is transformed into comedy.

For example, various everyday concepts have historical origins, and because these form the nuances of the various concepts, it is meaningless to define such concepts. And it is these nuances that allow for the distinguishing marks of irony, paradox, perception, and so on. These various concepts can also signify various critical, dialectical positions. The historical (dialectical) process of these various concepts transforms in this way into (dialectical) logical structure; this is nothing more than the process by which tragedy can transform into comedy. Thus, if comedy is *critical* and *judgmental*, the meaning of tragedy, in contrast, has a positive character. That is to say (according to one of my formulas), in contrast to comedy as an essentially journalistic literary production, tragedy becomes an essentially academic literary production. Ultimately, can we not take up the opposition between tragedy and comedy as an example of the opposition between academism and journalism in literature? By doing so, I believe we can for the first time retrieve the *ideological* and logical essence of tragedy and comedy.

(March 1933)

### 3. Humorist Literature and Humor

These days, in our country's literary scene, humorist literature seems to have become a central preoccupation. Especially in recent times, traditional proletarian literature with its frank, straightforward *manière* has been buried under particularly abysmal conventions such as <censored words>, <deleted words>, and so on. In order to reduce the chain of sacrifices that this kind of suffering alludes to, humor is being encouraged. But it is not only that humor has to be chosen as an expedient for the mere self-defense of left-wing literature. In fact, insofar as left-wing literature represents the consciousness of the *critical* class, we should expect that [humor] becomes the essential content of this literature. Humor has an intrusive, essential aspect that currently cannot be fully expressed in the so-called humorist literature of our country: bourgeois salaryman literature (Sasaki Kuni and others), highbrow sentimental literature (Ibuse Masuji and others), modern life literature (Nakamura Masatsune and others), and so on.

Of course, it goes without saying that this problem of humor is never simply a problem for literature only. In general terms, it must be a problem for all discursive activity. Along with deeply investigating the essence of humor today, the scope of its significance must be comprehensively and uniformly taken up.

What is humor, really? I want to sketch out, in a very simple way, the outline of some of its aspects.

The word "humor" has its origins in the human (anthropological) sciences. It referred to a number of types of *body fluids* intrinsic to human beings, which were thought to determine human *character*. From there, this word came to signify *moods*, the *ambiance of ideas*. Ultimately, it was an easy next step for humor to come to express a type of infinitude in an idea.

However, if an idea is simply infinite, then, in fact, it cannot possibly constitute an idea. Thus, the general character of humor is that, even while it is infinite, it contains the core of something. And when this center is not simply the center in its outward appearance but moves itself freely of its own accord and eventually suspends itself centrifugally, it constitutes the first type of humor—namely, the volatility of ideas (*Ideenflüchtigkeit*) and the extravagance of ideas (*Ideenextravaganz*). The former includes, for example, such things as *puns* and *rapid-fire-style nonsense*; the latter includes such things as *clowning around* and *hyperbolic-style nonsense*. In

this first type of humor, the consciousness is satisfied by an escape from general reality, and this feeling of escapist satisfaction ranges from the *intoxicating* to the *awakening*. The feeling of awakening also has a “self-satisfied,” “feel-good,” or sweetly optimistic tinge. People can laugh and forget.

However, we now turn to a second type [of humor] in which the center of the idea of infinitude is not suspended but is already in repose, and a fixed stability can be observed. In this case, people do not intentionally escape from reality; in other words, they are not creating a special world of optimistic escapism. Instead, they have the courage to examine the world as it actually is. But reality is not being analyzed in the least; rather, it is being swallowed in its actual condition. The idea center does not, as in the first type, move itself freely in order to escape from a collision with reality but, on the contrary, while resting quietly, the idea center scoops up reality by means of the idea’s peripheral fringe. Reality, as the center of an idea, expands and contracts like a yo-yo, causing the liquid-film inside the fringe of the idea to float. This second type might be called *jesting*, and this is, in fact, a *representative form of humor*.

However, there is a third type [of humor]. The center of the idea is neither centrifugally suspended nor fixed in calm repose, but instead it has begun a positive movement. Instead of moving itself, the center faces the periphery and begins to utilize centripetal force. The idea does not simply swell up wildly but takes on its own functional *elasticity*. This third type of humor is generally (in contrast to the escapist kind) *critical* and (in contrast to optimistic sweetness) contains both pungency and bitterness. But in spite of this, because pungency and bitterness generally can also be the subject of intoxication (look at sentimental confession, religious and moral banter, etc.), in this case as well, humor ranges from the *intoxicating* to the *awakening*. One can say that the former is *irony* or sarcasm, and the latter is *critique*.

Thus, in this manner, the purview of humor stretches between two sides—in the direction of a mindset for the most vulgar jokes and in the direction of the most refined critical mindset. (We must try to think from a different perspective about why these become *laughter* and *funniness*.) If humor is used to escape, then literary works written at such a moment take the form of *humorous writing*; if humor is used actively, then it takes on the form of *critical discourse*. The question of what kinds of purposes humor can be used for depends, in each epoch, upon the fluctuation of

class influence. We may be able to trace this point using as material the history of journalistic phenomena that are representative expressions of the social consciousness in various epochs. In recent times, we can recall the doodlings and comic *tanka* from the end of the Tokugawa period, the nonsense vaudeville and music halls from the middle of the Meiji period, and many others.<sup>5</sup> We must similarly use the humorist literature of today as this kind of material.

Finally, at some point I would like to consider the necessary connection between humor and dialectical consciousness. At least it is a fact that the majority of the great dialecticians were serious humorists and bitter satirists.

(May 1933)

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5. The late Tokugawa was also a time of growing government repression and censorship. Comic writers were one of the principle targets of the department of censorship that was established in 1843; see Katsuya Hirano, *The Politics of Dialogic Imagination: Power and Popular Culture in Early Modern Japan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, forthcoming).

# The Fate of Japanism

## *From Fascism to Emperorism*

*Translated by John Person*

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Originally published in the May issue of *Keizai Ōrai* in 1935 under the title “Nihonshugi no saikentō” (A Reexamination of Japanism), this piece can certainly be read as a standalone essay. It would have been read with great interest in the context of the opinion journal *Keizai Ōrai*; the issue of Japanism was garnering considerable attention with many so-called Japanist organizations jointly mobilizing their members in the Movement to Clarify the Kokutai (Kokutai meicho undō) and calling for the government to publicly denounce the constitutional theories of influential jurist Minobe Tatsukichi. Still, “The Fate of Japanism” ought to be also read in the context of *The Japanese Ideology*, where it appears as Chapter 10, and the final essay in the first of two parts in the book entitled *The Critique of Japanism and the Principles of Its Execution* (Nihonshugi no to sono gensoku). In preceding chapters, Tosaka offers his criticism of Japanism as an idea and a methodological principle as it appeared in the works of a variety of contemporary scholars and theorists. His criticism of Japanism culminates in the present chapter, which traces the doctrine of emperorism as a civic consciousness to the restorationist nationalism present in the consciousness of middle-class soldiers and farmers. What results is a synthesis of his historical analysis and a theoretical examination of fascism that links the military consciousness to the farming villages, the source of both soldiers and their nourishment, and maintains a critical eye toward the class divisions that the restorationist nationalism effaces.

Several notes on the format are in order. Tosaka, and the publishing world in general, was under heavy censorship at the time. All words that appear in braces {} were blocked by censors in the original. Everything in parentheses was present in the original.

“The Fate of Japanism” is translated from *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1966), 2:322–327.

*Japanism* refers to a form of idea that broke out under the particular and unique set of circumstances of fascism. At the same time, strictly speaking, the application of this doctrine has not been limited to ideas. In so far as the effects of ideas infiltrate the material foundations of economic structures and society, Japanism also forces its characteristics on to material social structures. Primarily speaking, however, Japanism is first and foremost an idea, and despite the fact that it obviously broke out under particular, material conditions of society, it does not objectively reflect these material foundations. Thus, both as a form of idea and as an unfortunate idea, it carries quite a remarkable *ideological* disposition from the beginning. In other words, it is a “Japanese ideology.” In what follows, I would like to briefly analyze the various conditions of Japanism and the outcome to which it leads.

When monopoly capitalism becomes imperialistic it attempts to hide the contradictions of imperialism domestically through state power and internationally by building up the perception that it can solve these problems by force. Fascism is precisely the political mechanism that, in order to accomplish these measures, takes advantage of the petit bourgeois, or the middle class in the broad sense, which experiences turmoil in their social consciousness through some particular domestic and international political circumstances. It is the relatively advantageous method that appears to be succeeding in realizing its ultimate goal of extending finance capitalism, all the while taking advantage of the middle class, who have emotionally lost all of their faith in both the dictatorship of the proletariat and the explicit domination of the bourgeoisie, and just as emotionally carry the fantasy that they share the interests of fascism.

Now, laying aside this general political, social, and economic objective of fascism for the moment, in the case of Japanist fascism, we must now pay special attention to a particular characteristic that can arise out of the imperialistic essence of fascism. It can ambiguously be called {militarism} or {militaristic} consciousness, and it is a type of social consciousness that arises almost necessarily when imperialism is faced with the

need to conduct an imperialistic war. Of course, viewed as a general social consciousness, {militarist} consciousness need not always be imperialistic. Yet, on the other hand, when there is imperialism—that is, when the possibility of imperialistic war has an actuality (this is what we call necessity)—an imperialist consciousness always appears with a high degree of necessity. Our problem here is when this takes on a fascist characteristic as well.

Of course today the fascist militarist consciousness is a global phenomenon that is not particularly rare. In the case of Japanism, it appears as what we may call an {aggressive militarist} consciousness determined by the existence of the {military authorities}, a {privileged} occupational organization unique to Japan, and its consciousness. This particular {militarist} consciousness, a parameter unique to Japanism, is an imperialist, fascist, and {militaristic xenophobia}. This constitutes the definitive feature of *Japanism*, which is the summation of Japanese fascism.

We must not forget that, as it is known to the general public, the {military} clique, or the {military authorities}, are not simply a social strata, social group, or occupational organization, but a large force that in reality possesses all of the political privileges derived from the {authority of the commander-in-chief}. Of course what is referred to as the {military} authorities here obviously means the professional {soldiers} whose economic freedom as social status is guaranteed, or all so-called “{soldiers}” not including those who are nonprofessional {soldiers} in terms of their economic life in society (not their place in the chain of command), as well as the lower-ranking cadre of the {officers} themselves. If we look at the {military} as simply a social strata of citizens, keeping aside the aforementioned privileges derived from the relations to the {commander-in-chief} for the moment, both formally and to a large extent practically, they are a group of {military} bureaucrats given various forms of status guarantees, and the majority of them are no higher than upper-middle class in terms of their economic conditions. If bureaucrats are a type of middle class, then we must say the same about those in the military. If fascism as a rule is supported by the consciousness of the middle class, then the fact that Japanism has been supported by the almost uniformly nurtured consciousness of the military carries some essential meaning.

Needless to say, it is certainly no coincidence that the {military}, the subject that sustains the Japanist {militarist} consciousness, exists in Japan today. The emergence of the {military}, or rather the founding of the {military}, was a necessary and unavoidable consequence of the Meiji



Restoration designed to combat the pressures of foreign capitalism. The necessarily {militarist} essence of Japanism must be understood with this in mind. Further, even from the perspective of the history of the Japanese military system, we must say that the establishment of the {military} carries a high degree of necessity, since the grounds for universal conscription is believed to be a kingly restoration of the ancient military system of Japan.<sup>1</sup> Here, too, lies the necessity of the {military}-led {militarist} consciousness serving as an essence of Japanism.

By looking at the so-called {military} as a group of {military} bureaucrats, I have already provided a basis for distinguishing it from “{soldiers}” in general. Thus, it goes without saying that the idea of “all the nation as soldiers” of the actual soldier system does not necessarily mean the same thing as “all the nation as the military.” From the perspective of the soldier system all citizens are soldiers, yet in terms of their professional social status, of course not all citizens are “soldiers.” It is simply *conflated* by the ideal of all the nation as soldiers.

Historically speaking, this gap between these organizational ideals and the realities of civil society gives birth to a situation in which a special connection between the {military} and the samurai class of the medieval and early modern eras is too easily imagined. In other words, it is often easily thought that the {military} is a modern (nonhereditary) group of neo-samurais. That is likely why it is perceived that ancient *bushidō*,<sup>2</sup> which experienced its zenith in the Tokugawa Era,<sup>3</sup> is inherited by the flesh and blood of the distinguished warriors of today.

That a distinct {force} or group of {soldiers} called the {military} exists despite the policy of universal conscription, and the fact that it

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1. Although *kyokoku kaihei* has been translated here as “universal conscription,” it must be kept in mind that the term also refers to the idea that the defense of the nation is the duty of the entire nation, which serves as the ideological basis of the more concrete policy of universal conscription. A literal translation of the term would be something like “all the nation as soldiers,” which I have used to translate *kyokoku kaihei* when Tosaka seems to be stressing the ideological aspects of the term more so than the concrete policy.

2. The “way of the samurai” is a warrior code of ethics incorporating Buddhist and Confucian ideas. For a classic example, see Yamamoto Tsunetomo, *Hagakure: The Book of the Samurai*, tr. W. S. Wilson (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2000). For its modern discussion, see Nitobe Inazō, *Bushidō, the Soul of Japan: An Exposition of Japanese Thought* (New York, London: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1905).

3. The period of Japanese history ruled by the Tokugawa Shogunate spanning between Tokugawa Ieyasu’s victory at Sekigahara in 1600 and Tokugawa Yoshinobu’s “return” of state power to the emperor in 1867. It is also known as the Edo Period.

evokes some kind of direct relation to the samurai class or *bushidō*, already carries a reason why the aforementioned militarist consciousness, sustained by the {military} as the subject, must be some form of *feudal* consciousness in terms of an idea. This so-called *bushidō*, which has always been praised by foreigners (because of its unusually Japanese characteristic, thus belonging to Japanism in the broad sense) and is recently being strongly emphasized by the Japanese themselves, is no doubt an ideal of the whole of the Japanese folk (or Japanese nation?). Yet this only follows from the ideals of the soldier system of all the nation as soldiers. If any social reality other than this ideal of the soldier system is mixed in it, *bushidō* turns into a feudal ideology of a particular social stratum.

Farmers no doubt make up the majority of the nation under the ideal of all the nation as soldiers that the {military} is to command. Thus for this {militarist} consciousness to be endowed with an actuality and for it to be most effectively carried out, it must seek its most trusted foundation in the farming strata. As long as all the nation are soldiers, this would necessarily be the case. At the same time, because all the nation as soldiers is an ideal of the soldier system and not the same as the relations of economic distribution, farmers here are *farmers in general* who live under the *social order* called the farming villages, since the economic classification and differentiation within the farming society (what we call the farming villages) is not the issue here. Now the backbone and model for upholding the social order of these farming villages (as well as the mountain and fishing villages), and thus the people who most appropriately represent the farming villages, is none other than the various medium-scale farmers, or the rural middle class. This would mean that medium-scale farmers, or the rural middle class, are the most representative of the ideal of all the nation as soldiers. Here we find the true social base on which the {military}, the subject of the Japanist {militarist} consciousness, places the highest expectation.

The fact that the rural middle class, or medium-scale farmers, is the social foundation on which the Japanist military consciousness places the highest expectation is precisely a case of a particular determination of the idea that fascism in general is the consciousness of the middle class, corresponding to the fact that the military itself is the subject of the militarist consciousness. Now, since the rural middle class, or medium-scale farmers, is in general a reliable element of the contemporary system of agricultural production, and since we call such elements the backbone element of

the farming villages, it goes without saying that their consciousness of life can for the moment be described as *agriculturalism*. If this consciousness is put in conflict with other types of consciousness or their rights are claimed based upon national history, it produces so-called *agrarianism* [*nōhōnshugi*].<sup>4</sup> Since the problem is especially linked to the history of the Japanese folk, or the Japanese nation, this agrarianism inevitably aspires toward a feudalism that has, as its principle, agricultural production, the basis of the feudalist mode of production.

In this way, in conformity to the realities of civil society, the problem boils down to that of *feudalism*. We first saw that the Japanist {militarist} consciousness conceptually settled on a feudalist consciousness by way of the consciousness of the samurai class held by the {military}. Here we see that it again arrives at a feudalist consciousness by actual way of the foundation known as the farming villages. However, the important parameter of the feudalist consciousness here is in fact the idea of the “*oneness of soldiers and farmers*.”<sup>5</sup>

In the case of Japan, however, even if one only begins with the era in which the feudal system is assumed to have taken clear shape, one would find that the history of feudalism is extremely old and long with significant political variations. And so we must pay attention to the fact that

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4. A political movement and philosophy advocating the autonomy of farming villages. Its most famous proponents include Gondō Seikyō, Tachibana Kōzaburō, and Katō Kanji; see Thomas R. H. Havens, *Farm and Nation in Modern Japan: Agrarian Nationalism, 1870–1940* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974). For Tosaka’s own commentary on Gondō and Tachibana, see Chapter 6 of *The Japanese Ideology*, entitled the “Nippon Ideology,” which is included in translation in David A. Dilworth and Valdo H. Viglielmo, eds., *Sourcebook for Modern Japanese Philosophy: Selected Documents* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998) under the title “Japanese Spirituality, Japanese Physiocracy, and Japanese Asianism.”

5. The distinction and non-distinction between soldiers and farmers has a long history in Japan. It is said that Oda Nobunaga, the first of the samurai daimyō to conquer Japan during the Warring States period (1467–1573), had a comparative advantage over other daimyōs because of his success in creating a professional army. Prior to this development, daimyōs going to war would gather their forces from the farmers under their dominion, meaning that there was in fact a unity between soldiers and farmers since they were not yet differentiated. The separation was pursued to a greater degree through the disarmament policies aimed at the non-samurai, which were introduced under Toyotomi and Tokugawa rule. With this in mind, in the context of this essay it is important to note that the imperial proclamation on conscription (1872) after the Meiji Restoration, which became the basis of the Conscription Act (1873), rebukes the “feudal” separation of soldiers and farmers and calls for their unification based upon “egalitarian” ideals.

what is normally considered a feudalist consciousness in Japan is in fact a quite ambiguous *restorationism*. Restorationism carries somewhat different parameters and extremely different meanings depending on the era. However, laying aside for a moment what kind of determinations are in fact given to restorationism by restorationists today, as well as what kind of meaning we may find there, our problem is first and foremost this ambiguous restorationist consciousness. The argument here is that this restorationism is an extension of the consciousness toward feudalism as well as its rather unclear synonym.

Of all the varieties of contemporary restorationism, the one that is most fundamental and peculiar from our perspective (though it may not be so from the restorationists' own perspective) is the emphasis on *familialism*. The family system in fact had developed into the keystone of social order during the Tokugawa period, when the feudal system is thought to have been the most refined. Thus this argument of familialism must first and foremost correspond to this family system that reached its height under the Tokugawa feudal system. It is doubtful that anyone would look to the family system of the Heian period to find the historical basis of familialism. From this point, too, we can see that restorationism is a synonym for the ambiguous extension of feudal consciousness.

Since this ambiguous restorationism is precisely the direction that moves from the present rule of highly developed monopoly capitalism, which gave birth to the Japanist ideology in the first place, to the feudal system in the past that is strikingly different from capitalism in general, restorationism is none other than the move toward the direction of the primitivization of society. Of course it is completely impossible to actually primitivize a society that has developed into advanced capitalism out of material necessity. Yet, at least in the idealist ideological realm, a person can be a primitivist as much as they like, and, directly related to this, even in the realm of the actual material world one can also subjectively and idealistically wish for this as much as they like. The word "primitivization" is allowed by this understanding and by this understanding alone. (Restorationism and feudalism make sense only as such idealist movements.) For example, while it is impossible to primitivize—or, in other words, un-technologize—material productive technology, it is possible, at least idealistically, to hold a doctrine that wishes such a development if one wishes to do so. In addition to, and directly related to, the so-called antitechnologist perspective on civilization that is growing internation-

ally, it is always possible to have an idealistic doctrine advocating antimaterialism or the defeat of materialism.

While this concerns the consciousness toward feudalism in general, and ambiguous restorationism and primitivism in general, as mentioned earlier the main point of feudalism at which the militaristic moment of Japanism arrives was the idea of the “oneness of soldiers and farmers (all the nation as soldiers and agrarianism).” Yet, we must keep in mind that the lack of a soldier system featuring professional warriors and the dominance of agriculture as the core of life are, generally speaking, common characteristics of primitive societies. Even from the perspective of this kind of feudalism with only its main points abstracted out, one can see that a direct link can be made to primitivization in the most general sense in one leap without having to pass through restorationism. In this way, in the end feudalism boils down to primitivizationism [*genshikashugi*]. Although I stated at the outset that monopoly capitalism, imperialism, {militarism}, and the {military} cliques ultimately boil down to feudalism, now we may say that they also come back to *primitivizationism*.

There is yet another important point that has been neglected. The phenomenon of restoration had hitherto only been an ambiguous restorationism. This is not enough to serve as a pivot point for the developed (?) Japanism of today. We must take on primitivization with a more nuanced understanding.

That is to say, it is important to point out once again that this thing we call the primitivization of society was only a movement or doctrine for a particular idea, which promoted and desired the primitivization of society. Since this is a movement for the primitivization in one’s idea, it is inevitable that it actually results in the primitivization of ideas themselves as an obvious accompanying phenomenon. It goes without saying that this domination of the primitivization of ideas, or primitive ideas, is a characteristic of social groups that are strikingly behind in their logical and social consciousness, either naturally or by design. Members of farming villages and the {military} represent these social groups today. It is probably an undeniable fact that this is a result of inadequate communication for the former and deliberate, goal-oriented education for the latter. What is important here is the fact that this primitivization of consciousness must also capture the middle class in general, or the petit bourgeois, which is experiencing extreme turmoil in its social consciousness.

Primitivization of consciousness among the petit bourgeois middle

class appears as spiritualism under the name of antitechnology, antimechanization, antimaterialist thought (?), and antirationalism, among others. Religious deception of consciousness, mysticism, beliefs connected to healing and fortune-telling, and modern forms of such primitive cognitive effects capture the turmoil of the petit bourgeois middle-class consciousness. Mysticism has been the social consciousness of the middle class and the mostly middle-class pacifist intelligentsia under Japanist fascism.

Though one may usually associate spiritualism with the ideology of the military (it seems that in the farming villages they do not consider the revitalization of the spirit of farming villages to be very promising), there is good reason why the military cannot become a pure spiritualism. This is because there cannot be a combat spirit that does not take mechanized infantry units seriously. Spiritualism is the primitive natural common sense of contemporary middle-class citizens. For this to be trained to fit the qualifications of Japanism, it must rely on the other powerful “common sense” of the military. Here spiritualism can no longer remain as voluntary spiritualism (like, for example, European spiritualisms or Buddhist or Confucian spiritualisms) but must become restorationist. This means that restorationism develops into a civic common sense as a political concept of a clearly defined spiritualism, or *Japanese Spiritualism*, by passing through the universal, global norm of spiritualism as civic common sense and shedding itself of the ambiguous restorationism that we have discussed thus far. This is what the *Spirit of Empericism* [*kōdō seishin*] is.<sup>6</sup>

Political concepts cannot be established without being based upon civic common sense. Thus the advocacy of the restoration of the “oneness of soldiers and farmers” unique to the military lacks the qualifications as a political idea on its own. On the other hand, the spiritualism unique to

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6. Literally, the Spirit of the Imperial Way. In the broad sense of the term, this should be understood as a form of spiritualism based upon the belief that the emperor serves as the essence of the Japanese nation, though there was probably never a consensus as to what this spiritualism entailed. Although it was not until 1937, or two years after the publication of Tosaka's *The Japanese Ideology*, that the Japanese government provided an orthodox account of what constituted the Kokutai (national essence or polity) through the publication of *Kokutai no hongī*, by 1932 the Ministry of Education had already founded the Research Institute for the National Cultural Spirit (Kokumin bunka seishin kenkyūjo), which played a central role in providing such publications. On the challenges and debates that arose in these tasks, see Nobuyuki Konno, *Kindai Nihon no kokutai-ron* (Tokyo: Perikansha, 2007), and Ryōichi Hasegawa, “*Kōkokushikan*” *to iu mondai* (Tokyo: Hakutakusha, 2008).

the petit bourgeois middle class does not lead to the power of material domination on its own either. Through what we may call a joining of military and civilians, Japanism as restorationism can become the expression of the will of fascist political power. Precisely because it is the doctrine of emperorism, it can serve as the ultimate point of departure and arrival of Japanism. This is my final, all-encompassing conclusion that unifies all of the parameters I have touched upon in my analysis thus far.

The task remains of taking the reverse course that we have traversed thus far to examine how this essence of Japanist ideology called the doctrine of emperorism (pay special attention to the fact that this does not refer to emperorism itself but to its doctrine!) is utilized by the ideals of contemporary fascist politics and its political system, as well as how it is utilized by the contemporary capitalist system to which fascism corresponds. I will omit this discussion here.

# Theory of the Intelligentsia and Theory of Technology

## *Proposing to Reexamine the Theory of Technology*

*Translated by Takeshi Kimoto*

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“Theory of the Intelligentsia and Theory of Technology” was first published in *The Japanese Ideology* in 1935. In this essay, Tosaka takes issue with leftist scholar Aikawa Haruki’s criticism of Tosaka’s *Philosophy of Technology* (*Gijutsu no tetsugaku*, 1933). Aikawa claims that *gijutsu* (technology) needs to be defined strictly as the “organization of means of labor.” He criticizes as idealistic deviation Tosaka’s conception of *gijutsu*, which includes subjective skills and techniques. Although the means of labor do constitute an essential aspect of technology, Tosaka responds that *gijutsu* cannot be reduced to this dimension in an objectivistic manner. Instead, he proposes a *gijutsu suiijun* (technological standard) that mediates both subjective and objective aspects of technology. In this context, he points out that the vernacular term *gijutsu* means both techniques and technology. Here Tosaka addresses a semantic and ontological question of the language rather than force a seemingly materialistic point of view on this phenomenon. More significantly, he mentions the notion of “immaterial technique” in this context, which allows us to reread his discussion from today’s theoretical perspective.

Tosaka Jun’s theory of technology represents a culmination of his en-



ture philosophizing, which started in his *Kagaku hōhōron* (*Methodology of Science*) in 1928. It forms a basis for his materialist philosophy and provides a principle for his ideological critique of idealisms, including the Kyoto School of philosophy. In fact, his final published essays in 1941 deal with the question of technology (see Tosaka Jun, “Kagaku to gijutsu no kannen” (The Notions of Science and Technology) and “Gijutsu e iku mondai” (The Problem Leading to Technology) in *Tosaka Jun zenshū*, 1:355 and 1:360, respectively.

“Theory of the Intelligentsia and Theory of Technology” is translated from *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1966), 2:38–92 (hereafter cited as *TJz*).

The question of technique [*gijutsu*, technology], according to the way of thinking in bourgeois society, is always presented, first and foremost, as a form of “technology and economy.” What is meant here is industrial technology as in industry, agriculture, and other areas. Therefore, the contents of the question, for the most part, are industrial and agricultural economies, wherein even commercial and management sorts of techniques are sometimes connected to these technologies. If one extends the concept of technique in this way further, it comes to include law-making and administrative techniques and others, and then one might even bring up something like a technique in creative writing. Needless to say, however, in such a naive conception, there is almost no definite systematic relation amongst various kinds of “techniques.” Possible questions and doubts about this conception are narrowly evaded only because the term “technique” here is being used in extremely mundane and vulgar ways.

This is caused by the fact that the social category called technique is not clarified philosophically in its full qualification as a social category. Technique itself is basically one of the major philosophical categories. The world understands this point tacitly and thus assumes as if the category of technique were ultimately somewhat already commonplace to everyone. This is why the economic institutions of a society are discussed in such an extremely loose way.

Thus, secondly, technique is so often taken up as not only something regarding the economic institution or social domains directly related to it alone, but also it itself can be regarded as an independent topic, as one of the fundamental problems of bourgeois philosophy or worldview. Especially in the face of economic, political, and cultural crises such as those

of the recent world situation, constant attention is paid to the fundamental significance of this problem. Today, *philosophy of technique* [technology] and the discussion of technology as a type of *theory of civilization* [*bunmeiron*] in relation to the former naturally play a special role. But the concept of technique itself yet remains scientifically quite obscure. It is perhaps here that the category of technique should be grasped most broadly and most fundamentally. Instead, the so-called philosophical concept of technology is ultimately nothing more than a scholarly sophistication of a mere commonsensical notion of technique.

Now, then, technology [technique] is one of the basic problems concerning the decisive point for materialism in general. Materialist theory of technology [technique], which has recently shown some development in Japan, succeeded in clarifying at least two essential points. First, although this philosophical concept of technology has broad and comprehensive meanings, the theory has analyzed and synthesized this general concept as a systematic totality layered with primary and secondary elements. Technology in general must be concretized as an organization derived from the basic line of *material technology of production*. To have clarified this relation, which is apparently quite self-evident but whose meaning is nonetheless overlooked in the received bourgeois commonplace, is the first achievement.

The second achievement lies in pointing out the distinction between such technology [*gijutsu*, technique] on the one hand and skills, technique [*gihō*], and methods on the other. In other words, technology in its proper sense, that is, material technology of production, means the objective and material base of a society and must thus be distinguished, at least once beforehand and strictly, from skills that are among the characteristics of a laboring subject who deals with this technology and techniques and methods that are regarded as extensions of these skills.

However, it does not necessarily seem that a materialistically sufficient clarification of what this primary technology is in the proper and strict sense—or technology itself—has been provided yet.

A memorable essay regarding this second point is Mr. Aikawa Haruki's "Essentials of Recent Debates on Technology" (*Sociological Review*, Issue 1).<sup>1</sup> Here, he summarizes his own viewpoint regarding the theories

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1. "Saikin ni okeru gijutsu ronsō no yōten," in *Shakaigaku hyōron* (July 1934): 105–136. Aikawa Haruki, born Yanami Hisao (1909–1955), joined the Institute for Proletarian Science

of technology proposed and discussed by materialists thus far. It also seems that his fundamental critique of an opinion I once presented (see my *Philosophy of Technology*) runs through it.<sup>2</sup> As for its inadequate idealism and mistakes concerning my theory, I have to agree with his comments. I myself can evaluate his current essay quite highly in this regard. Nevertheless, regarding his positive views, I still cannot clear away some quite fundamental doubts.

According to Mr. Aikawa, technology cannot be anything but the *system of material means of social labor* [*shakai teki rodo shudan no taikai*] in a certain stage of development of material forces of production of a human society. That is, technology is primarily the *organization of means of labor* [*rōdō shudan no taisei*]. The only materialist approach, he insists, is to determine the idea of technology as such. In fact, all of the determinations of his conception begin with this definition and concentrate on it. Perhaps, what is usually called technique [*gijutsu*] vaguely includes skills and methods for one thing and techniques [technology] of immaterial techniques [technology] of production for another. It is usually not considered that the organization of means of labor (machines, instruments, factory, transportation facilities, and so forth) alone comprises technique. Probably, *common sense* refers to the idea of technique—not the organization of means of labor itself but something based on it. (Here what I mean by an “idea” is a notion in which the resulting analysis is anticipated in a certain way.) Therefore, in order to mean the so-called organization of means of labor by using the everyday word “technique” instead of some other words, Mr. Aikawa has to take responsibility for explaining why the commonsensical signification of the term would be nothing but unscientific, on the one hand, and must also be able to provide the reasons for this scientific term to convince common sense and force it into self-reflection, on the other. If he neglects this procedure, his determination of technique [technology] would end up with a “definition” greatly cherished by bourgeois sciences, which merely amounts to defining the “organization of

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and the Materialism Study Group in 1932. He was also a member of the Kōza faction, writing an essay entitled “Agricultural Economy and Agricultural Crisis” for Volume 6 of *Nihon shihonshugi hattatsushi kōza*. He was one of the main figures in the “Debate on Technology,” advocating an objectivist standpoint. After making a political conversion in 1935, he published *Gendai gijutsuron* (Modern Theory of Technology), in which he discussed various technologies, including film, as a means of mass mobilization.

2. Tosaka Jun, *Gijutsu no tetsugaku*, in *TJz*, 1:229–298.

means of labor” in an artificial way with a scholarly term (?) called “technique.” As is always the case with this sort of procedure, the terminology, in this case “technique,” is taken up only arbitrarily and mechanically. Here, any truthful development cannot be expected.

It appears that Mr. Aikawa picked up the above definition of technology from Marx’s writings. But this remains a matter of mere speculation; in fact, I have not yet discovered the passage and do not remember any other people’s texts quoting it. In any event, as far as Mr. Aikawa cites it, he does not document directly Marx’s text corresponding to the definition.

However, the major literature he cites for his argument is the passage in which Marx explained “technology” [*Technologie*]. “Those who doubt whether or not technology is the organization of means of labor,” Mr. Aikawa says, “should begin with reexamining Marx’s thesis (which Lenin put forward when he explained the materialist view of history in his *Karl Marx*.)”<sup>3</sup> He puts the following two quotations of Marx before and after this passage. The first one (before): “Technology reveals the active relation of man to nature, the direct process of the production of his life, and thereby it also lays bare the process of the production of the social relations of his life, and of the mental conceptions that flow from those relations.”<sup>4</sup> The second one (after): “a critical history of technology”—the formations of “the productive organs of man in society, of organs that are the material basis of every particular organization of society.”<sup>5</sup> These are the passages that Aikawa insists Lenin put forward.

Thus, Mr. Aikawa concludes: “In short, the technique as such, which is the object of the study of technology, is nothing but ‘productive organs’ that are the ‘material basis’ of ‘every particular’ society, that is, specific to a certain form of historical development. That is to say, it is the means of production, especially, the means of labor among others.”<sup>6</sup> He claims that what Marx elsewhere calls “a certain technological basis of a society” is identical with this “material basis of society.”

However, as is immediately clear, this conclusion comes, if it does, at best from Marx’s second thesis. Rather, an opposite conclusion would

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3. Aikawa, “Essentials of Recent Debates on Technology,” 109; see also Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, “Karl Marx: A Brief Biographical Sketch with an Exposition of Marxism,” in his *Collected Works* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1974), 21:43–91.

4. Karl Marx, *Capital*, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin, 1990), 1:493.

5. *Ibid.*

6. Aikawa, “Essentials of Recent Debates on Technology,” 109.

come from the first one because Marx says that the object of technology is “the active relation of man to nature” (“the direct process of the production of his life”) and thereby “the process of the production of the social relations of his life, and of the mental conceptions that flow from those relations.” If this is the case, the technology that Mr. Aikawa is looking for must be found in these quotations. Why is it that “the active relation of man to nature” and the formation process based on it, of not only relations of production, but also mental conceptions, must be conceived of as the “organization of means of labor”? Rather, one cannot help but take Marx’s passage as explaining explicitly that so-called technology is not limited to the organization of means of labor. Furthermore, what attracts our attention is that, immediately after the quotes, Marx says that “[e]ven a history of religion that is written in abstraction from this material basis is uncritical.” He continues: “To develop from the actual, given relations of life the forms in which these have been apotheosized” is “the only materialist, and therefore the only scientific” method.<sup>7</sup> That is to say, what Marx refers to here as the “material basis” or “material” does not mean anything like “means of labor” as Mr. Aikawa inferred, but it just generally points to the starting point of the materialist view of history.

Moreover, his reasoning from Marx’s second thesis is extremely groundless. Even though Marx equates the “productive organs of man” with the “material basis of every particular organization of society,” it is a rather dangerous reading of the text to deduce “means of labor” by combining these two. What is referred to as “productive organs of man” is originally an analogy from “the organs of plants and animals, which serve as the instruments of production for sustaining their life.”<sup>8</sup> If this analogy is taken to be based on a mere external similarity, it just implies “the active relation of man (or plants and animals) to nature” by the active functions of material organs. (Mr. Aikawa may insist that the organs as instruments of production imply means of labor. But Marx just wants to say that the organs here do not mean mere passive organs of cognition but active, productive organs.) On the other hand, if the analogy is a more essential one, the so-called productive organs of man (i.e., the material basis of a society) will express some material basis that retains the characteristics of organs as such (both the nervous system and muscles are organs), not just

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7. Marx, *Capital*, 1:493–494.

8. *Ibid.*, 1:493.

the mere organization of means of labor. It seems Marx explained this elsewhere in a tautological (from our standpoint) form as “technological basis.” Moreover, if he made an essential comparison between technology [technique] and the productive organs of plants, animals, and man, it shows that technology [technique] cannot be explained away merely by a definition—that is, the organization of the means of labor—in an *objectivistic* (or even mechanistic) way. Marx may have thought that the historical origin of what is called technology [technique] lies in the organs of living creatures. If so, the meaning of the analogy of productive organs here points to both the organs as the “organization of means of labor” and the subject of sensory and kinetic functions.

In any event, the definition of technology [technique] that Mr. Aikawa looks for, the “organization of means of labor,” does not only derive from Marx’s two theses; rather, a conclusion that would negate such a mechanistic definition would be considered more natural and a more appropriate reading. Yet, although I am now asking whether or not Marx said this or that statement, I do not intend to enter into a philological exegesis. I merely want to say that, as far as the conclusion Mr. Aikawa drew from the quotations from Marx is concerned, my reading tends toward the opposite direction from him.

Of course, Mr. Aikawa does not take Marx’s words as his only ground. It seems that his own system of thought necessitated him to think of technology [technique] in that way. But, needless to say, a systematic necessity for a theoretician is not always an objective necessity. To use terminology that is far removed from the common sense, but which has the same word in common, instead of criticizing and overcoming the common sense, would not be very appropriate from a scientific point of view. To be sure, one does not have to respect claims of common sense at all, but an analysis that does not rescue the common sense would not be scientific and would not be socially supported by the masses in the first place.

Yet, one may as well think in this way: The word “technique” [technology] is a vernacular term [*zokugo*], and therefore it is inappropriate to make it into a scientific one; one needs a scientific concept of technique [technology] independent of its vernacular version and may call the former “technique” [technology] just tentatively. But then one should call it something like the “technical” [technological] or technological basis. In any case, this “technique” [technology] in this conception and the “means

of labor” still have such a huge gap in language that choosing the word will be pointless. In other words, the “means of labor” makes sense, in and of itself, to the common sense and does not need to be explained by the word “technique” [technology] or its variant. Of course, if the means of labor and so-called technique [technology] were entirely different things, Mr. Aikawa or anybody else would not intend to identify these two. This surely implies there is some necessary connection between them. However close this connection may be, it does not mean they are one and the same thing, especially when equation of these two is questionable for a more substantive reason.

As a matter of fact, the vernacular technique perhaps does not comprise a scientific category itself. Several categories based on a theory of technology would be necessary to substitute for it, derived from analyzing the difficulties of this vernacular notion. To be sure, as one of the categories, that is to say, as a moment of the phenomenon of technique [*gijutsu gensho*], the “means of labor” is probably absolutely necessary. But if one isolates it from other categories representing other moments of the phenomenon, it will be meaningless or lose its utility as a category. Then what kind of categories can one think of? Something like a *technological* [*technical*] *standard* [*gijutsu suijun*] that is indicated and measured by this means of labor will be necessary. What is generally referred to as *technique* seems to be, for the most part, one moment of what this category of technological standard refers to. At this point, however, this concept remains naught but a mere idea left to the imagination.

Of course, even if one assumes something like a technological standard, it would not take a specific visible form. In this sense, it does not have materiality such as that which the means of labor has, for instance. But, just as the forces of production in a society are material, it has to be material as well. The technological standard is by far a higher social abstraction than the means of production or its organization and, therefore, it belongs to a more abstract idea of a social institution. But it is only through this standard that the so-called *organization of means of labor* and the corresponding *skills* as properties of labor power are connected practically and therefore unified theoretically [*kannenteki*] as well. Thus, it can also satisfy the demands of the common sense that will incorporate the skills into the so-called productive technology [technique].

The technological standard, as a social abstraction from the organization of means of labor, is measured, as it were, by this organization itself.

On the other hand, the skills are measured in view of this social technological standard. If one says that certain skills of labor power should correspond to the organization of means of labor in a certain society, this statement merely expresses an expected result. In actuality, however, there exist continuous interactions between the skills and the organization of means of labor. For example, without standardizing the socially average level [*suijun*, standard] of skills (skill standard), one cannot design the driver's seat of a tractor. The very measure that indicates the skill standard in an objective way is the *technological standard of a society*.

The practical interaction between the means of labor and skills takes place by being converted into the technological standard that serves as a sort of a *technological equivalent*, as it were.

Although Marx sometimes apparently uses technique and technology [*gijutsugaku*, *Technologie*, science of technology] as synonyms, these two must be distinguished scientifically. Yet, a science concerning technique is not necessarily technology as such. Nor should we be so quick to say that the object of study for technology is technique. The study of technique may be economics and perhaps even sociology but not necessarily technology. In his introduction to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Marx calls a study of a particular branch of production "technology" and distinguishes it from political economy as a study of production in general or general production.<sup>9</sup> (Therefore, it was already problematic that Mr. Aikawa inferred from Marx's explanation of technology the determination of "technique" as its object.) If, then, one distinguishes technology [*gijutsugaku*] from so-called technique [*gijutsu*], what does technology look like? It is precisely here that the category of technological standard becomes useful.

As I have already said, technology is not simply an "-ology" of techniques. Actually, it is a technological organization (intelligence and knowl-

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9. By "introduction," Tosaka refers to one of the appendices included in Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, trans. S. W. Ryazanskaya (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1970). This introduction constitutes the first part of Marx's 1857–1859 notebooks that were later published in their entirety under the title *Grundrisse*. Tosaka seems to refer to the following passage: "If there is no production in general, then there is also no general production. Production is always a *particular* branch of production—e.g., agriculture, cattle-raising, manufactures, etc.—or it is a *totality*. But political economy is not technology. The relation of the general characteristics of production at a given stage of social development to the particular forms of production is to be developed elsewhere (later)" (*Grundrisse*, trans. Martin Nicolaus [London/New York: Penguin, 1993], 86).



edge based on experiences and skills) concerning “techniques.” (Let us suppose there is such a thing.) Therefore, its main components must be a technological organization concerning the means of labor and its organization. Now, what does the development of technology mean? It virtually means, as an ideology, the rise of the *level of subjective skills* of engineers in general, on the one hand. And, on the other hand, from an objective standpoint, it means precisely the rise of the *technological standard* of a society. Because the level of engineers objectively means the technological standard of a society, both technology and technique are usually used in the same sense in a careless way. This provides another reason for the fact that common sense expects the major moment of so-called technique in the technological standard.

Then, the social technological equivalent that mediates the organization of the means of labor and the skills of labor power is something like a technological standard, based on which a broad, unified, and systematically layered totality of techniques first becomes possible. Without using a technological category that represents this type of social abstraction, any philosophy, worldview, or cultural theory concerning technique would end up with all sorts of nonsense. Marx’s guideline to the critique of religion—that is, the statement that it needs to be developed from the standpoint of technology—then, would clearly not make sense. The relationship between the question of technique and cultural theory lies in questioning the relationship between the technological development and the progress of mankind. In a primitive stage of mankind, in which the means of labor and skills of labor power were not yet separated even physically, the technological standard was represented by functions of the organs as productive instruments, as Marx said. Here, the technological standard was nothing but the degree of development of the biological intelligence of mankind. The technological standard can be regarded as transmitted from the primitive, undeveloped stage to today’s developed social organization as a standard moment of “technique as such” and also as a still basic measure of the development of human society. If technique is the material basis of a society, its contents can be grasped by assuming the standard-ness of the technological standard. Otherwise, one would have to turn to a system of the means of labor, machines, instruments, and the like. This is literally the first step to a mechanistic theory.

It is, of course, not Mr. Aikawa alone who assumes that technique is the “organization of the means of labor.” Rather, it seems that many ma-

terialists have come to place some trust in this assumption by now. However, I believe that this trust is worthy of ruthless materialist reexamination. This essay is an attempt at this. While my opinion on the technological standard remains a mere idea or hypothesis, the received “materialist” (?) definition of technique cannot avoid being subjected to doubt in a materialist manner. What kind of judgment would you the readers make in this case?

As I conclude, I must touch upon my direct motif in raising this doubt. The question of the intelligentsia, which is recently discussed throughout literary and intellectual circles, has, I believe, something to do with the doubt I just mentioned.<sup>10</sup>

It seems that the current discussions of the intelligentsia have the following two defects. First, these discussions have a tendency to not grasp the question as one of its subjectivity—that is, as the question of the intelligence of intelligentsia—but often as a mere question of a social stratum. However, a progressive task of today’s intelligentsia lies, and must lie, in the question: How progressively will the intelligentsia utilize their subjective intelligence?

The second defect consists in the arbitrary tendency to begin with analyzing the literary and philosophical problem of intellectuals while separating their intelligence from the question of technology. Since human intellect or intelligence emerges from, and is conditioned by, a social life that social humans practice as active activities [*nōdō teki katsudō*] vis-à-vis nature, to separate intelligence from techniques and make it into something independent means, generally speaking, to ignore the principle of

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10. Here, Tosaka intervenes in the debate on the intelligentsia that was widely discussed among writers, critics, and social scientists in the early 1930s. The debate was first launched by Marxists, who argued that intelligentsia generally play a negative or limited role in class struggle, but since the suppression of their movement and subsequent conversion, there appeared two major tendencies. One was the sociological approach that largely identified intelligentsia with the newly emerged “salary men” and regarded them as an independent social class. Tosaka criticized this as a phenomenalist approach neglecting the intelligentsia’s place in the material relations of production. Another was the literary standpoint that identified the intelligentsia with writers, critics, and intellectuals who, it claimed, were distinguished by their ability for anxiety and skepticism. Tosaka rejected this position of “literary liberalism” for committing the same mistake as the former approach; see his “Intelligentsia Consciousness and the Theory of Intelligentsia as a Class,” in *The Japanese Ideology*, chap. 16 (Iwanami bunko version), 291–300; in *TJz*, 2:371–376; and “Doubts about the Theory of Intelligentsia,” in *The Japanese Ideology*, chap. 17 (Iwanami bunko version), 301–315; in *TJz*, 2:376–384.

*materialism*. This represents a quite careless and idealist conception of intelligence. To my surprise, this self-evident case does not come into focus very clearly for today's progressive theorists of the intelligentsia. Unless it becomes clear, the question of intelligence that constitutes the subjectivity of the intelligentsia becomes nearly meaningless or it is raised as a distorted question of the "active spirit of the intelligentsia," for instance. This kind of questioning has quite unfortunate a fate.

Needless to say, intelligence is nothing but one of the skills of labor power. This is the reason why the question of the intelligentsia is raised as the relationship between intelligence as the *skill of labor power* and *technique as such*. But, the question cannot be solved without figuring out what technique as such is, and what kind of practical and technical connection it has with skills. So long as one considers technique as the organization of means of labor, the question of intelligence—and therefore, the question of the intelligentsia—will be simply overlooked or destroyed. This is the reason why I dare to attempt to designate technique as "technological standard" in a society.

From this, it can be concluded that the question of the intelligentsia cannot properly be solved without a materialist standpoint. That is to say, the question can never be answered, in a simplistic way, as a liberal question for liberals.

# Liberalist Philosophy and Materialism

## *Against the Two Types of Liberalist Philosophy*

*Translated by John Person*

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Like the previous excerpts from *The Japanese Ideology*, this piece, too, can stand on its own. It appeared in July 1935 as an essay in the journal *Yuibutsuron kenkyū* and in *The Japanese Ideology*, so it is clear that it was intended for the broader project. While “The Fate of Japanism” served as the concluding essay for the first of the two parts that make up the monograph, this essay (Chapter 19) served as the concluding essay for the second part, The Critique of Liberalism and the Principles of Its Execution (*Jiyūshugi no hihan to sono gensoku*). This second half of *The Japanese Ideology* is devoted to the analysis of various forms of philosophy and literature that Tosaka identifies as “liberalist,” demonstrating how these not only are powerless for critiquing Japanism, but also work to reinforce it. In this culminating essay, Tosaka focuses his critical eye on what he calls two forms of liberalist philosophies: cultural liberalism, which reduced liberalism to a moral attitude divorced from political and economic realities, and the idealist liberalism of Kawai Eijirō, which Tosaka sees as attempting to accomplish ideals through ideals. Tosaka argues that, despite arguments to the contrary, Marxism has also been a philosophy with ideals but, armed with the methods of a “materialist historical material-

ism,” it avoids confusing its ends with its means, thus providing a framework for a viable critique of the present. According to Tosaka, liberalism must look to materialism to develop the methods of critiquing its mutual enemy, Japanism.

Several notes on the format are in order. Unlike “The Fate of Japanism,” this piece did not contain any words that were removed by the censors. All words in parenthesis are Tosaka’s.

“Liberalist Philosophy and Materialism” is translated from *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1966), 2: 392–402.

In a certain newspaper, Dr. Gorai Sosen says that the real enemy of Japanism is materialism.<sup>1</sup> Though it is not immediately clear what exactly this Japanism refers to, it is even less clear what he means by materialism. Yet, aside from its status as a behavioral phenomenon in contemporary society, from the standpoint of theoretical value, it is impossible to say that Japanism possesses true theoretical independence. All things considered, it appears to be a theory that cannot stand on its own. As a testament to this fact, if one attempts to endow Japanism with a relevancy that would make it more applicable to society in general, one would immediately need to back this up by introducing foreign philosophies. There are very few cases where these sort of man-made, crafty philosophies develop into something more than a brand of vulgar philosophy. On the other hand, materialism has traditionally been a theoretical system possessing a singular and independent, comprehensive organization. Therefore, from the standpoint of theoretical standards, an attempt to place this materialism and Japanism on an even plane and call one a true enemy of the other would inevitably draw ridicule.

I could not contain my laughter when, upon paging through a certain journal of criticism that claimed to introduce factions of contemporary thought, I saw that materialism was listed along with various contemporary schools of phony thought such as those of Heidegger, Scheler, and Jaspers.<sup>2</sup> When one ignores historical importance and arbitrarily compares

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1. Gorai Sosen (Kinzō) (1875–1944) was a renowned journalist and scholar who specialized in political science, literature, and sports. A professor of Meiji and Waseda universities, he is the author of many works, including *Fascism and Its Theory of State* and *An Outline of Political Science*.

2. Martin Heidegger’s (1889–1976) students and acquaintances included prominent Japanese philosophers Kuki Shuzō, Tanabe Hajime, and Miki Kiyoshi. Max Scheler (1874–1928)

various recent phenomena, it tends to lead to awkward results. The idiocy of these judgments is a consequence of the fact that they lack objective fairness. There is nothing more unsightly than such complacent, subjective perspectives.

In comparison to this association of contemporary materialism to the whimsical philosophies of Scheler and Jaspers, it is much more interesting and thoughtful to link it with contemporary Japanism. Although, as I said before, Japanism cannot stand on its own in terms of theory (though perhaps as a nontheoretical theory? it can always stand on its own) from the standpoint of actual influence in society, it is probably true that materialism is a capable opponent of Japanist philosophy. From the perspective of materialism, too, Japanist philosophy is an irreconcilable opponent. Despite whatever it says to the contrary, Japanist philosophy is the philosophy of Japanese fascism, and materialism holds fascist philosophy in general as its final opponent.

It seems that the recent social situation in Japan momentarily brought to the attention of the public the problem of liberalism. The editorial journalists are proclaiming the fall of liberalism. Yet, where had liberalism been all this time to make such a fall possible in the first place? In all honesty, the truth of the matter is that this freedom had always been quite limited and is now being oppressed anew. As such, we might say that the consciousness toward freedom, or interest in liberalism, has actually been stimulated and even in some respects has risen to the occasion. Whether it has fallen or ignited, such was the extent of the actual power of recent liberalism (after the golden age? of Marxism). In fact, at this point, it is neither a fall nor a surge.

At any rate, we must make special note of the fact that it is this liberalism that must now realize for the first time in an actual manner the significance of being in antagonistic relation to Japanist philosophy, which had hitherto been the enemy of materialism. Although this may seem like an obvious fact known to everyone, liberals have nonetheless failed to pursue this perspective to the extent that they should. That is to say, liberalism, at least in order to compete with Japanism, has no choice but to share the same theoretical concerns as materialism. The current circumstances demand a choice between materialism and Japanism. Liberalism

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was a philosopher of phenomenology; Karl Jaspers (1883–1969), a psychiatrist and philosopher. All three were German.

must seek its footing in materialism if only to gain its own basis of argument.

Needless to say, liberalists are averse to heeding such recommendations, both emotionally and by habit. Liberalists imagine and contend that liberalism has an independent philosophy unique to itself. Thus we arrive at the need to critique and overcome this thing called *liberalist philosophy*. This is because without such a critique we cannot make the most of liberalism itself. I would now like to investigate why liberalism cannot critique and overcome Japanism unless it rids itself of liberalist “philosophy.”

Liberalism and liberalist philosophy: These are words that are used to denote many different meanings today. They refer to a doctrine that simply loves freedom, while they also refer to “antifascist” emotions. Further, they also exist as a pretext for “anti-Marx.” We could go on forever if we were to examine each of these vulgar concepts, yet it is important to first recognize the point that liberalism possesses at least three parts or aspects. It goes without saying that liberalism first appeared as economic liberalism. Its point of departure was the elimination of mercantilist<sup>3</sup> state intervention advocated first by the physiocrats<sup>4</sup> and then by orthodox economics. This economic liberalism conceived of as the theory of the economic policy of free trade and free competition eventually gave birth to political liberalism, to which it also corresponds. The contents of this political liberalism are the social status of freedom and equality for its citizens and, based on this, the political concept of democracy (bourgeois democracy).

From such economic-political liberalism, or perhaps based on this or even corresponding to it, there occurs a third aspect of liberalism. For the sake of convenience, let us call this cultural liberalism. Instead of economic or political consciousness, more generally, or rather in terms of a higher consciousness, we can think of a cultural consciousness. Cultural liberalism refers to liberalism within this cultural consciousness, or rather within the cultural activities that are social activities based upon this par-

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3. Mercantilism is a system of economic policies and theories that was implemented between the late fifteenth and late eighteenth centuries, advocating the expansion of a nation’s wealth through achieving a positive balance of trade.

4. Physiocracy is a late eighteenth-century theory of economics that originated in France. In opposition to trade-centered mercantilism, it argues that agricultural production is the only source of wealth.

ticular cultural consciousness. Many people have already noted this aspect of liberalism. It has been referred to as “liberalism in literature” (Aono Suekichi) or “spiritual liberalism” (Ōmori Gitarō).<sup>5</sup> However, not only do these two examples lack comparisons with other aspects of liberalism, but Aono overly esteems this aspect of liberalism while Ōmori disregards it as if it lacks any kind of value. In any case, we can say that many people think that this aspect of liberalism called cultural liberalism seems to be especially relevant today.

To some extent these three parts or aspects possess independence from one another. Just as the principle of planned economics by itself does not necessarily contradict political liberalisms such as parliamentary politics or party politics, we cannot lose sight of the phenomena of the individual parts, such as the “fall” of political liberalism actually leading to the elevation of cultural liberalism. It can be seen also that the fall of political liberalism (which is actually rooted in the same thing that caused the temporary wane of Marxist cultural theory) in fact led to the “restoration” and flourish of a particular liberalist cultural consciousness. Examples of this in literature include the active spirit,<sup>6</sup> angst-ism,<sup>7</sup> romanticism,<sup>8</sup> and various forms of humanism, among others.

And so, even if economic and political liberalisms fall, cultural liberalism can thrive to some extent on its own, though perhaps momentarily. Thus, if liberalism in general is viewed as something that must be protected, when economic and political liberalisms are at a disadvantage, cultural liberalism obviously becomes the inevitable last gathering place of

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5. Aono Suekichi (1890–1961) was a literary critic prominent in the proletarian literature movement. Ōmori Gitarō (1898–1940) was a Marxist economist and journalist and the author of *A Reader on the Materialist Dialectic*. Ōmori was a staunch, and sometimes sensationalist, critic of liberalist economics and academic culture at Tokyo Imperial University, where he was assistant professor until his resignation in 1928.

6. *Nōdō seishin* was a literary movement headed by the writers Funahashi Sei'ichi (1904–1976) and Abe Tomoji (1903–1973) and promoted in their journal, *Kōdō*.

7. *Fuanshugi* is a series of debates inspired by the translation of Lev Shestov's *Philosophy of Tragedy* in 1934 and the works of Miki Kiyoshi on the concept of angst; see, for example, Miki Kiyoshi's *The Philosophy of Angst and Its Overcoming* (*Fuan no shisō to sono chōkoku*) and Aono Suekichi's “Notes on the *Philosophy of Tragedy*” (*Higeki no Tetsugaku ni kansuru nōto*).

8. This likely refers to the Japan Romantic School movement led by writers and critics such as Yasuda Yojūrō (1910–1981). On this movement, see Kevin Doak, *Dreams of Difference: The Japan Romantic School and the Crisis of Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).



liberalism in general. Today there are many intellectuals who seek to derive a positive liberalism in general from within this cultural liberalism (like Aono Suekichi). We can further say that while these many bland liberals, who are vaguely and emotionally liberalistic, may not harbor any liberalistic views of economics or any kind of democratic will in politics, they still personally believe in this cultural liberalism. We might then say that this cultural liberalism is an influential form of liberalism that has today gained a fresh sense of initiative.

From this cultural liberalism a certain sort of liberalist philosophy sprung forth, but before we look at this, we must be attentive to the two types that are contained in the category (fundamental concept) “liberalism.” In most cases, categories that indicate a certain social phenomena simultaneously employ the same word to express a specific phenomenon in history as well as a transhistorical general form. For example, romanticism at the same time points to a certain movement in German cultural history that followed classicism, as well as antirealistic movements in all eras more generally.<sup>9</sup> Liberalism also fits as an example of this. Although as a historical category it refers to the economic, political, and cultural ideology at the time of the rise of the bourgeoisie during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, we must not overlook the fact that it not only refers to this ideology possessing historically particular limitations, but also to a transhistorical universal humanist category more generally. (Hasegawa Nyozeikan calls this a moral category.)<sup>10</sup> It goes without saying that as a historical category liberalism cannot be anything other than bourgeois ideology, the product of capitalist culture. Yet, when it comes to this liberalism as a moral category, we can say it has been liberated from this particular class nature—from this particular ideological character. Thus, this liberalism as a moral category can take an extremely accommodating form that can insert convenient provisions and contents upon necessity. We must say that it is quite natural that this liberalism as moral category—

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9. On the early German romantic movement and its relation to classicism, see Frederick Beiser, *The Romantic Imperative: The Concept of Early German Romanticism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).

10. Journalist and literary critic Hasegawa Nyozeikan (Manjirō) (1875–1969) was the founder of the journal *Warera* and the author of many columns, essays, and books, including *Critique of Japanese Fascism*. Hasegawa was one of the founding members of the *Yuibutsuron kenkyūkai* but left the group after a short membership when it came under the pressure of the thought police for the first time in 1933.

the last, or most recent, stage of liberalism—would provide the last resort for these liberals, who will worship anything that is liberalist.

The point that is important here is the singular fact that this “liberalism” as a moral category is cited as the direct certification for the aforementioned cultural liberalism. In other words, the liberalists who place their final trust in cultural liberalism use as the basis of their trust the argument that their cultural liberalism is based upon this liberalism as a moral category. That is to say, it is claimed that cultural liberalism carries authority precisely because it is moral (universal humanist) liberalism. If this were a legitimate argument it would have to mean that this cultural liberalism is the final and highest form of liberalism.

Yet there is a fine mistake hidden here. And this gives birth to a significant misdiagnosis. No matter how cultural, and thus transeconomic/transpolitical, cultural liberalism is—or in that sense no matter how unrealistic a liberalism it is in meaning—it does not mean that this cultural liberalism is a liberalism that is a transhistorical, so-called moral, category. It should not be permitted to understand cultural liberalism, which had only been a part or aspect of liberalism, to be the same as liberalism as a moral category that has reign over liberalism as a whole. If one were to insist on thinking along these lines, one would have to change this liberalism as a moral category to something like *moral liberalism*. If it is called moral liberalism, it is probably the same as cultural liberalism. Yet, if one were to do this, the “freedom” that liberalism as a moral category possessed, the freedom from the historical limitations imbedded in liberalism as a historical category, would no longer be guaranteed to moral liberalism.

Accepting this line of thinking for a moment, if cultural liberalism could be established today, one would have to say that the establishment of this cultural liberalism also signals the formation of liberalism in general, based on the argument that it is one and the same with liberalism as a moral category whose legitimacy at least cannot be denied. Thus, it would also mean that economic liberalism and political liberalism could in fact only be conceived with cultural liberalism as its basis. In other words, it would mean that economic and political liberalism gain legitimacy in their establishment through a moral foundation. Thus, for example, those who are opposed to political liberalism would have to be criticized for being immoral. And that is not all. These cultural liberals often come to believe that they can obtain the right *to be generally* liberal by

holding on to this cultural liberalism without dealing with the issues of political (or economic) liberalism (or freedom). Thus, cultured liberal literati begin to argue that political freedom really does not matter since “what really is important is our robust self-consciousness.”

Cultural liberalism has the bad habit of using this so-called liberalism as a moral category to disguise its own liberalism as a general form to the extent of supplanting it with moralistic liberalism. Cultural liberalism is perverted into moral liberalism. It is no longer a liberalism *of culture* but rather a switch to *culturalist* liberalism. Since this is a phenomena often found among the literati, in the broad sense of the term, I have called this literary or philosophical liberalism in the past (see Chapters 11 and 15 [of *The Japanese Ideology*].)

Thus, the “literary” philosophical system of liberalism is finally formed in this way. Cultural liberalism was no more than what we called one part, or one aspect, of liberalism. Yet when this one part, one aspect declares its own independence and begins the unifying process of all of liberalism as a whole, it comes to mean a specific doctrine, a specific philosophical attitude toward liberalism as a whole. Here “The Philosophy of Liberalism” emerges for the first time. (However, this is only one of two patterns of its emergence: I will write about the other half later.) Here literary categories are used instead of philosophical categories. (I have already explained this in the present book: in Chapter 11 [of *The Japanese Ideology*].) This is why it is a literary liberalist philosophy. For example, the various types of humanism in the literary criticism of today are secretly based on this liberalist philosophy, and if we were to draw political consequences from this liberalist philosophy, its political conclusions would be quite predictable. My readers will probably find that this philosophy serves as a pillar of thought for some of the literati who have ideologically converted.<sup>11</sup>

What bears remembering is the fact this literary liberalist philosophy is not simply a system of thought applied only to what we call literature. In fact, we must be attentive to the fact that the mechanisms of this liberalist literature lurk within many of the main currents of bourgeois *philosophies* of today. For example, Nishida philosophy likely conjures a sort of

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11. *Tenkō* (ideological conversion or apostasy) refers to the renunciation of political attitudes deemed to be harmful to national security and a reorienting toward nationalist values, which was often forced upon leftist thinkers and activists during the early Shōwa period. At times, however, the conversion was voluntary as well.

liberalism in its readers.<sup>12</sup> If that were so, this liberalism is none other than literary liberalism (in other words, moralist liberalism), and thus it would mean that it is a type of liberalist philosophy. It is quite interesting that so many Japanese bourgeois philosophies of today can be classified as liberalist philosophy in this sense. In this way, various types of cultured philosophies that seem to have absolutely no relation to political liberalism actually can be traced to the philosophy of liberalism.

It is no coincidence that all liberalist philosophers of this type, without exception, oppose materialism, despite the fact they possess some rationality and progressiveness in their political common sense, which is based upon their cultural education—and despite the fact that they to some extent consider as their duty to respect and express sympathy toward the theoretical importance of Marxist cultural history in the area of intellectual history. This is because in the end liberalist philosophies of this type have already decided to remain within the boundaries of cultural liberalism. Material powers, such as productive forces and power that are at the foundation of society, had absolutely no relation to this liberalism. Materialism had been unnecessary to this philosophy from the beginning. Incidentally, only a hint of harassment is necessary in turning these liberalist philosophers into the enemy of materialism. These points are no different for even those literati who may be called the representatives of the cultural intelligentsia.

Now, thus far we examined the case of liberalist philosophy rooted in cultural liberalism, but now let us consider a different type of liberalist philosophy that arises from the ground of economic or political liberalism.

Generally speaking, it seems to be a characteristic of cultural liberalist philosophy that it does not appear to advocate any kind of liberalism, which speaks to the fact that it never was a liberalist philosophy in any robust way. In fact it is probably inevitable that a liberalism that came as a result of skipping over economic and political liberalism only to armor itself with cultural liberalism would not be able to bring about a robust liberalist philosophy. A legitimate liberal philosophy, or at least one faithful to its own name, must start with economic and political liberalism as

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12. “Nishida philosophy” was coined by Tosaka to refer to the philosophical school lead by Nishida Kitarō, which is often called the Kyoto School of philosophy. Tosaka himself was a product of the philosophy department at Kyoto University.

its foundation. In that way cultural liberalism can automatically be incorporated into the sphere of liberalism.

This second type of liberalist philosophy is quite rare in contemporary Japan. Yet its most notable example is apparent in the hard work of Professor Kawai Eijirō.<sup>13</sup> The reason I say hard work is because, according to the opinion of the professor himself thus far, the philosophy of liberalism has not yet been fully established, and the people hard at work in establishing this are people like Professor Kawai (see “Philosophical System as Principle of Reform,” *Chūō Kōron*, 1935, no. 5, etc.).

According to Professor Kawai, it is generally agreed upon that liberalism is an ideology that was born on the basis of the rise of capitalism. Yet, just because it was that way in the beginning does not mean that it will always be so. People in general, and especially Marxists, immediately assume that liberalism will never develop past social reformism because of its capitalist limitations, yet this is a terribly hasty assumption. The professor urges us to pay attention to the fact that “liberalism of today has departed from social reformism and has developed itself into socialism.” It goes without saying that socialism here refers to that which opposes capitalism, but in special national conditions such as that of Japan or Germany, the principle of contemporary social order is neither simply capitalism nor its resultant bourgeois liberalism. Their high levels of feudal remnants characterize their uniqueness. So, according to the professor, the current stage of liberalism in Japan possesses both capitalism and feudalism as its enemy simultaneously. Feudalism must be opposed with liberalism, and capitalism with liberalism. The organic unification of liberalism and socialism is the current stage of liberalism.

It is contended that liberalism is socialism. Then what kind of socialism is this? According to the professor, the current stage of liberalism (= socialism) results in *idealism*. Marxism is a materialism in that not only is it not an idealism, but the opposite of idealism, or, according to the professor’s estimation, it negates “ideals.” And so at the very least this socialism must be opposed to Marxism. Where does this current stage of liberalism, which is opposed to feudalism, opposed to capitalism, and even opposed to communism (Marxism), lead us?

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13. Kawai Eijirō (1891–1944) was professor of political science at Tokyo Imperial University and one of Japan’s strongest proponents of liberalism during the interwar and war-time period. In the early 1920s Kawai studied in England, where he was influenced by the neo-Hegelian philosopher Thomas Hill Green (1836–1882).

Now, the history of liberalism provides Professor Kawai with evidence for his explanation that the current stage of liberalism is idealist. According to the professor, liberalism proceeded from *natural law* to *utilitarianism* before finally reaching its current stage of *idealism*. This idealist liberalism is likely modeled after Thomas Hill Green's *ethical liberalism*.<sup>14</sup> Professor Kawai has researched this Kantian, un-Anglo Saxon ethicist Green quite thoroughly, but since Green passed away in the 1880s, I am not sure if he is appropriate as a model for the current stage of liberalism in Japan in this state of emergency. At any rate, we must keep in mind that Professor Kawai, who is an economic liberalist as well as a parliamentarian, sheds light on liberalism from a strikingly ethical perspective.

Professor Kawai's liberalism, that is idealism, refers to a doctrine that strives for the social development of individual personalities. It goes without saying that a person cannot develop his personality on his own in a given society—nor would this be *desirable*. Striving for the development of everyone's personality by acting or expressing sympathy for "public concerns" and "our unfortunate brethren" necessarily leads to the social development of one's growth in personality. An idealism that expresses the possession of such *ideals* must first of all be a "moral philosophy," and from there must become a "social philosophy," which refers to more or less concrete contents that would lead to the realization of such morals. In other words, the doctrine for this liberalistic social philosophy, or rather sociophilosophical liberalism, would be antistatism and parliamentarianism politically and economically freedom from the coercion of capitalism (though in the bourgeois liberalism of old it was freedom from coercion by the state).

And so the reason that the liberalism of the professor is idealism is precisely because he carries the moral ideal of the free development of man's personality. (Green analyzes this quite thoroughly in his *Prolegomena*.) This liberalism is an *ethical* doctrine. From this perspective, this long-awaited political economic liberalist philosophy is no different from the moralist liberalism of the literati and cultural philosophers that we spoke of earlier. In fact ethic-ism is one of the tricks shared generally by

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14. Green's theories of liberalism as the actualization of personality were immensely influential in many aspects of early twentieth-century Japanese thought, including philosophy, ethics, and politics.

today's bourgeois liberalism. According to them, social mechanisms such as politics and economics can be reduced to the ideals and obligations of ethics and morals. And from there stems "social philosophy" and "political philosophy" and "economic philosophy." Take the following as an example: The entire nation is reduced to soldiers (all the nation as soldiers)<sup>15</sup> and thus "soldiers" such as generals and colonels represent the "nation." But can this really be a serious logic?

In the exact same structure that ethic-isms are a type of trick, "ideal"-ism is also a type of trick. If holding ideals constitutes idealism, then Marx must have been the soundest of idealists. Yet he incorporated materialism instead of idealism (which can also be translated as *kannenron*.)<sup>16</sup> This was because the physical, actual means for the realization of his goal in idea, or his socialist ideal (it must not be forgotten that it was the true freedom of people—see *The German Ideology*), was materialist recognition and a line of action based upon it. Marx did not theoretically confuse the recognition of necessary laws of matter with practical courses of action nor did he have to think of them separately, as various ethicists and philosophers like professors Kawai and Koizumi Shinzō have worried.<sup>17</sup> The metamorphosis of reality to logic, from fact to value, is the dialectic of materialism. In other words, logical relation and the relation of value are reality or facts abstracted into principles through the experience of mankind. If this point is forgotten, it is understandable that one would not be able to understand the scientific criticism of culture that is being forged today. Now, in Marx, materialist means and ideal goals are neither separate nor simply one. For this reason, the former earns credibility in being useful as the latter in practice. However, according to the idealism of Professor Kawai, it seems that since the goals are ideal the means also must be ideal. For example, the means for attaining freedom must also be a free

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15. *Kyokoku kaihei* ("all citizens are soldiers" is a nearly literal translation) is often translated as "universal conscription." *Kyokoku kaihei* also implies the historically specific ideals of the military encoded in texts such as the Imperial Rescript to Soldiers and Sailors. For more on Tosaka's analysis of the role of *kyokoku kaihei* in the ideology of Japanism, see Chapter 10 of *The Japanese Ideology*, "The Fate of Japanism: From Fascism to Emperorism," also translated in the present volume.

16. Tosaka uses *risōshugi* for what I have translated here as idealism, which is literally "ideal" (*risō*) "–ism" (*shugi*). At the same time, *kannenron*, or the theory of concepts, has also traditionally been used to denote idealism.

17. Koizumi Shinzō (1888–1966) was professor of economics, specializing in the economic theory of David Ricardo, and president of Keiō University (1933–1947).

“parliamentarianism.” Though I do not understand why the means in general become un-free if we do not rely on the means of the so-called parliamentarianism of the bourgeoisie, confusing means and ends is the trick of this “idealism.”

While the professor claims that we must oppose Marxism because it confuses its goals and means as though material means were itself the goal, this confusion is in fact a representative characteristic of “ideal”-ists like the professor. Idealism can only have meaning as merely an ethical behavior, or such human sentiment or attitude. (Kiyozawa Kiyoshi considers liberalism to be such an attitude.)<sup>18</sup> As a philosophical system it is simply a system of idealism.<sup>19</sup> I have already discussed how idealism in general possesses a fundamental defect as a philosophical system, and these tricks serve as perfect examples of this.

Let us suppose that there is a person who is always saying truth this or truth that—truth to explain truth, even truth to defend truth. This would earn him the nickname “truth-ist” from those around him. In other words, this truth-ism would be identified as not being the truth. It is surely for the good of ideals themselves and freedom itself that we do not let “ideal”-ism and “liberal”-ism get twisted into such nicknames. It would be wonderful if Professor Kawai, who is an “ideal”-ist and a “liberal”-ist, were not one who would tarnish the credibility of ideals and freedom. Marxists also value the freedoms of speech, assembly, association, parliament, body, and all other (what Professor Kawai would call “formal” and “practical”) freedoms strictly as a means toward the goal of the human ideal of freedom. However, only “liberalists” believe that holding freedom as a goal automatically constitutes liberal-“ism,” and further, valuing these specific, free actions as the means. Where is the guarantee that a moral, ethical sentiment or intuition of freedom could straight away become a philosophical theory called liberalism? Materialism has had the habit of being the most cautious toward the human danger of thinking that a sentiment could transform itself into a system in one quick leap.

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18. Kiyozawa Kiyoshi (1890–1945) was a journalist educated in the United States. His ideas on liberalism can be found in the section entitled “Why Liberalism?” in his book *Present-day Japan*, a translation of which can be found in Wm. Theodore de Bary, Carol Gluck, and Arthur E. Tiedemann, comps., *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 2:873–878. Note that in the paperback edition the essay is found in Volume 2 Part 2.

19. “Idealism” here is a translation of *kannenron*.



If a love for freedom in itself (though materialists probably love freedom more than anyone and despise its obstacles more than anyone) promises an independent philosophical system called liberalism, then shoe salesmen would likely have a shoe philosophy and barbers would have a philosophy of hair. When a liberalism of rich sentiment attempts to become a philosophical system, it immediately turns into a flat, barren theory. This proves that liberalism itself was never a legitimate image of true liberalism. It is no coincidence that Professor Kawai had to lament the incomplete formation of liberalist philosophy.

It goes without saying that those who are the most interested in the so-called fall of liberalism are not the materialists, but rather the Japanists. Yet, it seems that a theoretical critique of liberalism of any degree from the Japanist position has been quite rare. Fujisawa Chikao's "On Liberalism" (*Shakai seisaku jihō*, May/June 1935) is probably the most worthy of attention.<sup>20</sup>

Yet, consistent with his specialty of political science, Fujisawa only focuses on political liberalism. According to him, today political liberalism has already completed its task. Liberal state theory, which is constitutionalist, is a consistent attempt to separate the state from society as much as possible, while also subtracting as much social, ethical meaning from the state as possible, leaving only the function of constitutional administrative action with the state. Such a liberal state has nothing to do with the ethical (even the Japanists speak of the ethical!) authority of society. And yet, Fujisawa warns, even in Europe such constitutional liberalism has now completed its task, and instead it is the idea of the total state that has emerged by incorporating the former. It is called the total state because here all of society is the state, and people in society only become human through their rights as a member of the state. The function of the state infiltrates all contents of society. This means, it seems, that no individual private matters are allowed to members of society.

Thus the total state recovers its authentic (?) social authority. Now, this *authority* does not refer to simply *power*. Liberalists generally are only familiar with power. Thus they can only conceive of "freedom" as the lack of this power. (People like Professor Kawai are like this.) How-

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20. Fujisawa Chikao (1893–1962) was a member of the Institute for the Culture of the National Spirit (Kokumin Seishin Bunka Kenkyūjo). He gained fame for defending the view that Japan was in fact the historical and geographical source of all humanity; see Hasegawa Ryūichi, "*Kōkokushikan*" to *iu mondai* (Tokyo: Shirasawa-sha, 2008), 233–234, 256.

ever, according to Fujisawa, this kind of freedom is only passive freedom. Real, positive freedom, he says, is in fact tied to such power, rather than opposed to it. Fujisawa argues that authority refers to the unity between this active freedom and power.

Fujisawa is introducing and also mimicking Nazi theorists of the state (Carl Schmitt and others) here, so if we recall “our leader Hitler,” we can imagine just what this authority, power, and positive freedom really refers to here.<sup>21</sup> Yet Hitler still does not suffice as the concept of authority for the Japanese Fujisawa Chikao. The true authority of the state requires the necessity deduced from tradition and kinship. In this way, the Empire of Japan apparently becomes the model for this authoritative, total state.

After this, Fujisawa falls into the etymological philological punning that is common to almost all Japanists. The only point that requires attention is the suggestion that while the organ theory<sup>22</sup> is a theory of the state held by liberalism *and* the leftists, and the theory of imperial sovereignty<sup>23</sup> is the theory of state held by the rightists, Japanism is the state theory that goes the middle road without any deviation.

Since this means that liberalism and Marxism are of the same nature, materialism winds up needing to go out of its way in defending liberalism. Thus, materialism must answer this challenge through a “scientific” research of the history of the folk—in other words through the study of Japanese history based on materialist historical materialism.<sup>24</sup> And in the

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21. Carl Schmitt (1888–1985) was a German political theorist and onetime Nazi Party member; see texts such as *Political Theology* and *The Concept of the Political*. For an analysis of Schmitt’s critique of liberalism, also see John P. McCormick, *Carl Schmitt’s Critique of Liberalism: Against Politics as Technology* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

22. Imperial organ theory interpreted the Meiji Constitution as framing the emperor as the highest organ of the state and was most famously argued by constitutional theorists Ichiki Kitokurō (1867–1944) and Minobe Tatsukichi (1873–1948).

23. The theory of imperial sovereignty, in opposition to imperial organ theory, interpreted the Meiji Constitution as granting the emperor unlimited power over the state, a view most famously argued by Minobe Tatsukichi’s chief rival at Tokyo Imperial University, Uesugi Shinkichi (1878–1929).

24. On Tosaka’s criticism of idealist historical materialism, see *Ideorogī gairon* in the second volume of *Tosaka Jun zenshū*, especially pp. 217–218:

And so if we follow Lukács, class consciousness is not the *actual* consciousness held by the proletariat, but rather the ideal consciousness that they ought to have. It is a world of logic understood independently of *psychological reality*. Of course even if we follow Rickert and others, meaning is not a construct, but it is in no way *existence* either. This neo-Kantian theory of meaning comes to Lukács via Max Weber. Class

end I am led to believe that materialism is more legitimate than liberalism when it comes to a materialist analysis of history. This would mean that what can most thoroughly defend liberalism is not liberalism but rather materialism. At the same time how the subjective sentiment of liberalists will react to this conclusion is beyond the limits of my guarantees.

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consciousness is not existence—it is an idea. It is a concept employed for the expression of the unrealistic nature, or the idealistic nature, of the consciousness that can only be held as a *result* of the analysis of the historical situation. It certainly does not refer to a *cause* that serves as the motive for the analysis of the historical situation. The class consciousness that is in fact held by the proletariat is the cause of the analysis of the historical situation. However, who in fact holds the Lukácsian class consciousness, which is to follow it as a result of the analysis of the historical situation? It can only be held by the theorist, of which Lukács is one. The class consciousness that can be held by the theorist and intelligentsia must be the ideal and model for the class consciousness held by the proletariat. Class consciousness can no longer be held by class (proletariat); class consciousness is at first given by non-class (intelligentsia). If this were the case, who is its master? The overvaluation of theory, consciousness, and the intelligentsia in history—the so-called Fukumoto-ism is a descendent of Lukács—finds its source here.

The Lukácsian class consciousness is neither an individual consciousness nor a mass-psychological [*Massenpsychologie*] existence that is in fact held by the proletarian mass. It is none other than an explanative principle—a hypothesis—of history held by the theorist. Lukács attempts to give this hypothesis reality. Of course its reality cannot be clearly grasped, and yet Lukács places his trust in it. Thus his historical theory, his theory of class struggle, becomes no more than the flip side of the theory of *class consciousness*. He argues that the dialectic only exists in history, that is, only in the consciousness of class conflict. Because of this, in the end he must inevitably take the approach of attempting to explain history, or society, through consciousness.

# The Police Function

*Translated by Ken C. Kawashima*

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“The Police Function” (Keisatsu kinō) first appeared as “The Police and Gangs” (Keisatsu to gyangu) in the June issue of the journal *Kaizō* in 1935. It was reprinted with the new name in Tosaka’s *Japan as a Link in the World* in 1937. It is one of several of Tosaka’s writings on the police and their relation to social processes and culture, especially “Gang Hunts” (Gyangu gari, 1935) from the June issue of *Bungei shunshū* and “[Social] Custom Police and Culture Police” (Fūzoku keisatsu to bunka keisatsu) from a 1936 issue of the journal *Shisō* and later included in *Thought and Custom* (*Shisō to fūzoku*).

“The Police Function” is translated from *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1966), 5:13–16.

In considering the formidable dangers that accompany the police in their mob hunts [*bōryokudan gari*], it certainly cannot be said that the way of the police is an easy one. However, since it is thought that the sole order of the police is to protect [*hogo*] the everyday life of members of society and to guarantee the safety of their lives, it goes without saying that the police should indeed hunt down such violent gangs. The police are not to be especially admired for this and, truth be told, there’s no particular reason to thank them for it either. If we are to thank the police, we should thank them for usual matters—not for special reasons having to do with the hunting down of violent gangs, which, when we really think about it, is totally ludicrous.

Yet, quite ludicrously, I must confess that I myself have paid thanks to the police for their policy to hunt down the mob. Cases against gangs, however, are nothing new; moreover, it is known that the so-called mob [*bōryokudan*] has not particularly grown in number recently. Had the police, up to now, hunted down the gangs with a little more enthusiasm and force, they could have avoided the situation they're now in, where they're going out of their way to seek thanks.

It is true that we have been in a continual state of emergency over the past few years. Famous people have been killed or threatened. Seventeen- or eighteen-year-old kids, pretending to be adults, have now also organized groups with orders to kill. This is an instance of the state of emergency. According to the military, the state of emergency peaked in 1935–1936; or, if we extend this further, the real state of emergency came in 1937–1938. In this regard, if these killings continue for some time, perhaps they might be recognized as a matter of patriotism. By and large, however, the subject behind these actions is not necessarily the so-called mob, but rather the loyal patriots [*shishi*] and whatnot. It can't be said, therefore, that the so-called mob has surged and expanded after the state of emergency came into being. It follows that the thanks given to the police department for suddenly and thoroughly hunting down gangs—as if they had just remembered to do so—can only be illegitimate. This hardly warrants glory to the police department.

The more the police are given special thanks, the more should we be led to consider how the police have only now, and rather suddenly, decided to undertake these mob hunts. In fact, these thanks point to nothing else except the way the police have made a mockery out of its past negligence in carrying out what is simply fundamental police work, namely curbing violence. Until now, the police have only been interested in the most extreme, metaphysical practices such as the thought police and the customs [*fūzoku*] police and haven't shown the same concern in protecting the lives of the general masses from the experience of various dangers. Nonetheless, all of a sudden the police are now saying that they want to reduce these crimes. Of course, we can only hope that they will carry this out thoroughly and with confidence; after all, they shouldn't be stingy in reforming crimes.

Unsurprisingly, according to certain followers of the police, the sudden arrests of violent gangs is not as out of place as I have suggested. It is an already established practice defined by continuity and necessity. They

claim that since the left wing has already been taken care of, the police have started to round up the right wing, with mob hunts as an extension of the thought police.

It goes without saying, however, that the actual repression of right-wing thought movements by the police is a big lie. Violent gangs experience repression, not the right wing. It is a fact nowadays that right-wing movements have distanced themselves considerably from violent gangs, a condition that allows us to discover the thoroughness of the so-called mob hunt. In the main, *violent gangs* can be counted as professional or amateur liars or delinquents. Those who truly use violence socially, publicly, and out in the open, always keep an arm's distance from the mob.

Be that as it may, if we were to understand gangs more broadly and philosophically to include the most extreme right-wing groups (what could be called *right-wing infantilism!*), then our discussion becomes very interesting indeed.<sup>1</sup> Of course, that which possesses the quality of being a mob or a gang is decidedly not restricted merely to the mob or to gangs. What, then, is this quality of being a gang?

A gang is not a gang simply because it executes violence unaided. A gang always has to have someone, or some group, pulling strings in the background and working behind the scene—a group, moreover, that operates through a representative thug [*bōkan*]. It goes without saying, however, that this group is always formed with the express purpose of carrying out violence. For example, the group known as the Seiyūkai cannot qualify as a mob simply because one of its representatives knocks someone out in parliament. On the other hand, most people would agree that if some thug from a nonparliamentary group knocked out a parliamentary representative at the entrance of the Diet, this group would likely fall under the concept of “violent gang.”

Conceived broadly to mean those who use violence as their *raison d'être*, gangs can be defined in many ways. There are those whose direct incomes derive exclusively from carrying out violence, and there are others who carry out violence as a kind of social hobby [*shakaiteki shumi*]. The former qualify as a so-called mob, while the latter qualify as amateur delinquents or thugs. Of course, the latter's social interests are never sep-

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1. What Tosaka calls right-wing infantilism [*uyoku shōnibyō*] refers to Lenin's criticisms of anarchist movements, which he famously called “left-wing infantilism” in his 1920 pamphlet “*Left-Wing*” Communism, an Infantile Disorder: A Popular Essay in Marxist Strategy and Tactics (New York: International Publishers, 1940).

arated from certain economic results, but this still doesn't capture the fundamental or essential definition of gangs broadly conceived. The essential definition of violence, broadly conceived, is that the use of violence is based, in one way or another, on a principle [*purinshipuru*]. This principle finds its rationale in neither one's financial situation nor interest or hobby, though of course these reasons cannot be separated from the execution of violence. Beyond these reasons, the qualification for an authentic mob is that it must be furnished with an ideal pretension of some sort [*kannenteki purinshipuru*], such as "crushing the strong and helping the weak"; acting in the name of Socialism; or "loyalty and patriotism." By and large, all of these examples reveal a stereotypical pretension that can be advocated—or serve as a smoke screen—and it is here that we can discover the real power [*kenri*] of the use of violence.

These highly esteemed pretensions and ideological conceits, however, are not necessarily visible economically or as a social interest, pretext, or justification. Because these phenomena blur the difference between truth and lies, those involved inevitably fail to grasp this difference. This problem is easily discernible if we take a cursory look at several right-wing groups operating today. Based on these principles (or what political parties call platforms), these gangs have created all kinds of idealized organizations, ethics, and customs. Moreover, these idealizations are even turned into tradition by appealing to history. These idealizations appear as "virtuous duty" [*jingi*] or as some sort of "soul," or else as a "spirit" of some kind of another. Even for the mobs that operate strictly as a business, these notions of virtuous duty, soul, or spirit are believed in naturally, and it is not long before a pretension or a principle is born. Generally speaking, therefore, the ultimate meaning of a mob is that it is based on a pretension and principle.

Earlier I said that those involved in violent gangs cannot grasp the difference between what is true and what is a lie in the pretensions and principles of gangs. The same problem can be said for another quality of violent gangs, namely the problem of being against society. Now, when we speak of the quality of being against society and the like, one may be led to conjure up an image of being faithful to bourgeois notions of society that are promoted by bourgeois social science. Objectively speaking, however, being against society or not is beside the point, for in terms of the consciousness of those involved in violent gangs, they are unable to comprehend whether their disposition of being against society is fact or fiction. If their leader makes them pay their taxes, for example, they will

have already undergone the transformation of cooperating with “society.” Indeed, if we restrict ourselves just to the big thieves with many underlings, and reconsider the antisociety/prosociety relationship in terms of the relationship between public and private, then this latter relationship will generally apply to the phenomenon of violent gangs. Strictly speaking, insofar as gangs are even remotely aware of being against society, they are aware of this from a private social position. However, even for certain gangs that occupy a public social position, this public position is, in actual fact, one that has become private [*shiteki-ka sareru*]. Indeed, it is not uncommon for gangs to derive their defining characteristic from this transformation. Examples abound of gangs that have been formed periodically on the basis of the privatization of public or semipublic institutions of the state or society, that is, on the basis of *private state policy and private state power*.<sup>2</sup> In such cases, it goes without saying that individuals involved in these violent gangs are utterly incapable of seeing where that which is public ends and where that which is private begins.

Violent gangs, defined broadly in terms of this remarkable indistinction between public and private, are directly connected to what I raised earlier, namely the ambiguities of the earnestness of pretension and principles. These pretensions and principles are, without fail, upheld as a social matter of the public, irrespective of the way they are displayed either as the truth or as lies. It is precisely here that notions of crushing the strong and helping the weak or of righteousness or patriotic loyalty are all bellowed out, and it is soon claimed that each of these notions, such as virtue and “spirit,” possesses a social objectivity. Crucially, *the quality of being a gang is not something that is tinged with the* [subjective] *appearance or manifestation of a certain kind of spirit*. The phenomenon of gangs, of course, is only one of the many relatively constant phenomena in our society. Moreover, gangs can be seen all over the world. However, a gang, burrowed in the everyday life of the streets during normal times, is not something that is displayed in its highest essence. At best, only low-class gangs are visible by your run-of-the-mill urbanite. The truest and highest class of gangs [*kōkyū gyangusei*] only appear, generally speaking, when society experiences a natural calamity or when a state of emergency is announced—that is, when some sort of “spirit,” so to speak, is called

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2. I have put “private state policy and state power” (*shiteki kokusaku kenryoku*) in italics because in the original text Tosaka inserted a question mark in parenthesis after it. While Tosaka did not make specific note of the meaning of this question mark, it is likely that it was consciously inserted to indicate the contradictory nature of this term.



forth with great urgency. For example, following the state of emergency announced after the natural disaster of the Kanto earthquake, a *spirit of vigilantism* [*jikeidanteki seishin*] was called forth with particular urgency to prepare for “attacks” by rioters. Additionally, a percentage of Tokyo citizens were mobilized into veritable gangs for the same purpose.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, when XXXXXX<sup>4</sup> are carried out, youth groups acting in the name of *the spirit of national defense* [*kokubō seishin*] have gone so far as to even assault doctors in the middle of surgical procedures. And so on. These are nothing other than instances where a public or semipublic group has been ambiguously transformed into a private one.

The police will never consider repressing violent gangs, defined in this broad sense. What is more, they don’t possess the ability to do so. Only low-level gangs experience repression. Be that as it may, today the ministry of the interior is especially focusing its energies on cultivating and displaying a *spirit of policing* [*keisatsu seishin*]. Police sergeants, now under strict orders to attend sergeant meetings in formal police attire, sing police songs, even police marches. Well, now, with such a raging spirit of policing on display, what kind of social function does the police have in these times of crisis? Of course, it is absolutely impossible that the police would dare transform itself into a “gang.”

In order to demonstrate precisely the extent of this absolute impossibility, the police department (which can be said to include, more broadly, the prosecutor’s office) has now undertaken to beat into the heads of our nation’s citizens that it is going to complete the hunting of violent gangs that it has initiated and that it will do so as extensively, thoroughly, and for as long a period of time as it possibly can.

(1935)

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3. Tosaka is here referring to modern Japan’s most devastating earthquake, the Great Kanto Earthquake, which shook and burned Tokyo and Yokohama to the ground on September 1, 1923. In the days and weeks following the quake, citizen vigilante groups were mobilized and organized by army reserves and the police to “keep the peace.” Mostly (in)famously, however, it was at the hands of vigilante groups that more than six thousand Koreans living in the Kanto area were murdered in what became known as the Great Korean Massacre, or *Chōsenjin daigyakusatsu*. Also during this time, the anarchist, Osugi Sakae, was assassinated by the Tokyo police.

4. Aware of police censors, Tosaka deliberately crossed out this passage. He was likely referring to anti-emperor movements or revolutionary organizations.

# Film as a Reproduction of the Present

## *Custom and the Masses*

*Translated by Gavin Walker*

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Written in 1936, Tosaka's essay "Eiga no shajitsuteki tokusei to fūzokusei oyobi taishūsei" argues, in an exceptionally contemporary manner, for an analysis of film as an element of what he refers to as "custom" (*fūzoku*). Refusing at all times an "aestheticization" of apparently aesthetic phenomena, Tosaka's analysis privileges above all else the materiality of the filmic moment, the hard current of matter generated by film's social role as a *mass* phenomenon, its *mass character* (*taishūsei*). What we see here is Tosaka's creativity as a thinker, crossing the fields of aesthetics with a firm grounding in Marx and a residual sensitivity to the specific character of the masses in modernity, gained from his long interest in the work of Gabriel Tarde.<sup>1</sup>

"Film as the Reproduction of the Present" was translated from *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1966), 4:282–289.

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1. Gabriel Tarde (1843–1904) was a French sociologist, criminologist, and psychologist. Tarde's work was exceptionally important in prewar Japanese philosophy. Both Tosaka and especially Kakehashi Akihide wrote extensively on Tarde's texts, such as *The Laws of Imitation* and *The Monadology*. It is significant that Tarde's work, although it had already become obscure in Europe in favor of Durkheim, remained influential in Japan. There is a link here to the concept of "custom," precisely around the repetition or imitation of given life practices, the sort of material glue that holds together the social around what is customary or repeated.

I do not possess any special knowledge of film. Obviously, this includes the principles and reality of film-making itself, but I also do not know a great deal about film criticism. In this sense, I am nothing more than another member of the typical audience. But I enjoy film. Film is extremely *interesting* not merely as a form of amusement or recreation, but as something which forces one to think, something that arouses hopes and ambitions in one's consciousness. It is often said that, unlike literature, film produces a superficial consciousness and the impressions one receives from it are quickly forgotten, but I do not think that this is the case. On seeing a particularly good film, one often has the feeling that if it were possible, one might also like to try making a film—this isn't just my personal feeling, but rather a widely shared one. In this sense, the number of true film enthusiasts is quite large. On this point alone we can refute the charge that film is something superficial and easily forgotten. It is rather that film, which possesses the power to arouse the consciousness and spur on the creative impulses of the people of the present, holds within it living truths—thus it cannot be understood merely as a form of amusement or diversion.

Where does this interest come from, which I, a lone spectator, find so interesting in film in the aforementioned sense? The glorious streets of consumer life, the type of social relations possessed by the theater, constitute the secret (?) that guides me toward the cinema. When one is tired of reading books and can't be bothered to visit friends, hurling one's body into the noise and fray of the pulsating city streets that force one into movement (despite the current socioeconomic contradictions) gives a sense of ease and self-confidence to modern man. At this sort of moment, it is the comparatively cheap movie theater that holds the single greatest allure.

But for the time being we'll leave aside considerations of the urban origins of this interest in film—for now, I would like to concentrate on thinking what exactly it is that stimulates me so much in the content that appears on the screen itself. It is the very situation in which the screen gives movement to the visual senses that can be understood at first glance. Of course we cannot forget that the talkie already appeals to more than just vision. Even if we bring up vision here, the sensations that are filled by the talkies of today at best contain planar form, shadow, and movement but neither three-dimensional solidity nor color. The fact that film has taken a massive leap through the form of the talkie does not mean that we

are unaware of its remaining visual limitations, but nevertheless the films of today, already and above all, satisfy our visual senses. That is, it is not that film has suddenly become interesting as a result of the development of the talkie, but rather the basis of this interesting element of film was already present from the silent film era onward.

Of course, one can draw a distinction between people with a keen sense of vision and those with a keen sense of hearing, but in film itself at least, the gap between the role of vision and the role of hearing is so great as to not even require a comparison. We simply cannot ignore the history of the development of the film in which the talkie emerged not to affix photographs to sounds, but rather the reverse—to give sound to the photograph. Certainly everyone is aware that in the world image of a blind person, the role of the sense of touch is greatly enhanced, but the characteristics of this type of sense of touch resemble much more closely the sense of vision than the sense of hearing. Vision itself possesses the characteristics of the touch, the caress. In contrast to the temporal continuity of hearing, it has a feeling of the tension of spatial continuity. Touch is just the same. We can say that, in its general meaning, for the *cognition of reality* [*jitsuzai*], vision, more than hearing, has a fundamental significance. It is film that places its emphasis on precisely this sense of vision.

Let's leave aside the senses of smell and taste. Further, no matter how much one demands a film to function as a perfect reproduction of reality, we obviously don't need to concern ourselves with seeking the involvement of the sense of touch. In seeing or hearing, there must be a definite distance between oneself and the object, and there must be a definite medium that substitutes for direct contact with this object. If you stick something right up against your eye, you become unable to see it. This distance is a condition required for the contemplative situation but not for actual activity, something that could perhaps be referred to as the physiological circumstances corresponding to the nature of what is known in aesthetics or the arts as disinterested interest, or *Interesselosigkeit*. The affect that sets up this distance is represented above all through the operation of "seeing." If we go one step further, this "seeing" is not merely *contemplation* but a practical measure taken in relation to things.

Obviously, contemplation, seeing, and the sense of vision are not things limited to the field of film. Painting, sculpture, photography, dance, and theater are all based on these, but what particularly characterizes film, even if thought to be nothing more than *moving photography*, is that it

already fulfills the content of this most concrete, representational sense of vision. The arts and the stage possess their own unique artistic reality. Whether it is something photographic or something symbolic, it is unrelated to the quantity of *artistic* reality. But it is entirely different to say that the arts and the stage, that is, in general each of the visual arts, belong to a world that is abstracted from an original, spatio-temporal, social-historical actuality, according to their degrees and objectives, and that they are therefore characterized by abstraction in their various distances from this reality of *actuality*. In other words what we must consider is not the *problem* of artistic reality, but reality in the sense of the reproduction [*saisei*] of actual reality—if we attempt to consider this in relation to film, we can see that in this sense, it is film that fulfills the most real content of vision. The content that appears on the screen is the most concrete. This is the case, whether or not the *artistic* world of film is concrete or representational.

This widely known fact seems at first to be nothing particularly noteworthy, but I think that we must first directly acknowledge that this is the precondition that determines to the very end the content of film. In other words, we must emphasize that film is first and foremost photography, moving photography, and that this is what ought to be attempted in all film aesthetics. It goes without saying that this photography possesses the most concrete, actual reality. To restate, even if this is something like alteration or so-called art photography, if it is not based on the reproduction [*saisei*] of actual reality, the particular excellence of photography will be lost. It is the screen's physical image that adds motion and sound to the actual reality of the photograph.

The aforementioned remains within its physiological, physical basis, and I have not yet problematized the social-historical, theatrical, literary, and other conditions of film, but even this alone is already sufficient as an explanation of the particular, singular world in film. This is what we might call its “reproduction of the present” [*jissha*]<sup>1</sup>— nothing other than the reproduction of a random portion (in fact there are already various social, literary, artistic, etc., perspectives on how this portion comes to be chosen, camera angles and so forth) of actual reality as it occurs on the earth. What reproduces the “when, where, how, and what” of something, the fact that somewhere sometime at some point in some way something happened, is precisely this sense of “realism” in forms like the news.

It is enough to simply say that I hold the value of film in high esteem solely for its realism and news. People might ask what artistic value there could possibly be in the news and might say that to call film an art is merely pretense. Certainly, art is the pretense of film. But as soon as one says this, I want to ask: Why can't we consider the news to be artistic? I would count myself among those who are concerned at the lack of literary truth in the society pages of the newspapers, but this is precisely because I hold the supposition that the news is capable of having literary value. The fact that the news is at present not artistic is due to the inadequacies of the reporters employed in the newspapers themselves. If you'll forgive me a somewhat impulsive fantasy here—the news could be magnificently literary if we remember to bring Homer along. That is, the actuality-reality of the news must be elevated to the status of truth through social discernment and a grasp of psychology. To speak of realism is not something insignificant, since we must say that the extolling of the beauty of cultivated nature through the power of the camera has certainly enriched the realism of the views of humanity. I think it was the late Terada Torahiko who said that the more one examines in detail the natural the more delicately beautiful it appears, while the more one examines in detail the man-made the more crude it seems, but this observation itself is today enabled as a result of the camera.<sup>2</sup> The newspapers do not tell us what manners of speech are employed or what color eyes could be seen among the masses at a social event or in the actions of the masses in a plaza, but it is indeed the camera that presents to us precisely this sort of crucial literary spectacle.

It is abundantly clear that painting or theater cannot possibly present us with this sort of human affect that comes from actual reality. I certainly want to emphasize that social commentary on current events is another modality with a crucial literary dimension, but that is precisely because it is this actual reality [*genjitsuteki riaritī*] *itself*—not “artistic” reality—that possesses this artistic value.

Our curiosity doesn't simply signify a type of blind or mindless action, nor is it merely the quality of mass curiosity, the phenomenon of the watching bystander. Rather, it is something based on the journalistic in-

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2. Terada Torahiko (1878–1935) was a Japanese film critic; see “The Film Era” (*Eiga jidai*, 1930) in Tetsuo Najita, ed., *From Japan's Modernity: A Reader*, trans. Chika Kinoshita (Chicago: Center for East Asian Studies Select Papers, 2002), 11:133–145.

stinct of the human being: what Confucius called “friends coming from far away,” the herald (or spy), the speaker, the storyteller, and so on; all of these positions or roles emerge in correspondence with the demands of this instinct. This literary essence of journalism—in other words, this essential linkage between journalism and literature—is common knowledge, theorized in a textbook-like fashion by numerous literary critics. But what most basically exemplifies this demand for “information gathering,” “observation,” “examination,” and so on, is nothing other than the screen itself. The news and the realist image themselves are, even merely in their methods of depiction, when done from an honest viewpoint and with artistic truth, sufficient to make people think. Here we have the joy of experiencing the world in sight and sound; this joy itself is something extremely important for philosophy. Thought, too, is cultivated out of this experience. It is an error to conceive of film’s unlimited ability of on-the-spot depiction as merely limited solely to its practical use in the general sense.

Montage or tricks of filming support this “on-the-spot” essence of film. What makes montage possible is obviously the photographic nature (not in the sense of Cezanne’s work, but in the sense of the dense concentration of real objects in one plane of space, as in Dürer) of film as a material, while what makes certain tricks effective is that it is precisely the spectator who performs their contrast with actual reality. Without this photographic aspect of film, tricks would be meaningless. On a general level, our everyday experience of sight and sound is itself more or less a technique of montage—in this sense, perhaps we can liken travel, sight-seeing, and so on to a type of montage.

I am not forgetting that of course there is a theatrical or literary moment in the artistic value of film. But in order for this value to manifest itself, first and foremost the realism of the reproduction of actual reality is crucial, and this realism *itself* is already what gives film its particular artistic value. Let us leave the photography and reporting of natural or social events aside for a while and point out here that in other artistic modalities, the photographic effects of everyday natural phenomena often merely end up as a servile realism, trivialism, or mimicry, but within film, these same effects appear as the most outstanding and viciously incisive. In terms of natural phenomena, it is the screen that teaches humans the goodness of the materiality of the world, the joy of the movement of matter. By and large, we observe these things everyday, but this element of

goodness, this joy, actually occurs to us first when it appears on the screen. There was already the endearing nature of the photograph, and the attraction of the graph itself, but the screen is above all a photograph in motion and thus draws all the more attention to actual reality itself. Movement is a language in which matter speaks through a body.

Now this actual reality (which we can also refer to simply as “actuality”) is not limited to natural phenomena—social phenomena also belong here. But what sort of thing constitutes the actual reality of society? In general, it appears by and large in the forms of custom [*fūbutsu*; *fūzoku*]: It is the primary condition of film to *show* us these forms of custom. Information gathering and observation primarily connote the gathering of information related to custom. In fact, filmic exoticism (in its photographic realism or on the level of its content) is something that gives us considerable satisfaction, but this exoticism, at least as far as film is concerned, is not what leads it astray as an art. Being able to observe the local customs (this is what is referred to colloquially as “popular affect and custom” [*ninjō fūzoku*]) from all over the earth is a truly wonderful thing, but what shows us these customs specifically as *form* is nothing other than the screen. Perhaps you might ask: Is there really such value, such artistic value, in merely observing custom in this way? We need to further explicate precisely what custom itself is.

It is well known that Hegel classified law (in other words, morality in the broad sense) through the levels of law, morality, and ethicality (habituality [*shūzokusei*]), but he considered this habituality to take on a certain substantiality in the forms of habit, custom, manner, and so forth. Thus a sequence of custom or manner such as marriage, home life, parent-child relations, and so on produces the substantial entity called “the family,” and this family is the first stage of ethicality. At this point, I shouldn’t have to explain the idea that custom thus produces one of the essences of morality, since to say that popular affect and custom originally stem from a certain moral essence is an evident truth. Popular affect is the appearance of habituality or ethicality in consciousness, and custom is its materialization in the material, sensuous forms of clothing, architecture, behavior, facial expressions, and so on.

The meaning of morality and the level on which it operates can be understood in a variety of ways, but we can at least say that its most general material sensuous expression takes the form of custom; custom itself seems to have little direct relation to ethical problems of good and evil,



conscience, character, and so on, but even if we dispense with these things, we still do not lose sight of a certain moral essence. For example, we consider traffic etiquette to be something utterly conventional and rather distanced from questions of conscience and character, but when one is in relation to a certain human being with an urban disposition, this etiquette has the same degree of importance as his or her bearing or outward appearance, and thus the difference of custom in a rather typical situation rarely means a lack in our moral dissatisfaction, animosity, or solidarity. Typically, no matter what he or she says, one cannot respect a foreigner who can't adequately speak the language of one's country. (The term *barbaros*, "barbarian," originally indicated someone incapable of speaking Greek.) There is a strict boundary drawn on the level of custom between slave and freeman, which allows life to go on without the possibility of any signs of solidarity with the slave developing. (Here is the secret of the uniform, or any garment that indicates class status.) It is often thought that a person's appearance indicates that person's moral consciousness, their thought. There is a certain speculation that a military man will have a shaved head, that a man of letters will have long hair, that one can tell what type a woman is by the style of her hair. Within dominant society, clothing customs express moral sentiments and social consciousness through distinctions on the levels of the individual and social strata. In the male-female relation, the most primary site of custom, the question of the distinction between male and female clothing is an extremely serious one: The police are, in fact, always on the lookout for men in women's clothing and women in men's clothing.

Thus we can understand why this thing called "custom" is the most important material, sensuous expression of popular affect, human relationality, morality, and thought. Even those who can't really grasp the abstract ideas of "national thought" [*kokumin shisō*] or the "national polity/body" [*kokutai*], nevertheless have no trouble directly understanding the notion of "Japanese customs" [*Nihonjin no fūzoku*]. In truth, it is precisely in this fact that we might point to the concrete expression of this "national thought." Maybe the fact that the Soviet masses all at once burst out laughing while watching a Japanese folk movie indicates the existence of a rather serious diplomatic issue. When the mechanisms of production of a country depict the customs of its peasantry and petty bourgeoisie, obviously it will artistically characterize them. We might say that in general, there is no great literature that does not depict custom.

The observation of custom originally belonged within the range of sensationalism, and this sensation of custom had a sense of morality. It is film that first allowed us to see this sensation of custom itself, and it is in this sensation, in other words, in its *sociality*, that we can find the most interesting elements of film. Within actual reality, the social phenomenon becomes *visible* as custom.

Now, custom and eroticism remain in an inseparable relation. The fluctuations in custom that have resulted from eroticism have been far greater than those occasioned by the grotesque—even the impact of the development of the meal on custom is nothing compared to the degree of impact of this eroticism. Often eroticism is conceived of as a corruption or subversion of customs, treating it as a kind of lechery to the extent that it is considered a destruction of custom or negative disturbance of it—but in place of this type of deliberate denigration through interpellation, if we refer to the erotic (vital-cultural) moment of human society as “eroticism” in a detached manner, we can come to grasp its meaning as the fundamental element of custom as a whole. Thus, it is an obvious fact that film, which enacts the destiny of this sensation of custom, which gives it its privileged status, never loses this aspect that constantly pursues the erotic—this phenomenon itself reveals that it is never a question of the supposedly “lowbrow” artistic nature of film or anything of the sort. But when this sensation-alism of film is something impure, in other words, when sensation itself is seen as a latent means to certain sensuous behaviors, as a means of sensuous association, then at this point alone, the eroticism of film degenerates into lechery.

However, this sensationalism of film (the artistic basis particular to film) is not a breaking away from eroticism, but rather must be grasped precisely as the purification of the erotic. Film demands of the audience a confrontation between the audience’s consciousness (life consciousness, social consciousness, and so on) and the forms of custom that appear on the screen. This sense of custom, as anyone can understand, is connected to mankind through the universality of the sexual relation, and it is precisely this point that we can consider one of the foundations of the mass characteristics [*taishūsei*] possessed by film content itself. (Mankind’s consciousness of genus [*rui-ishiki*] emerges from sexual relations; *Menschengeschlecht* = *Geschlecht* [the human species = sex]). The consideration of sexual morality by the masses takes place through the screen.

Just to clarify and prevent any possible misunderstandings, I’m not

suggesting that the most important artistic content of film can be understood through a consideration solely of eroticism or sexual morality. Rather my point is that custom is the fundamental condition upon which the artistic value of film is established and that, as one of its necessary moments, eroticism is an essential question. Nor am I suggesting that merely this sense of custom is something that conclusively determines the artistic value of film for all time. But the artistic value of film is something that only for the first time can be perfected on the level of this ground of material, affective, physical, and social embodiment that is custom, and moreover within this sensation of custom, there is already, as seen in examples of the photography of natural phenomena and the news, the promise of an independent artistic value. In other words, in film, despite its sensational expression but at the same time precisely because of it, custom itself possesses a certain moral.

We can give a wide range of proof for the fact that the moral consciousness of the masses is artistically stimulated by the sensation of custom in film; the fact that foreign films in which the language is not easily understood are more interesting to we young men than Japanese films in the Japanese language demonstrates that the newness and freshness of our life consciousness is unsatisfied with this Japanese actuality. This fact is reflected within the young generation, although they are unaware of it—that objective circumstances in which the progress of Japanese capitalism means a movement toward the advanced capitalism of England, America, France, and Germany, and that there is moreover a necessity of moving toward the economic organization of the Soviet Union. It is not only that foreign directors and actors are highly skilled, but rather the fact that the young generation perceive this high level of skill at all demonstrates a new trend toward a certain moral advancement. Bourgeois film itself is fated to be unable to challenge the self-criticism of custom in the present, so we cannot expect any positive effects of the critiques of morality contained in such films. Often the observation of custom ends up merely in a fixation or preoccupation with it—this is the artistic weakness of the sensation of custom. In fact, it is the weakness of sensationalism taken more generally, or in a more narrow sense the weakness of eroticism. It goes without saying that the most mainstream mass films—the sword-fight [*chanbara*] film for instance, while stemming from a kinetic (or rather gymnastic) sensation of custom that returns to a certain eroticism—basically originate from a feudal morality and feudal sensation of custom.

Thus the *mass characteristics* of film appeal to the general sensibilities of the members of a society (their sense of actuality, their sense of custom, their eroticism, and so on), and precisely at the point when these sensibilities migrate over into ethics, the sense of morality, and social thought, their mass essence is revealed. The mass characteristics of film cannot be grasped solely through something obvious, like the idea that since movie theaters are cheap, anybody can go and watch a movie together with everyone else, and so on. Nor is it the case that the basis of these mass characteristics can be seen in the fact that a film can be endlessly reproduced and thus brought anywhere to be shown.

In the above, I've tried to analyze why it is that film is interesting through the form of realism that is specific to film itself. In other words, film's specific realism exists at the point when actual reality *just as it is* becomes artistic reality, and at the same time, at this same point, something else is revealed, something that confers a mass sense of satisfaction that cannot be duplicated in other forms of art. This is something rather different from the question of the theatrical or artistic value that film ought to have—this “something” rather consists in the preconditions that existed prior to this consideration of value; to ignore these conditions and directly criticize the theatrical or literary essence of film is perhaps to reduce the filmic to merely an instance of theater or literature. The simple but complex fact that one can observe something on the screen in the same way as one observes the actuality of the world is sufficient to give us what is most interesting and specific to film as a form. For the time being, I will refrain from discussing the theatrical function and literary value of film. I have argued here from the standpoint of the viewer; it is impossible for me to here analyze the technical, economic, and social conditions of film production. But even without the analysis of these factors, we can nevertheless elucidate to a certain extent the mass characteristics of film.

# Film Art and Film

## *Toward the Function of Abstraction*

*Translated by Gavin Walker*

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Tosaka's 1937 essay "Eiga geijutsu to eiga: Absutorakushon no sayō e," included in his collection *Thought and Custom (Shisō to fūzoku)*, intervenes in a crucial period in Japan in terms of not only its subject matter, but also its focus on the contemporary moment. The clarification of the relation between *the filmic* and *the aesthetic* more broadly was a crucial concern in a moment when film was becoming increasingly the communicative medium of news as well as the technical medium of propaganda. In this context, Tosaka's emphasis on the *epistemic* function of film serves as a conceptual link between his philosophical work proper and his more general cultural criticism, a link that remains crucial to understand the breadth of his development of historical materialism.

"Film Art and Film" was translated from *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1966), 4:465–469.

What is meant today by the term "film" is predominantly film as an art. These films are placed under the category "art," regardless of whether or not they have "value" as an art form in the strict sense. By this I do not mean simply what is known as "art film." Since, for example, we can consider what is referred to by the term "cultural film" [*bunka eiga*] as something opposed to the "art film," this cultural film is thus not considered to be film as an art while the "art film" is posited as its representative

form—yet it is clear that we cannot grasp the totality of film art simply through the so-called art film.

Further, I find numerous points I cannot understand regarding this notion of the so-called cultural film. More than a film that happens to be cultural—in other words, a film constituted by its cultural content—in practice, this rather seems to signify something closer to film as a means of cultural policy. We can even consider the *cultural* film [*bunkateki na eiga*] to emerge precisely in the sense that it does not follow the path of the so-called propaganda film in its blunt disclosure of its intentions. Further, in considering its actual content we might say that since the cultural film includes within it many films in the style of educational materials, it is a kind of “educational film.” On the other hand, since these educational films are not so much concerned with pedagogy or educational objectives in the style of moral training but rather with the rationalistic, scientific education, we might refer to them as “science films.” But at any rate, whether we consider it to be a type of educational film or a type of scientific film, the cultural film is thought to be characterized by its tendency to follow the line of cultural policy—however, if we see it merely as a form of cultural policy, we must say that it belongs to a rather elevated sense of policy. And yet attempting to assist the implementation of cultural policy by means of materials such as the science film is something of which the typical cultural policy is incapable.

I do not particularly trust the cultural film as a form, but at the same time, in my view we have to pay close attention to what is concealed therein: a certain unknowable, immeasurable potentiality of film itself. Whatever the present actuality of this cultural film form might be, it is undoubtedly the case that it is something like the antithesis of the so-called art film, and thus what is interesting is that, to a certain extent, this “cultural film” has been able to escape the category of *film as art* itself. Art itself, in fact, is considered something capable of possessing the essence of cultural policy, or at least it is a constant possibility that art can serve as one means of transmission on the level of policy. However, if this is the case then merely the notion of film art will be sufficient and through this alone the cultural film should be achievable. There would be no need to distinguish it rigorously on the level of genus from its presumed representative, the art film (if we consider it favorably in its ideal content). But if we see how in fact this distinction is drawn in actuality, we immediately

confront the fact that things like the cultural film cannot be contained within film as an art.

If we take up the educational film or the scientific film (and from there, the propaganda film, documentary film, news film, and so on), obviously these types of film are rigorously distinguished from the art film, but more importantly, it is clear that they are rigorously distinguished from the category of *film* art itself. This is clearer in such films than it is in the case of the cultural film: In as much as we can say that in fact the cultural film—on an ideational level—is quite close to the concept of art, the cultural film itself can be a useful set of materials that allows us to clearly perceive the *limitations* of the *filmic moment as artistic*.

But I am not specifically attempting to problematize the cultural film as such. Rather, I want to first draw attention to the limitations of the filmic-artistic itself when examined from the vantage point of film as a whole. In other words, it is a fact that when one hears the word “film” within society in general, one immediately thinks of the art of film—thus, in common sense, film is considered something internal to art, and this equation itself is considered to be something obvious, something that goes without saying: Of course, this view is mistaken. The cultural commodities offered to us on the streets are for the most part films as film art, but recently, *it is a fact of the streets* that the news film has been valued highly, and the news film is already absolutely not a type of film as art nor representative of film art. There are of course a variety of idiots who argue that war has produced a new aesthetics and that thus news of the war has become an art, but one ought not to engage such idiots in dialogue. There was already an understanding of the filmic value of the news film in gestation from long before the advent of the war news, and this itself was nothing more than the obvious result of the fact that society had arrived at a stage of gradually deepening reflection on the general and fundamental function of film. If we seriously examine the news film as a form, we can immediately understand that film itself can never be reduced to an art.

This might seem like a clearly established fact, but if for the sake of argument we attempt to compare this relation to the question of literature, we see that it is in fact full of unexpected questions. That is, we can perhaps compare the news film to reportage literature or to reportage itself—thus the relation between film art and the news film will roughly parallel that between the traditional and mainstream work of literature and reportage literature or reportage. But here literature and reportage stand in a

rather problematic relation. Of course, simple reportage is not “literature” in the expected sense, but in order for reportage to possess an angle on the *truth*, it must have at least a certain *literary* dimension. Reportage itself is of course not “reportage literature,” but if we accept that any true reportage itself must be literary to a certain extent, then how would we draw a distinction between reportage itself and so-called reportage literature? It might be said that reportage literature is over-fictionalized, while reportage itself is neither fictionalized nor narrativized, but this is not a serious distinction on an artistic level—in other words it is merely a distinction of genre on the level of writing. But, for instance, the novel or theatrical drama are differentiated in terms of genre, and yet precisely because of this, we cannot say that one is literary while the other is not. Thus, even if we return to the differential on the level of writing between reportage and so-called reportage literature, it reveals absolutely nothing to call one literature and the other “non-literary.”

Something similar emerges in the relation between film art and film news. It is clear that in terms of film genre, they are different things, but solely on the basis of this fact it is impossible to declare that one is an art form and the other is not. In other words, genre itself can be determined by the given form of art, but whether or not something qualifies as “art” can never be determined solely on the basis of genre. If we were to do this we would end up returning to the early era of film’s development and declaring that this new genre called “film” in general was simply never an art to begin with.

Of course, I do not attempt to deny the fact that film art and film news are different—nor do I attempt to deny that one is widely considered an art while the other is largely exceeds the category “art.” Rather, I want to emphasize precisely this fact. Despite this, I want to emphasize and draw our attention to something of far greater importance than whether or not these forms constitute “art” or not—the fact that before all else, they are forms of film. I cannot immediately agree with the system of classification that encompasses this problem by first differentiating “art” from “non-art” and subsequently locating film art in the former and film news in the latter. Rather, we should grasp the distinction between, for instance, film and literature and then distinguish film art and film news from within *film* taken as a whole (i.e., the distinction between artistic literature understood as the literary arts and exegetical writing as the study of the classics).

The cultural “genre” called “art” reveals to us the most direct form of



the given phenomenon in terms of cultural history, and yet “genre” itself as a classification mechanism cannot be the necessary tool for the analysis of the problems posed by this fact. The machinic apparatus for this analytic operation is the distinction of literature, film, the arts, craftsmanship, architecture, and so on, an apparatus that contains those things that belong to these various artistic genres as well as those that do not. Is architecture actually an art, or is it merely a set of implements for dwelling? Is a work of handicraft simply a tool or is it an art object? Precisely in this sense, regardless of the question of whether film constitutes an “art” or not, we must emphasize first and foremost that it is filmic. By doing so it becomes possible for the first time to make clear the distinction between film as art and film as something other than art—in other words, film must be something absolutely independent from the contingent set of analogies derived from preceding art forms such as literature, and in order to preserve this, one must decide oneself what constitutes the *artistic*. That is, one ought not to decide that this is art or not, but rather from the converse direction, one must decide this question on the following basis: Is this a film or not?

There is a great fear in analogizing the news film itself to reportage literature. In order to problematize the relation between film art and the films that exceed this category in a relatively pure sense, we ought to examine not so much the relationality between film art and the news film,<sup>1</sup> which is relatively clear, but rather the relationality of film art in contrast to the so-called cultural film, a relation that at first glance is highly ambiguous.

Thus a doubled consideration of the conception of film art is necessary here. The first point is whether or not the concept of “film art” is derived from the common sense that it is an “art.” The second point is that a series of stereotypes are imposed on film derived from a notion of the “artistic” stemming from an extra-filmic common sense. This first point seems obvious: Anyone who ponders the question a little bit will quickly understand that it is not merely an art. But on the second point, the problem can be quite complex—it is a common sense possessed by everyone today that this notion of “the artistic” that distinguishes film art from extra-artistic film of course should be regulated by the pretense of film itself and not

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1. This phrase appears in *Tosaka Jun zenshū*, 4:467, as “eiga geijutsu teki eiga nyūsū,” but it is clearly a typographical error for “eiga geijutsu tai eiga nyūsū.”

something regulated by the pretense of the theater or the form of the novel. And yet what exactly is the “artistic” within film? On this point there is no decisive definition. This is as it should be: Precisely because there are numerous particular mechanical and affective functions operative within film that were previously largely unknown (in particular those based on the camera and movement of film), the distinction between art and non-art cannot be determined without adding certain completely new elements to it. In other words, it can be dangerous to flatly assume that the form of the news film is something extra-artistic.

To push this point a bit further, at the same time that the question of whether or not film constitutes “art” is a particularly problematic distinction, it has come to be thought that perhaps in comparison to previous instances, the question of to what degree film is “artistic” or not is not such a crucial problematic. It is the characteristic of the material function, indeed the social conditions of existence, of film to necessitate a special interaction between some form of the artistic and the non-artistic. Precisely this point requires us to rethink the question of the artistic within the cinema, and this point can be an operation for the general re-examination of the concept as it extends to the totality of the artistic.

Within the cinema, it is precisely “film,” not “art” that is the question. That is, the primary and fundamental question is the total function on the *epistemic* level of this thing we call “film.” Only through the clarification of this point, and only in as much as it is not merely glossed over, can the question of what the artistic *in film* actually consists in be determined. Only through this fundamental point can we analyze the distinction and interaction between film art and non-art film. At the same time as the artistic is one cultural genre that appears on the cultural-historical level, it is a major theoretical category on the epistemological level. That is, “art” signifies the sum totality of a series of cultural phenomena such as literature, the arts, theater, and so on, and at the same time, is the name of a certain epistemic sequence. In parallel with science, art signifies a *modality of cognition*. But there is a more foundational determination of film than the question of whether or not it constitutes film art: the fact that it also signifies a new human cognitive capacity. Film is a name for a *means of cognition* or a *function of cognition*. It is obvious that the general modality of cognition is determined by the means of cognition or function of cognition—common sense dictates that it cannot be the reverse. This has been referred to by the concept of the “bridle” [*jōgu*] within aesthetics

(e.g., T. Fischer). The form of cognition that “bridles” language (or writing) is literature. In comparison, the form of cognition that “bridles” the mechanism of film is nothing other than the film itself.<sup>2</sup>

For this reason, I think that the fundamental problem for film theory, prior to any considerations of film as a phenomenon of cultural history or art, is that we must consider film to be first and foremost something epistemological. It is the modality of *cognition*, under the effect of what is proper to film itself, through which we can first grasp its artistic nature. The fundamental problem is not whether or not film itself is an art, or how a certain film might be considered artistic, but rather prior to this, there is the question of film as a means of cognition, the actual analysis of what role film plays in the history of human cognition. I do not mean here merely that because film has its own particular artistic characteristics or indicates a more general function, we ought to respect it. Rather, we require an awareness on the level of epistemology that is adequate to the fact that film itself is a progressive cognitive function of humanity. Of course, it is entirely appropriate that film should be understood in a mass sense [*tsūzoku ni*] as an art or leisure (it amounts to the same thing), but this cannot serve as a point of departure for the principles of a theory of film. The problem that poses itself to us is that we must precisely grasp the significance of this general artistic sensibility and leisure on the level of a theory of epistemology. For such a question, film is the most suggestive object of analysis.

However, the fact is that the function of film is already widely understood on a general level. At this point, there is no longer a need for me to explicate this at length—some time ago I attempted to deal with this more or less theoretically.<sup>3</sup> There I argued that the characteristic element of film was contained in its connection to custom and epistemologically identified that the material function of film was directly related to social factors like custom. Leaving this line of inquiry aside, another directionality that remains interesting on an epistemological level is the operation of “abstraction” in film.

Abstraction is one of the most fundamental operations within all cog-

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2. “Bridle” occurs in Kant and Hegel to indicate the boundedness or limitations on the freedom of the subject. But Tosaka’s use here is quite off-hand and not fully worked out or explained in his work. The earlier reference to “T. Fischer,” too, remains obscure.

3. Presumably, Tosaka is referring to “Film as the Reproduction of the Present: Custom and the Masses,” translated in the present volume.

nitive function. Precisely because it is almost too well known that science in general is based on this fact, abstraction can easily invite misunderstandings—for instance, the vulgar and simplistic notion that science differs from art in that it is abstract. Rather, art is precisely something that is the most abstract. Without this understanding, something like “style” in the literary arts becomes utterly meaningless and painting as a form would never have been established. The distinction of science and art—or the distinctions of various genres within the arts—is given by the differentiations of abstraction at work. Thus, as a heuristic for the examination of the distinctions between the various arts, we need to examine this abstraction itself.

However, it is not merely that it is essential for the distinction of various cultural modalities (modalities of cognition); it is essential because the ground of the operation of abstraction is contained within the function of cognition or the means of cognition. The cinema (not necessarily what we merely understand by “film” as one modality of culture) must possess a unique form of abstraction in order to operate as a function of cognition or means of cognition. Perhaps we might say that this abstraction itself is a mediation that connects film to other means of cognition, but we will have to leave this question for a later date.



# Here, Now

## *Everyday Space as Cultural Critique*

Robert Stolz

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Tosaka Jun has long been known, if less often appreciated, for *The Japanese Ideology* (1935), his unforgiving, blistering attack on intellectual fascism. Other papers in this volume indicate the extraordinary depth and breadth of Tosaka's cultural criticism, in which he focused on matters ranging from laughter, journalism, film, and Kyoto School philosophy, to the economy, Japanese society, and war. In this essay I will show that Tosaka's cultural critique is grounded in a materialist philosophy of space and time best seen in his essays "The Principle of Everydayness and Historical Time" (*Nichijōsei no genri to rekishiteki jikan*, 1930) and "On Space" (*Kūkanron*, 1931).<sup>1</sup> Read together, these two texts form the basis of Tosaka's particular form of historical materialism centered on the concept of the everyday. They should also be viewed as part of the self-imposed mission of the *Yuibutsuron kenkyūkai* (Yuiken) to develop an authentic philosophical materialism based on a progressive natural science—a system of thought that could organize not only the sciences, but also consciousness. As fellow Yuiken member Kozai Yoshishige put it, Lenin in *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* (1909) had merely demonstrated the need for a philosophical materialism, but the task of actually producing such a philosophy had fallen to the Yuiken.<sup>2</sup>

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1. See the translations of both of these essays in this volume.

2. See Kozai Yoshishige, *Senjika no yuibutsuronsha tachi* (Tokyo: Aoki shoten, 1982), 41;

In taking up Lenin's challenge, in these two texts Tosaka first begins by linking time and space in a dialectical relationship mediated by matter in motion. But quickly going beyond Lenin's simple reflection theory of human consciousness,<sup>3</sup> Tosaka combines it with a historical materialist version of the Heideggerian concept of "thereness" to construct a mode of Being and a materialist, socio-historical theory of knowledge. The result is Tosaka's historical materialism with its distinctive insistence that practice needs to be centered in the here and now—what I call the "space of everydayness" and what Tosaka often simply called "actuality" or the "actual moment." This "space of everydayness" describes, firstly, what Harootunian has called the "minimal unity of the everyday"—a concept meant to grasp the historical experience of modernity.<sup>4</sup> Further, the space of everydayness is a site of practice that may be, in Tosaka's words, constantly and consciously "configured" (*konfigurieren*)<sup>5</sup> in a permutational relationship to the totality of historical time. In Tosaka's view, this configuring makes the present moment available as a moment of intervention *within* history rather than the occasion for an idealist and politically dangerous leap *outside* history to nature, to the natural community, to Culture, or to the folk.

Just as important as this historical critique of Japan in the 1930s may be, as a theory of the inescapable materiality and historicity that mediates human practice, Tosaka's concept of the space of everydayness also offers us, in my view, a powerful critical tool still relevant to our own present

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see also V. I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1976).

3. This theory holds that the external, material world is reflected in the mind, forming consciousness of that external world. In *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* it is specifically deployed against theories that held that the external world was merely a projection of the mind. Lenin followed classic materialism in showing that the discoveries of astronomy, geology, and other natural sciences illustrate that the world existed long before any human consciousness could have grasped it. It thus followed that the world exceeds humans' consciousness of it. For an excellent discussion of just how Tosaka exceeded this Leninist theory, see Gavin Walker's essay, "Filmic Materiality and Historical Materialism: Tosaka Jun and the Prosthetics of Sensation," in this volume.

4. See H. D. Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000). By incorporating both the materiality and the uncertainty of relativity and quantum theory, Tosaka's space is finite and relative, simultaneously proscribing both metaphysical and mechanistic rigidities.

5. Tosaka uses the German words *konfigural*, *Konfiguralität*, and *konfigurieren*, written in the Roman alphabet, to express this concept. These terms come from discrete mathematics; see later in this essay for a larger discussion of Tosaka's application to historical time.

situation. I will argue that the same method Tosaka used in his critique of the metaphysics of space as it was deployed in fascist ideology in Japan in the 1930s is also helpful for thinking through issues he did not take up in his lifetime, including our own environmental crisis.

## Everyday Space

Tosaka's decision to name everyday space as a potentially emancipatory site requires explanation as it goes against a tradition of viewing space as antithetical to a critical politics. Indeed, many critics of modernity, perhaps most notably Ernst Bloch, have seen a reliance on the category of space as an "infallible sign" of reactionary ideology.<sup>6</sup> This critique is understandable. The global catastrophe of the 1930s teems with a spatial vocabulary: *Heimat*,<sup>7</sup> *furusato*, *Lebensraum*,<sup>8</sup> motherland, Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere, and many others. These static sites of supposed authenticity seem to directly oppose the progressive possibilities of dynamic temporal categories like progress, renaissance, and, of course, revolution. Yet, despite the ease with which spatial categories lent themselves to right-wing politics, Tosaka took pains to make space a fundamental part of his attempt to found a progressive natural science and philosophical materialism. Despite its title, "On Space" is not simply a call to include spatial analysis as a supplement to standard philosophical investigations. It is rather a fundamental rethinking of the philosophical tradition itself.<sup>9</sup>

According to Tosaka, philosophy erred when it separated time and space from each other. Pre-Socratic philosophers like Parmenides and Democritus had theorized space as existence. For Parmenides, "to be" meant to have a spatial presence: Existence was spatial existence. Later, Socratic philosophy cast off the spatial character of existence in favor of Ideal forms and questions of Spirit, and the necessary link between space

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6. Ernst Bloch, *Heritage of Our Times*, trans. Neville and Stephen Plaice (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

7. German for "homeland," roughly the same as the Japanese *furusato*, or "native place."

8. Literally "living space," *Lebensraum* was the Nazi ideology of empire that called for an expansion of the German *Volk* into Eastern Europe, especially Poland and the Ukraine.

9. Tosaka Jun, "On Space," in *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1966), 3:239–266 (hereafter cited as *TJZ*).



and existence was lost. In its place, post-Socratic philosophy focused on the concept of time and temporality, and the original interest in problematizing spatial existence gave way to questions of consciousness. When philosophy removed existence from its implication in physical nature (*shizenteki sonzai no kitei o nuki ni shite*), this led “directly to theorizing existence according to immaterial, indeed spiritual, nonsensuous stipulations” allowing existence to escape the material boundedness of pre-Socratic philosophy.<sup>10</sup> (Parmenides, Democritus, and the ancient Greek natural philosophers had proscribed the void as antithetical to existence: “Only being is, nothing is not.” And Lenin famously stated: “Nature is infinite, but it infinitely *exists*.”)<sup>11</sup> Freed from the regulations of material space, existence acquired metaphysical attributes, which, in turn, opened the way for the void (nothingness) and the infinite.

The rise of idealism also signaled the severing of questions of time from questions of space, preparing the way for later philosophy to treat them in isolation, something Tosaka calls “time-space parallelism” (*heikōron*): “Space belongs to the treatment of things, time to the treatment of mind (*kokoro*)—spirit or consciousness would do just as well. . . . And so, just as the issues of mind and matter are seen as parallel, space and time have a corresponding parallelism.”<sup>12</sup> After this splitting of space and existence, it became possible for things to exist without a material presence. In “On Space,” Tosaka undoes this space-time parallelism itself when he re-links space and time as a dialectical moment of matter in motion. He thereby reconnects consciousness to material existence.

The structure of “On Space” is an interrogation of what are commonly conceived of as different kinds of spaces: the symbolic space of psychology, the Kantian space of philosophy, the geometric space of mathematics, and the material space of physics. Tosaka seeks to show that all these spaces in fact presuppose that which they pretend to explain: space itself. While all are locally valid, they seem to rely on something prior. They therefore must be considered “single, phenomenal forms” that lead to specialized sciences: Symbolic space leads to psychology as material space leads to physics, and so on. Specialization undermines each discipline’s claims to universality. Symbolic space cannot describe the mechanism or

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10. *Ibid.*, 241.

11. *Ibid.*, 240; see also, Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*, 314 (emphasis in original).

12. Tosaka, “On Space,” in *TJZ*, 3:243.

mediation by which sensory input becomes thought—the mind-body, or brain-body problem. Similarly, just as symbolic space fails to speak as space itself and so must be relegated to a specific phenomenal form, Kant’s unproblematic identification of intuition with geometry (*sono mama*) presents problems for the transcendent, *a priori* status of Kantian space. For Tosaka and others, the problem for Kant comes from the rise of non-Euclidean geometry in the nineteenth century. According to Kant’s system, a geometry of more than three dimensions should be impossible, yet it exists. It is, of course, possible to derive *n*-dimensional, non-Euclidean geometries from Kantian (Euclidean) space—but *not as a process of intuition*. Extension, such as described by the continuum 1, 2, 3, . . . *n*, is a function of mathematical and logical reasoning; we do not intuit four-dimensional space.<sup>13</sup> This inconsistency means not only are there problems with intuitive space’s claims to universality; it also announces the relative autonomy of the space described by geometry as it is no longer reducible to intuition. With the concept of extension Kant’s space can be saved as a valid form of “humanist” perception, but it can no longer be identical to geometry, nor may it claim universality. As we shall see, Tosaka’s identifying of this moment of slippage in Kant implicates even our intuition in the historicity and materiality of the space of everydayness. In doing so, Tosaka draws attention not to intuition’s *a priori* or transcendental nature, but to its historically embedded moment of production.

With the demotion of intuitive space to a single, phenomenal form, a new, more fundamental space, “everyday space” (*nichijōteki kūkan*), must be posited existing beneath and through these partial descriptions.<sup>14</sup> The result is the expansion of the materialism of the space of physics to a philosophical materialism whose materiality comes from matter itself—or as Tosaka puts it, “what Kant unfortunately understood as the unknowable thing-in-itself”—in other words, the materiality of the world itself. Fundamental, everyday space is the space that all people may “rely on in the course of their daily lives” even “without knowledge of the inner structure of the atom.”<sup>15</sup> As the space that underwrites the other spaces, everyday space resembles Henri Lefebvre’s “social space” in that each is lived be-

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13. *Ibid.*, 251.

14. *Ibid.*, 260.

15. *Ibid.*, 264.

fore it is thought.<sup>16</sup> Whereas symbolic space, geometry, and the space of physics are “indirect abstractions from space itself,” everyday space is unmediated by a specialized science. Tosaka therefore calls it “a direct abstraction.”<sup>17</sup> For Tosaka, the sciences have forgotten this basic truth in the rush to establish their universality. By ignoring the materiality of existence, post-Socratic philosophy lost the ability to “analyze [space] from within” and so philosophy has everywhere “explained [space] from without” by reference to nonspatial categories such as “God, Light, Consciousness.”<sup>18</sup> If philosophy would analyze space from within, it would rediscover that space is completely tied up with existence.

The fundamental character of this spatial existence is “a particular matter-of-factness”—a “*Da-Charakter*.” *Da*, written in the Roman alphabet and glossed as *soko*, stands for the “thereness” of spatial existence that is the character of everyday space: “Space is the *Da-Charakter* of things.”<sup>19</sup> Because what Tosaka describes as materiality-as-existence resembles Heidegger’s background familiarity which enables people to cope with the world without reflection, it is tempting to equate *Da-Charakter* with Heidegger’s *Dasein* except that Tosaka immediately tells us that this “thereness” describes an objectivity that comes from “the materiality of the objects themselves” and “not [from Heidegger’s] anthropological Being,” which, Tosaka believes, is in one way “just another form of subjectivity.”<sup>20</sup> The word for “anthropological” here is *ningentekina*, or “humanistic.” It may also be tempting to see an anticipation of Heidegger’s own self-critique in 1946 of the “humanism” in his earlier work *Being and Time* (1927), but I believe it is more likely that Tosaka’s theory allows us to arrive at a philosophically similar but politically different place to later Heidegger by starting from and building on Lenin’s insistence that the

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16. Lefebvre writes: “In the beginning was the *Topos*. Before—long before—the advent of the *Logos*, in the *chiaroscuro* realm of primitive life, lived experience already possessed its internal rationality; this experience was *producing* long before *thought* space, and spatial thought, began *reproducing* the projection, explosion, image and orientation of the body”; see Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 174; see also 46 and 60–61.

17. Tosaka, “On Space,” in *TJz*, 3:260.

18. *Ibid.*, 260–261.

19. *Ibid.*, 262.

20. Tosaka would criticize Heidegger’s spatiality developed in *Being and Time* (1927) as confusing “space itself” with spatial analogies; see Tosaka, “On Space,” in *TJz*, 3:260, and the translation in this volume.

world exists beyond and prior to human consciousness. By building on Lenin's call for a progressive natural science, Tosaka's approach maintains the materiality of philosophical materialism and allows him the space for a critique of global cultural ideology and practice of the 1930s—in a way that Heidegger's enthrallment to culture does not.<sup>21</sup> Tosaka's *Da-Charakter* operates as an inverted Heideggerian *Geworfenheit* or "thrownness," whereby the individual is thrown into an inescapable material existence, whereas in Heidegger the thrownness seems rather to be into future-oriented temporality. As we shall see in the next sections, in contrast to Heidegger's *Dasein*, which takes its meaning from an anticipated future, Tosaka's *Da-Charakter* is fundamentally rooted in the historical present, and this seemingly subtle difference will have enormous implications for Tosaka's political and cultural criticism.

Further, *Da-Charakter*'s "particular objectivity" of "thereness" is fundamental and may not be subsumed under any other concept; it is explained in terms of itself.<sup>22</sup> Material, everyday space is the fundamental givenness of existence. It functions similarly to both Heidegger's thrownness and Kant's limits to inquiry, but it does so from a materialist perspective. Because the phenomenal forms rely on this given everyday space that exists independently of our cognition, we can see already how Tosaka's inversion of Heidegger allows the concept of everyday space to deal with the rise of non-Euclidean geometry better than Kant's space-as-intuition. In Tosaka's system both intuition and geometry rest on everyday space, so unlike Kant, he can supplement the single, phenomenal form of intuitive space with the axioms and logic of the single, phenomenal form of geometric space. Importantly, even if this space of daily practice has a "quasi-Euclidean" and therefore "quasi-Kantian" feel, only *philosophical* investigation of the category of the everyday reveals the fundamental materiality of everyday space.

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21. *Ibid.*, 263; see Martin Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," in *Basic Writings*, ed. David Farrell Krell, trans. Frank A. Capuzzi and J. Glenn Gray (London: Harper Perennial: Modern Thought, 1993), 213–265. A similar thing can be said for the term *Da-Charakter* itself. Though this term does appear in later Heidegger, Tosaka has developed *charakter* to be that which exceeds and precedes subjective representation of the external world.

22. *Ibid.*, 262. It is interesting to note that Tosaka's *Da-Charakter*, by being explicable only in terms of itself, occupies the same place as "culture" or *hiatus irrationalis* does in liberal (bourgeois) epistemology. As we shall see below, this is not a coincidence and actually forms the basis of Tosaka's attack on what he derisively called "cultural history."

The reader may notice that this analysis of everyday space is very close to Kant's analysis of *intuitive space*. Is, in fact, our everyday space the same as Kant's intuitive space? But notice, too, Kant analyzed intuitive space without problematizing the everyday. If it is not derived from a *concept of the everyday*, it cannot be called everyday space. It is thus wholly accidental that Kant's result resembles ours. The spirit of the analysis—that is, its site and goal—are totally different. Kant's method never escapes *psychological* and *phenomenological* categories. Instead of analyzing space from and *according to the concept of the everyday* (this means the concept of everyday space), Kant merely analyzed space *as intuition*. We have analyzed *space as a concept of the everyday, within the concept of the everyday, according to the concept of the everyday*—we could call it a *conceptual analysis*.<sup>23</sup>

*Da-Charakter* is the fundamental materiality of everyday space. Existing prior to, and establishing the ground of, the sciences (psychology, physics, geometry, etc.), the *Da-Charakter* of everyday space is the condition of possibility of all human practical activity (*jissen seikatsu*).<sup>24</sup> By making everyday life and practice the site of philosophical investigation, Tosaka claims to have revealed the baseline materiality that underwrites all of the other phenomenal forms. In this way, he brings us closer than ever to what he calls “space itself.”

Though more fundamental, everyday space is still merely another phenomenal form of space. It is not space itself. Space itself cannot be described in isolation. Rather, space is the dialectical union of time, motion, and matter.<sup>25</sup> This moment signals the union of time and space and the undoing of time-space parallelism. Overcoming this parallelism not only renders all existence as spatial existence; it also brings time into the realm of “thereness” and practical activity. As we shall see below, this is the theme of “The Principle of Everydayness and Historical Time.” The result is the “philosophical materialism” Lenin had called for in *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*. The space of everydayness's baseline materiality echoes Lenin's claim that no matter the philosophical affiliation of a scientist, in practice, and those who are honest about their practice, all

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23. Ibid. (emphasis in original).

24. Tosaka, “On Space,” in *TJz*, 3:264.

25. Ibid., 265.

“instinctively subscribe” to the materialist theory of knowledge—a theory that says “matter is primary, and thought, consciousness, sensation are products of a very high development.”<sup>26</sup>

Lenin’s text also helps us see the connection between Tosaka’s theory of space and his critique of ideology—especially in the discussion of symbolic space. As we saw, *theoretically*, psychological space cannot claim supremacy because sensory input can never be clearly connected to conceptualization—no mechanism seamlessly connects anatomy to thought. But *epistemologically*, Lenin argues, if symbolic space is taken not as one limited, phenomenal form, but as space itself, this means not only are ideas mere “constellations of sensations,” but also, using Bishop Berkeley’s own proof of the *reality* of the transformation of water into wine at Canaan, *reality itself* is nothing more than the “simultaneous perception of the same by many people.”<sup>27</sup>

We are already a long way toward understanding Tosaka’s critique of Japanist hermeneutics whereby the cultural authority of the Imperial House guarantees this simultaneous perception of the same and thereby creates the (national) community of the same. If, as Tosaka believed, the material everyday was a minimal unity made of a concrete mutability that came from matter itself, this simultaneous perception of the same must be imposed from without. Here the emperor—or a “logic of the East” or “culture of feeling,” and so on—operates as a violent act against perception itself. The cultural unity of the Imperial House emerges as a phenomenological enforcer, a process that Ken Kawashima’s contribution to this volume on the cultural role of the police explores in greater detail. This violence forms the basis for Tosaka’s denunciations of Japanist interpretations as “pure barbarism.”<sup>28</sup> It is interesting to note that Tosaka’s materialist criticism of consciousness closely resembles Uno Kōzō’s analysis of the emperor system as a cultural expression of the violence (metaphorical

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26. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, 76.

27. *Ibid.*, 21. Lenin quotes Berkeley: “‘If at the table all who were present should see, and smell, and taste, and drink wine, and find the effects of it, with me there could be no doubt of its reality.’ And Fraser explains: ‘Simultaneous perception of the “same”. . . *sense*-ideas, by different persons, as distinguished from purely individual consciousness of feelings and fancies, is here taken as a test of the . . . reality of the former.’”

28. See, for example, Tosaka Jun, “History and Dialectics: Metaphysical Categories Are Not Philosophical Categories,” in David Dilworth and Valdo H. Viglielmo, eds., *Sourcebook for Modern Japanese Philosophy: Selected Documents* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998), 330–338.

and actual) required to move from the simple value form (a subjective standard of use values) to an imposed and policed equivalence of values characteristic of the money form. In this analysis, both money and emperor become the transcendental Subject through which the diversity of use-values and subjectivities are forcibly reduced to sameness.<sup>29</sup>

## The Historicity of the Present

In “The Principle of Everydayness and Historical Time” Tosaka joins the inescapable materiality of existence of “On Space” with the inescapable historicity of the present. Critiquing, in turn, phenomenological and natural-scientific concepts of time, in this text he shows “the time of consciousness” (phenomenological time) and natural-scientific time to be two reified methods of parsing time. Both veil the fundamental nature of historical time. Just as space itself was the *Da-Charakter* of things, historical time is the fundamental concept of things.<sup>30</sup>

Phenomenological time arises only in consciousness. Historical time, by virtue of belonging to no one consciousness, is opaque to phenomenological time—if not, history is lost as it becomes not actual events but mere thought. Tosaka criticizes Bergson’s notion of *durée* (duration) in relation to the stream of consciousness when he demonstrates that even the stream of consciousness cannot be Bergson’s pure duration with no parsing or rupture. If it were, consciousness would reach the pure formality of a continuum of real numbers in mathematics, losing all relation to the contents of the series and becoming abstract, empty time. While this may make it possible to count out the continuum *quantitatively*, it also makes it equally impossible to ever “*problematize* the *qualitative* difference between any two numbers on this flow.” By rejecting the empty formality of quantitative succession, Tosaka declares that time and even consciousness must progress in *qualitative*, quantum leaps: “which is to say, it *does not flow*.”<sup>31</sup>

Time as used in the natural sciences, physics, geology, and so on, is equally problematic. Phenomenological time could not deal with discon-

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29. See Katsuhiko Endo’s essay, “The Multitude and the Holy Family: Empire, Fascism, and the War Machine,” in this volume.

30. Tosaka Jun, “The Principle of Everydayness and Historical Time,” in *TJz*, 3:95–104.

31. *Ibid.*, 96.

tinuity. Natural-scientific time reifies it, making the unit of division itself completely autonomous from the historical period that gave it birth: “The division replaces time itself.” Tosaka explains:

Though it is true the natural phenomenon of the earth’s rotation is taken as a standard of measurement [e.g., a day, hours, minutes, etc.], once established, that unit breaks free and may be placed anywhere in time . . . [it] also means that, regarding temporal units, it is equally fine to insert or not any division. If this is done, this time, this division, is an empty placeholder. . . . Divisions become *superficial* and *arbitrary* [with] no relation to the content of time.<sup>32</sup>

Phenomenological time exaggerates the purity of flow and reduces time to the “eternal now.” Natural-scientific time exaggerates the division and formally spatializes time until it is “not time.” Both are the result of taking partial aspects of time for the totality and both lead to the veiling of historical time.

Unlike either phenomenological or natural scientific time, historical time maintains an essential mutual determination of form and content. Historical time depends on a method of periodization sensitive to the contents of that time. While a sensitivity to contents means there are huge numbers of variables to consider, those variables are organized into a modality centered on politics. And these politics are themselves a function of the forces and relations obtaining in the here and now of production in all its forms: economic, political, aesthetic, philosophical. It is this political modality that stamps the period with a definite character.<sup>33</sup> Unlike the period of the natural sciences, these periods, dependent as they are on content and not form, are not given as fixed: “The duration, quantity, of a period changes depending on the nature, quality, of the character, not the reverse.” Further, historical time itself comes from the continuum of periods that make it up. But here Tosaka makes a very important inversion that resembles Walter Benjamin’s historical materialism and brings historical time under the aegis of the everyday. The period is not the foundation for the establishment of the historical continuum: “Quite the contrary, [the period itself] is first defined by reference to the totality of the

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32. *Ibid.*, 97 (emphasis in original).

33. For a discussion of this use of “stamp,” see Kevin M. Doak, “Under the Banner of the New Science: History, Science, and the Problem of Particularity in Early Twentieth-Century Japan,” *Philosophy East & West*, 48, no. 2 (1998): 247.



periodizations of historical time. . . . Against the whole of historical time, the period is given a configured orientation.”<sup>34</sup> “Configured” in this sentence is a translation of Tosaka’s original German terms: *konfigural*, *Konfiguralität*, and *konfigurieren* written in the Roman alphabet.<sup>35</sup> Tosaka takes these terms from discrete mathematics, which is the study of objects that have distinct values—such as integers and logical statements—that do not flow into one another forming a smooth continuity. Unlike the configured periods of historical time, the periods of the natural sciences are *given as fixed* once they become independent of the content that originated them. They are, in Tosaka’s words, “two-dimensional” because a period such as the earth’s rotation “means both the piece cut out and, at the same time, the totality of the standard. . . . Both periods fall on the same plane.” Historical time is three-dimensional because it stands in a constantly renegotiable relationship to the totality of historical time.

Configuration in the present is fundamental to Tosaka’s entire critique of contemporary Japanese capitalism and fascism—especially the deployment of “tradition” and “culture” in an attempt to infuse the present with a past meaning. A three-dimensional reading of the use of Japanese culture in rightist ideology would argue that an antimodern appeal to a pre-modern past is itself modern.<sup>36</sup> More specifically, it is the deployment of a feudal artifact within the industrial present; it is culture mediated by (capitalist) production. This configured orientation gives historical time a dynamic and potentially explosive gestalt quality, a quality completely lacking in both phenomenological and natural-scientific time.

The space of everydayness is the site where this configuring and negotiation takes place. It is the space where history is made:

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34. Tosaka, “The Principle of Everydayness,” *TJz*, 3:101.

35. See “The Principle of Everydayness and Historical Time” in this volume. In “The Principle of Everydayness and Historical Time,” he makes this point explicitly in his discussion of energy that also does not smoothly flow, but instead moves in quantum leaps to discrete levels of energy. Discrete mathematics allows for permutations and arrangements that can even recall Walter Benjamin’s sense of juxtaposition and use of mosaic. *Konfigural*, *Konfiguralität*, etc., are also used in Gestalt psychology, which says not merely that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, but that a period’s very status *as a part* depends on its deployment in the whole. Though Tosaka’s terms come from discrete mathematics, this Gestalt psychology sense is close to Tosaka’s refusal to take cultural history even as a part of a total history.

36. I am indebted to Tetsuo Najita for this particular construction.

The important thing is that this present period is freely expandable and contractible within the *bounds of necessity*. Depending on the situation, the present period may be reduced to ‘today’ or to ‘now.’ Nevertheless, this ‘now’ has the same quality—the same presentness [*genzaisei*], the same reality [*genjitsusei*] of the present historical period.<sup>37</sup>

This “now” must be bounded by the necessity of the “life of practice.” Together with the fundamental difference between Tosaka’s present and Heidegger’s anticipated future, the requirement that all thought and practice remain embedded in an inherited historical series circumscribes the realm of “possibility” with that of a broadly understood historical, materialist “necessity.” As we shall see, this requirement, too, will be essential in Tosaka’s critique of Japanist cultural metaphysics.

Importantly, this necessary circumscription of possibility by historical, materialist practice implicates the fundamental materiality—the *Da-Charakter*—of everyday space:

Our consciousness may indeed live in the phenomenological concept of time. But it is equally obvious that our bodies cannot. The place where we actually go about our lives is a present [*genzai*] that exists in historical time, a present that is part of a certain period, indeed, the present period [*gendai*].<sup>38</sup>

The everyday works the same way. Each new day provides the opportunity, not for complete freedom, but for practical intervention in the historical continuum of days that have come to constitute, and are constituted by, the accumulated totality of historical time.<sup>39</sup> The entire accumulation of past material practices—and in Tosaka’s method this includes concepts—is open to practical action in the not-yet-fully-configured moment of the present. It is likely that today’s forms, too, will ossify and become part of the past, but they need not do so. “Today” is currently

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37. *Ibid.*, 101 (emphasis in original).

38. *Ibid.*

39. The freezing, or reifying, of these past practices is what Tosaka refers to when he speaks of “custom” (*fūzoku*)—as such they are therefore an important object of study in the analysis of social reality. For the importance of studying these customs see Gavin Walker’s and Fabian Schäfer’s essays in this volume.

available for “configuring” by historically informed actors within the space of everydayness. Today is special because the historical continuum is open; it is the only time when historical change is possible.<sup>40</sup> A three-dimensional, or gestalt, understanding of historical time opens up the possibility of a conscious, creative configuring (appropriation) of the past in the space of the present. Indeed, it is the immanent tension between the demands of the present and the whole of historical time within the space of everydayness that creates this unique moment of opportunity.<sup>41</sup>

Thus a fundamental materiality and a fundamental historicity—in other words, a spatio-historical materialism—regulates the space of everydayness. “With history confined to the level of practice, the present draws nearer until it is ‘today’ . . . This is the Spirit of History.”<sup>42</sup> The act of configuring ultimately must happen “today.” “Today” is always a unique historical moment because “here in the present is *the accent* of the totality of historical time. It is because here is the core, the focal point of the character of historical time. It is because the three-dimensional nature of historical time is *concentrated* here.”<sup>43</sup> The effect of this historicity of practice is to always draw attention to moments of production, including, of course, cultural production. Because the space of everydayness is fundamental, culture must be brought down from its metaphysical heights to its moment of production in the space of everydayness. It must be made subject to the historical, material, and political character of its own period, a period with a specific relationship to the whole of historical time.

Lastly, because of the requirements of everydayness and the circumscription of the possible by the necessary, the space of everydayness imposes historical perspective and a hierarchy of values specific to it—what

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40. This “openness” within a finite material and historical space matches Tosaka’s observations in “On Space,” where, in proscribing the infinite as such, he leaves the present open to continued production within a continuum. (“On Space,” in *TJz*, 3:251).

41. Moishe Postone has recently identified precisely this tension as the deep temporal logic of the twentieth century; see Moishe Postone, “The Holocaust and the Trajectory of the Twentieth Century,” in *Catastrophe and Meaning: The Holocaust and the Twentieth Century*, ed. Moishe Postone and Eric Santner (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 104.

42. Tosaka, “The Principle of Everydayness,” in *TJz*, 3:102. Harootunian has recently come to similar conclusions on Tosaka’s concept of everydayness, showing how repeated actions (custom) and the everyday express the commodity form; see Harootunian, “Time, Everydayness and the specter of Fascism: Tosaka Jun and Philosophy’s New Vocation,” in *Re-Politicizing the Kyoto School as Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 2008), 106–107.

43. Tosaka, “The Principle of Everydayness,” in *TJz*, 3:101 (emphasis in original).

in many other works Tosaka often referred to as the “production of meaning.” For entities that inhabit the contemplative utopias of the realm of thought and mere possibility—“postulated individuals, people impossibly rich in leisure time” on whom the now does not impinge, entities Tosaka suggests do not exist—there is never the urgency of the everyday. They may always put off work from one day to the next. But for anyone who will not live forever, a life of practice bounded by impending mortality, Heidegger’s “famous Death,”<sup>44</sup> requires a valorizing process based in today. By the standards of an ahistorical utopia, all jobs have equal value, the hazard of dealing with infinite sums. But under the law of perspective given by the principle of everydayness and eventual mortality, that previous “*valuation of the two jobs collapses*. All practical work, all historical narratives, all human action must take this present as the point of origin.”<sup>45</sup> Here is the political payoff to the difference between Tosaka’s present governed by an everydayness circumscribed by historical time and practice, and Heidegger’s “Being-toward-death” in thrall to the future and governed by desire, anticipation, and mere contemplation. It is the difference between valorizations imparted by an actual, historical possibility and a merely imagined one. With Tosaka, the antinomy between “necessity” and “freedom” is resolved in the aleatory struggles of “today.”<sup>46</sup>

“The Principle of Everydayness” ends with a call for the unification of historical materialism and logic in such a way that “the principle of everydayness [holds] a place in the historical imagination just as Einstein’s Theory of Relativity and Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle do in physics.” The unification of history and logic, of course, also echoes Marx’s own belief that under capitalism history and logic move closer to each other, constituting a historical directionality.<sup>47</sup> Einstein appears as a simi-

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44. This is a reference to Heidegger’s “being-toward-death (*Sein zum Tode*),” a recognition of one’s mortality that Heidegger posits as the necessary condition of human freedom.

45. Tosaka, “The Principle of Everydayness,” in *TZ*, 3:102.

46. Daniel Bensaid recently made the same point for Walter Benjamin contra Heidegger: “Bringing the past back into play can, however, take one of two routes: either ontological, with Heidegger and the temporality that is temporalized on the basis of the future; or political, with Benjamin and the messianic possibility that is conjugated in the present”; see *Marx for Our Times: Adventures and Misadventures of a Critique*, trans. Gregory Eliot (London: Verso, 2002), 85.

47. It is true that Marx saw this mutually reinforcing relationship of history and logic to be a phenomenon specific to capitalist society, but of course, Uno Kōzō’s concept of *muri* (impossibility) shows definitively that capitalism cannot completely unify history and logic; see Gavin Walker, “The Absent Body of Labour-Power: Uno Kōzō’s Logic of Capital, in

lar corrective in “On Space”—not as a correction to Newton and classical mechanics, but to Kant and phenomenology by describing a finite, bounded universe that converges on itself, proscribing a leap to the infinite.<sup>48</sup>

## The Space of Everydayness as Method

I would like to conclude with some examples of the application of Tosaka’s method to real-world problems from the Philosophy of Culture, politics, and environmental degradation. I think we can read “The Principle of Everydayness” and its critique of the production of meaning (valorizing) as an attack on Japanist histories of entities not subject to the space of everydayness. The list of such entities imagined by idealist philosophy would, of course, include those metaphysical entities that do not die: the folk, the Imperial House, Japanese culture, and the nation. Because the everyday does not impinge on the folk or the nation, they cannot, under Tosaka’s theory, be considered historical; a “history of the folk” is a contradiction.

It seems clear that Tosaka’s attack on Nishida’s philosophy in *The Japanese Ideology* comes from this insight. A history of any entity—such as “Japanese culture,” the values of which come not from the material present but the unbounded and atemporal “place of absolute nothingness”—is not historical. Such a “history” would exist merely in thought and thus impose a valorizing process inappropriate to material, historical

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*Historical Materialism*, forthcoming. In the two essays I examine here, Tosaka is laying out the case for a more basic materialism and its implications for practice, including the writing of history. Other essays in this volume deal with the historically specific mediating role of capital in Tosaka’s work, one in which capital itself emerges as the subject of modern history.

48. See Gregory Golley, *When Our Eyes No Longer See: Realism, Science, and Ecology in Japanese Literary Modernism*, Harvard East Asian Monographs (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2008). This appeal to Einstein and Heisenberg is similar to what Greg Golley has called the “realist moment” in Japanese literature, a *crisis of objectivity* and *perception*, as opposed to a *crisis of subjectivity* and *representation*, that occurred when breakthroughs in science undermined faith in positivism. Golley writes: “[M]odern experience had become so saturated with technology . . . that experiential fact (which for Einstein, included the constant velocity of light) could no longer reasonably adhere to the limits of Mach’s ‘colors, space, and tones’” (35). Not coincidentally, Mach is a major target of Lenin’s attack in *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*.

existence. Ahistorical valorizing—*interpreting* history according to meta-physical norms—also explains why, in “The Principle of Everydayness,” Tosaka parenthetically notes “a thing like cultural history, which does not periodize by means of politics, cannot even be considered one piece of a total history.”<sup>49</sup> In “Just What is a Crisis of Culture?” Chapter 11 of *Japan as a Link in the World* (1937), Tosaka shows the atrocities that may be logically derived from metaphysical valorizing when “‘freedom’ means cultural freedom, ‘progress’ means cultural progress.”<sup>50</sup> The fascist appeal to [the Idea of] Culture “always returns, not to questions of science or criticism, but to questions of morality . . . all questions must thus begin and end with an appeal to moral standards of good [*zen*] or bad [*aku*] [for the culture].” And because the Idea of Culture is necessarily particular and insular, it is not open to critical inquiry:

The burning of non-Aryan books by the Nazis strikes us as barbaric, reminding us of the burying of Confucianists by the first Qin emperor. But to the curators [*shihaiisha*] of German Culture, the purification of German Culture, the elevation of German Culture, explicitly requires this “vandalism” (!) Understand, Hirschfeld’s studies of sexuality harm German morality,<sup>51</sup> Marxist texts are immoral, and therefore anti-Cultural [*hi-bunka*]. . . . Goebbels’ ban on Jewish books, too, may look like barbarism. But when seen from Goebbels’ perspective [as curator of German morality] it is an urgent and necessary defense of German Culture.<sup>52</sup>

Echoing the central insight of *The Japanese Ideology*, Tosaka demonstrates that because the concept of Culture as an “objective spirit” of a particular people relies on the transhistorical concepts “Idea of Culture,” “Spirit,” and “Life”—concepts that also provide the ground of liberalism (see Katsuhiko Endo’s essay in this volume)—Nazi philosophy may be derived from the German Philosophy of Culture represented by liberalism “without any distortion [*sono mama*].”<sup>53</sup>

49. Tosaka, “The Principle of Everydayness,” in *TJz*, 3:99.

50. Tosaka Jun, “*Sekai no ikkan toshite no Nihon*,” in *TJz*, 5:62.

51. Tosaka refers here to the Jewish physician, gay activist, sexologist, and founder of the *Institut für Sexualwissenschaft*, Magnus Hirschfeld (1868–1935). In May 1933 the Nazis looted the Institute and burned its library.

52. Tosaka, “*Sekai no ikkan toshite no Nihon*,” in *TJz*, 5:63.

53. *Ibid.*, 65.

Inappropriate valorizations not only degenerate into the easy barbarism of the Philosophy of Culture. They also threaten to make urgent political questions opaque to historical investigation, as seen in Tosaka's criticism of metaphysical categories for understanding the war in East Asia:

For example, recently in Manchuria, there has been a breakdown between the Kwantung security forces and the prosecutor general of the consular authority. If we limit ourselves to philosophical—in this case, metaphysical—inquiry, it is perfectly acceptable to not problematize this incident at all. But this is a major current events issue, an actual problem [*jissai mondai*]*—one that cannot be ignored. If our daily lives were stripped of all current events and actual problems, they would practically have no content at all. Philosophy and literature must directly confront this basic, singular fact [jijitsu].*<sup>54</sup>

For these and other reasons, practical human action must be grounded in the specific social, cultural, and political mediations produced by the forces and relations of production that stamp the period with a specific character.

Tosaka's method also, of course, applies to the metaphysics of nature as an outside to politics or as the basis of an alternative history—explicitly, cultural history as an alternative to historical materialism. More than merely applicable; in “Professor Watsuji, Climate, Japan” (1937) Tosaka argues it is Watsuji Tetsurō's category of “climate” (*fūdo*) that is *the* key for the establishment of cultural history itself. For Tosaka, Watsuji's early works such as *Nihon kodai bunkashi*, *Koji junrei*, and both *Nihon seishinshi* and *Zoku nihon seishinshi*, rely on Nietzsche and Kierkegaard as part of Watsuji's “knee-jerk aristocratic contrarianism” (*kizokutekina ippan-teki hankōsei*) against the leftward drift of the Japanese student movement. Later works on primitive Buddhism supplement this project with phenomenological and hermeneutic strategies from Husserl and Heidegger, but still, in Tosaka's reading, Watsuji's thought remained incomplete and ungrounded. It is only with the discovery of “climate” in *Fūdo-*

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54. This call to pay attention to the legality of the Kwantung army was, in part, a criticism of Tanabe Hajime's Hegelian conception of space and empire (Tosaka Jun, “Nichijōsei ni tsuite,” in *TJ*, 4:138). This also forms the basis of Tosaka's interest in journalism; see Fabian Schäfer's essay in this volume.

*ningengakuteki kōsatsu* (1935) that Watsuji found a concept and method capable of simultaneously “rendering moot materialism and historical materialism” and establishing the uniqueness of Japanese (cultural) history.

Watsuji’s “climate” is no longer the early-Meiji neo-Kantian separation of nature and culture, but starts from the belief that specific places produced specific peoples. This move was a major methodological advance for Watsuji’s earlier theories of human “relationality” or “betweenness” (*aidagara*) and gave cultural history its purpose, “[f]or the question could now become, in just what way do peoples differ according to ‘Place! Place!’ [*tokoro, tokoro*]”? This is what was discovered in [the] ‘climate.’” As a theory of both place and ethics, “climate” appears to overcome subject-object dualism:

Professor Watsuji says the cold we feel is not an objective coldness that we, as subjects, feel: “When we feel cold, [we feel this way] because we already dwell within the exterior coldness.” In this understanding, the outside is neither a cold “thing” nor “object,” but is really ourselves. We are the entering and leaving [*Ex-istieren*] of the cold air. But when we communally feel cold, this outside cold air is not merely our-selves alone, more than this, the communal nature of the cold is none other than our mutual interrelation of betweenness [*aidagara*]. Our feeling cold is none other than understanding ourselves as coldness, understanding ourselves in our human between-ness. Seen this way, the phenomenon of our feeling cold, our own betweenness as cold, in other words, ourselves as human, is a self-understanding [*jiko ryōkai*].<sup>55</sup>

By the end, material nature is gone and Watsuji’s claimed objectivity is nothing more than the simultaneous perception of the same, a culturally specific intersubjectivity. In Watsuji, the subject-object dualism is overcome by displacing both into a specific place—a single, undifferentiated unity of a naturalized human and a humanized nature: a community of the same tied to a specific place: Japan.

“Climate”—as a combination of place and ethics, indeed a place-

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55. Tosaka, “Watsuji hakase, fūdo, nihon,” in *Sekai no ikkan toshite no Nihon*, 5:98. For a translation of Watsuji’s “A Phenomenology of the Cold,” see *Japanese Philosophy: A Sourcebook*, eds. James W. Heisig, Thomas P. Kasulis, and John C. Maraldo (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2011), 856–859.



based ethics—is an expanded version of the Heideggerian conception of nature as a human construction, but one much more rigorously tied to, indeed identified with, a specific nature. When the study of nature is identified with the study of the (group) self, hermeneutics becomes *the* model of all knowledge. Of course, hermeneutics had existed previously, but it had always been purely subjective; it had never been grounded because it had never been able to overcome “the fundamental thesis of materialism”: the objective existence of an exterior nature that existed prior to human representation.<sup>56</sup> That changed with the concept of “climate”: “‘Climate’ seems to be the preferred term of humanistic hermeneutics. Nay, for ordering nature or history by means of humanism or hermeneutics, the concept of climate is absolutely essential.” Overcoming the fundamental thesis of materialism provides cultural history with a starting point for a worldview that requires philology and hermeneutic interpretations in place of critical and scientific analyses. As Tosaka states, unlike Miki Kiyoshi, who tried to bridge Husserlian and Heideggerian concepts with Marxism, Watsuji was motivated from the start by anti-Marxism.<sup>57</sup>

By now it should be clear that Watsuji is able to work this “sorcery” (*majutsu*) only by overcoming both the everydayness and the *Da-Charakter* of nature. A nature understood in humanistic categories is the key to both establishing the uniqueness of Japan and attacking historical materialism (or science) as a method of understanding. Once the *Da-Charakter* of nature is overcome, nature, science, and history are replaced by hermeneutics and anything is possible:

Displacing humanism into a theory of climate first furnished cultural history with a method. And this is important: It also first allowed a counterattack on Marxist historical materialism, to slyly taint it as a lie. Why is this? Because “climate” established Japanese uniqueness, and so for the first time ever it was possible to paint that pastiche [*manga*], “the Russian-like Japanese” [*roshia teki nihonjin*] (!).<sup>58</sup>

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56. This can be found in nearly all materialist philosophies and makes up a large part of Lenin’s attack on idealism in *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* as well as in Tosaka’s own “History and Dialectics” (in Dilworth and Viglielmo, eds., *Sourcebook for Modern Japanese Philosophy*, 330–338).

57. *TJz*, 5:97.

58. *Ibid.*

Inside the hermeneutic circle described by “climate,” more “sorcery” is always possible:

The professor is not only able to easily do the impossible by searching for fish amongst the trees [*ki ni yotte sakana o motomeru*], he is the possessor of such occult powers he is even able to seek trees among the fish! Against any and every thesis, this sorcery is able to produce an antithesis.<sup>59</sup>

Tosaka does take some time to have fun with the absurdities produced by Watsuji’s hermeneutics of nature. If Watsuji is correct and the Japanese are the “monsoon” brand of climatic peoples, exhibiting its duality of passivity and passion, this can lead to some truly absurd conclusions: “Could we not then say that the Japanese national duality of *naniwa bushi* (traditional narrative songs) or lectures by the military broadcast over the radio in artistic programming somehow sprang forth from the meteorological duality of the typhoons in the weather report?” Ominously and obviously the real aim of Watsuji’s climate, Tosaka suggests darkly, is to be of service to reactionary social policy by providing a theory of (cultural) history to counter historical materialism. (We should not forget that Watsuji was on the editorial board that produced the soaring fascist absurdities of *Ko-kutai no hongei*, 1937). The reason for the relation to reactionary policy should also be clear. Tosaka asks in conclusion:

Why? Is climate really such an indispensable concept that it needs to be emphasized so vehemently? The fundamental answer to this question is exceedingly simple. It is an exceedingly vulgar *mystification* [*kiwamete hizokuna meishin*]: it is to say *that scientific analysis is inappropriate for analyzing the actual Japanese present*.<sup>60</sup>

Therefore, the unassailable conclusions of hermeneutic self-understanding and cultural logic we saw in Tosaka’s criticism of Nazi violence and book burning are justified by climate’s eternity, and indeed, *produced* from climate’s particularistic ethics.

The robustness of Tosaka’s space of everydayness becomes clear

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59. *Ibid.*, 5:98.

60. *Ibid.*, 5:102 (emphasis in original).

when the same method and categories used to critique Watsuji's *climate* are used to theorize the more materialist concept of the *environment*. When applied to our environmental crisis, Tosaka's critique of fascist metaphysics yields unexpected critiques of Deep Ecology and certain kinds of wilderness ethics. It also suggests a way of considering modern pollution as the historically specific result of everyday capitalist practices of nature structured by the commodity form.

Briefly, then, I would like to explore how the space of everydayness might be turned on the complex interrelations of nature, society, and politics. I would suggest it was partly the experience of industrial pollution in the 1890s that caused Japanese activists to reexamine both the radical empiricism of the late nineteenth century and the neo-Kantian separation of the natural and human sciences. Early antipollution activists like Tanaka Shōzō, Arahata Kanson, Kurosawa Torizō, Ishikawa Sanshirō, and others realized pollution was revealing previously unrecognized natural and social relationships, threatening the political freedoms won in the Popular Right and Liberty Movement (*jiyūminken undō*) of the 1870s. The mutual penetration of humans and nature brought into relief by the pollution problem undermined faith in the autonomous individual of Meiji liberalism. After 1900, as a wide range of Japanese thinkers increasingly identified humanity as at once implicated in and alienated from nature, it became clear that new forms of ecological and social knowledge were required.<sup>61</sup>

For many, the human-nature relationship was recaptured not in materialism, but in Taisho personalism/vitalism (*seimeishugi*). But the price of this human-nature reconnection was the loss of materiality as vitalism was expressed in a dematerialized "life force" of nature—often identified with the sexual drive—an immanent force that ran through one's body. In expanding human consciousness out into a dematerialized nature, a nature possessing its own ethics, vitalism comes close to the understanding of the human-nature relationship described by Deep Ecology. This should not be too surprising as Deep Ecology is often infused with Heideggerian and Mahayana Buddhist concepts, familiar Tosaka targets. Deep Ecology seeks the solution to the environmental crisis through overcoming an an-

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61. See Robert Stolz, *Bad Water: Nature, Pollution, and Politics in Japan 1870–1950* (Durham: Duke University Press, forthcoming).

thropocentric worldview by an empathetic “wider identification” of the self with nonhuman nature.<sup>62</sup> Though vitalism’s nature as “life force” led to interesting literary and artistic creations, it also authorized questionable political ideologies of escape to nature. Further, dematerializing nature left Taisho vitalism particularly unequipped to address real, material environmental problems such as pollution, a phenomenon that resists reduction to mere representation and acts on our bodies whether or not we even cognize it—an “intransitive object of knowledge” that is the same regardless of our knowledge of it.<sup>63</sup> Indeed, contrary to Watsuji or Deep Ecology’s celebration of nature, in the 1950s having the nature of Minamata Bay coursing through one’s body was precisely the problem.<sup>64</sup>

Imagined either as transcendence or immanence, by positing a nature devoid of human presence in opposition to history, Taisho vitalism and Deep Ecology, like Watsuji, violate the requirements of the material, spatio-temporal boundedness of the space of everydayness.<sup>65</sup> Tosaka’s method proscribes Buddhism’s and Deep Ecology’s direct, or immediate

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62. See Bill Devall and George Sessions, *Deep Ecology* (Salt Lake City, UT: G. M. Smith, 1985); also Michael E. Zimmerman, *Contesting Earth’s Future: Radical Ecology and Postmodernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), especially Chapters 1 and 3.

63. Roy Bhaskar, *The Possibility of Naturalism: A Philosophical Critique of the Contemporary Human Sciences*, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 1998). See also Brett Walker, *Toxic Archipelago: A History of Industrial Disease in Japan* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010).

64. This refers to the methyl-mercury poisoning of Minamata Bay by Chisso Corp. from the 1940s–1970s. Industrial effluent discharged into the bay moved up the food chain through fish in higher and higher concentrations (bioaccumulation), resulting in horrific and widespread mercury poisoning throughout the region. For a narrative of the problem, see Timothy S. George, *Minamata: Pollution and the Struggle for Democracy in Postwar Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University East Asia Center, 2002).

65. In light of Tosaka’s reading of Watsuji, it is more than a little disturbing to see Watsuji appealed to as a positive example in postwar environmental ethics; see, for example, J. Baird Callicott and Roger T. Ames, eds., *Nature in Asian Traditions of Thought: Essays in Environmental Philosophy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989). Further, Tosaka’s space of everydayness sheds some light on the Deep Ecology–Social Ecology debate, especially Social Ecology founder Murray Bookchin’s criticism of Deep Ecology as eco-fascism. Still, as we shall see, Tosaka’s theory of capitalist spatial practices of nature also suggests that Social Ecology’s model of an ideal ecological community is likely far too local to be adequate to the environmental crisis. For a summary of the Social Ecology–Deep Ecology debate, see Zimmerman, Chapter 4; for Social Ecology’s visions, see, for example, Murray Bookchin, *The Ecology of Freedom: The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy* (Palo Alto, CA: Cheshire Books, 1982) and Janet Biehl and Murray Bookchin, *The Politics of Social Ecology: Libertarian Municipalism* (Montreal: Black Rose, 1998).

identification with the whole. In other words, and in contrast to much environmental ethics, there is all the difference in the world between saying “everything is connected” and “everything is One.”<sup>66</sup> By historicizing nature, and thereby foreclosing the possibility of an escape from politics, Tosaka’s method guards against the pessimism of Weber, Heidegger, or even his student, Marcuse, each of whom saw the everyday as flattened into a totally administered existence of inauthenticity. Tosaka’s three-dimensionality of history also remains closer to Marx and Walter Benjamin in allowing the present’s very historicity to be the source of revolutionary inspiration.

The space of everydayness is even more helpful when, following environmental theorists such as John Bellamy Foster, Bruno Latour, Henri Lefebvre, and David Harvey, we recapture the original Marxist definition of production as a metabolism of nature and society. The multiple temporalities and spatial scales that construct the space of everydayness as a specific site of production and reproduction are more adequate to grasping pollution as just such a moment of production. Recent materialist environmental thought seems to be approaching a similar understanding of nature, for example, in the description of a two-mile-thick cloud of pollution over Southern Asia in 2002 (“The Asian Brown Cloud”) as “a visible sink of material flows that bind[s] economics, resources, people, and pollutants across molecular, local, regional, and global scales.”<sup>67</sup> Combining the inescapable materiality and historicity of the space of everydayness with the theory of nature-society metabolism of environmental thought makes visible to theory a historically specific human-nature relationship constituted by daily (capitalist) practice. Is the collapse the bluefin tuna population the result of an anthropocentric vocabulary? Maybe. But it is surely also the space of everyday capitalist practice that forces together the incompatible spatio-temporalities of the tuna’s distribution and reproductive cycle,

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66. See David Harvey, *Justice, Nature, and the Geography of Difference* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1996), 49–58, and Golley, *When Our Eyes No Longer See*, 58, 70.

67. Gregg Mitman, Michelle Murphy, and Christopher Sellers, “Introduction: A Cloud Over History” in *Landscapes of Exposure: Knowledge and Illness in Modern Environments*, Gregg Mitman et al., eds., *Osiris* 19 (2004): 5; see also Henri Lefebvre, *Introduction to Modernity*, trans. John Moore (London: Verso, 1995), 132–156; John Bellamy Foster, *Marx’s Ecology* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000); and Harvey, *Justice, Nature, and the Geography of Difference*.

the unevenness of global warming, the speed of industrial trawlers, human foodways, and the discount rate.

Though in this essay I have not laid out the social mediations that operate in and define the “bounds of necessity” that make up the space of everydayness, once combined with a metabolic theory of production, Tosaka’s method grasps the environmental crisis as a function of the historically specific nature-society metabolism produced by the real subsumption of nature under relative surplus value—itself a temporal category measuring capitalist wealth.<sup>68</sup> This would also suggest that the solution to the environmental problem lies in the self-conscious creation of new, non-capitalist *daily practices of nature* across multiple temporal and spatial scales, opening the way for a revolutionary environmental praxis. It further opens the way for writing environmental history that is no longer descriptive or a mere supplement to better-known histories but a critical political intervention in the (global capitalist) present. As the environmental crisis grows, environmental history may emerge as *the* task of historical writing and political criticism. If the idealization and ethicization of the natural environment was the original sin of reactionary politics in pre-war Japan, it may be that strict adherence to a spatio-temporal materialism in the study of nature is the path to a progressive social and natural science. Though he may have developed a basis for a historical materialism that includes the environment in a fundamental way, Tosaka did not survive the war to turn his theory on postwar capitalism and Minamata—that task has fallen to us: here, now.

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68. I have tried to do something like this elsewhere; see Stolz, *Bad Water*, especially the Conclusion.

# The Actuality of Journalism and the Possibility of Everyday Critique

Fabian Schäfer

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In an article first published in 1934 in one of Japan's largest newspapers, the *Yomiuri shinbun*, Tosaka Jun frankly demanded that philosophy “must be quotidian!”<sup>1</sup> This critique of contemporary academic philosophy in Japan was aiming at what he called the philosophical “snobs” (*zokubutsu*)<sup>2</sup> of the 1920s—first and foremost Martin Heidegger and his adherents in Japan—who, even if dealing in their philosophies with “everydayness” out of dissatisfaction with the idealism that dominated the universities, did so merely by describing everydayness in a negative way in terms of *Verfall* (fallenness) from “authentic everyday life” (*honrai no seikatsu*).<sup>3</sup> Similar to Adorno's critique of Heidegger's philosophy published in the 1960s, Tosaka criticized that this “jargon of authenticity,”<sup>4</sup> which translated everydayness “implicitly” into a “theological” (*shingakuteki*) concept and thereby postulated the existence of an “authentic everydayness” that transcends the real everydayness of the “proletarian masses.”<sup>5</sup> For a

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1. Tosaka Jun, “Nichijō-sei ni tsuite,” in *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1966), 4:136–141 (hereafter cited as *TJz*).

2. *Ibid.*, 136.

3. *Ibid.*

4. Theodor W. Adorno, *Jargon der Eigentlichkeit. Zur deutschen Ideologie* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1964).

5. Tosaka, “Nichijō-sei ni tsuite” (On Everydayness), in *TJz*, 4:136.

“pure philosophy” of that ilk, which “detaches itself from everydayness by means of abstraction,” philosophical examination of everydayness depraves into a mere “leisure activity,” similar to “salarymen singing No-chants” in their spare time.<sup>6</sup>

This deeply rooted disappointment with contemporary philosophy’s lack of engagement with actual problems in the face of growlingly fascist tendencies in the Japanese and German societies shared by both thinkers was similarly expressed by Adorno already in his inaugural lecture presented on the occasion of his appointment as lecturer (*Privatdozent*) of philosophy at the University of Frankfurt in 1931. Bearing the laconic title “The Actuality of Philosophy” (*Die Aktualität der Philosophie*), his lecture questioned philosophy’s general claim to totality, thereby anticipating the famous formula that the whole is always the untrue, which he developed in his later work, *Minima Moralia* (1950). According to Adorno, philosophical knowledge about reality can only be “true” as long as it succeeds in taking into account the historical conditions that brought about this particular knowledge. Philosophy, to use his words, “persistently and with the claim of truth, must proceed interpretively without ever possessing a sure key to interpretation.” Therefore, “it must always begin anew” because “[a]uthentic philosophic interpretation does not meet up with a fixed meaning that lies behind the question, but lights it up suddenly and momentarily, and consumes it at the same time.”<sup>7</sup> To Adorno:

it just is not the task of philosophy . . . to portray reality as “meaningful” and thereby justify it. Every such justification of that which exists is prohibited by the fragmentation in being itself. While our images of perceived reality may very well be *Gestalten*, the world in which we live is not; it is constituted differently than out of mere images of perception. . . . The idea of interpretation [of reality] does not mean to suggest a second, a secret, world that is to be opened up through an analysis of appearances.<sup>8</sup>

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6. Ibid.

7. Adorno, *Jargon der Eigentlichkeit*, 31.

8 Ibid. Adorno—explicitly referring to Walter Benjamin—described the most urgent undertaking of contemporary philosophy as “not to search for concealed and manifest intentions of reality, but to interpret unintentional reality, in that, by the power of constructing figures, or images (*Bilder*), out of the isolated elements of reality it negates (*aufhebt*) questions, the exact articulation of which is the task of science” (ibid., 32).



For Adorno, only dialectical materialism possessed the necessary “earnestness” (*Ernst*) to ensure that “the answer does not remain mistakenly in the closed area of knowledge, but that praxis is granted to it.” Put differently, it was only materialism that could enable philosophers to “reconstruct” the questions of existence from actual reality and to convert these interpretations into philosophical practice and thereby comply with Marx’s task “to change the world” instead of merely interpreting it.<sup>9</sup>

Tosaka would have agreed with these two most important features of what Adorno’s colleague at the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research Max Horkheimer later explicitly termed “critical theory”—namely its relatedness to the actual situation and the dialectic relationship of theory and praxis.<sup>10</sup> Tosaka, understanding materialism just like the proponents of the Frankfurt School as the orientation of theory toward revolutionary practice, also realized that not only academic philosophy but “academism” in general had departed from the actual reality by confining itself to the separation of “true knowledge” (i.e., “scientific” knowledge) from “common sense” in the sense of *doxa* since its very beginnings in the Platonic academy. Through its disciplinization and its narrow focus on “true,”—that is, “scientific,” knowledge—the academy never gained a position from where it “related [itself] to the quotidian and current problems of common society”; instead, it dealt with “more persistent and fundamental problems by trying to solve them one by one through passing them on and on.” To Tosaka, the problems of the academy were thus essentially “not current, but traditional.” Moreover, he argued that research at the academy was not primarily undertaken because “a certain science bears a certain political—sociohistorical or practical—value, but because science has a value as such.”<sup>11</sup> Therefore, Tosaka assumed that modern academism has developed into something totally opposed to any preoccupation with worldly matters:

The academy separate[d] itself from its immediate relation to the world  
 . . . no matter how political or intellectual the respective science itself is.  
 The academy does not treat sciences as a view of the world [*sekaikan*],

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9. *Ibid.*, 34.

10. See Max Horkheimer, “Traditional and Critical Theory,” in *Selected Essays* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972).

11. Tosaka Jun, “Akademī to jānarizumu,” in *TJz*, 3:148–149; see also the translation of this essay in this volume.

but as a technique [*gijutsu*]. . . . It does not consider it necessary any longer to relate the technical specialization [of its single disciplines] to a worldview.<sup>12</sup>

Philosophy, Tosaka continued, “has resigned itself to the fact that it is not pursued philosophically—worldview-like—any longer.”<sup>13</sup> This was especially true of the purely phenomenological, idealist, and otherworldly nature of the “bourgeois philosophy” of the Kyoto School and his mentor, Nishida Kitarō. It belonged to the type of philosophy that Tosaka described as “interpretative philosophy” (*kaishaku no tetsugaku*), which had assumed the most peculiar shape of contemporary idealistic philosophy in Japan. Thus, contemporary idealistic philosophy lost its relatedness to the everyday and thus its actuality.

In its present stage, metaphysics assumes a shape where it puts forth a systematization of certain meanings or interpretations instead of a systematization of reality. Basically, the existence of reality is in fact actuality permeated by the principle of actual time. However, interpretative philosophy rids itself from this temporal principle of actuality. A philosophy not based on this principle of time is metaphysics. And metaphysics is naturally nothing but introspection. Philosophy of history, cultural philosophy, philosophy of life or philosophical theology, and most literary philosophies and theories—all are types of this interpretative philosophy.<sup>14</sup>

Nishida’s thought still somewhat resembled an avant-garde philosophy of the Meiji period in 1911, when his first book, *Zen no kenkyū* (*An Inquiry*

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12. Ibid., 149. Japanese postwar intellectual Maruyama Masao describes this process as “arcanization” (*misshitsu-ka*) of the Japanese university; see Maruyama Masao, “Kindai Nihon no chishiki-jin,” in *Maruyama Masao shū* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten), 249–250.

13. Tosaka, “Akademī to jānarizumu,” in *TJ*, 3:149. Like Tosaka, who believed that “the academy had separated itself from its immediate relation to any worldview” and who therefore treated science merely as an apolitical ‘technical’ way of dealing with things (see *ibid.*), Ernst Bloch warned that “the university has become the opposite of what it was once founded as because “ratio itself has retreated into the technical expediency of the single disciplines”; see Ernst Bloch, *Der unbemerkte Augenblick* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2007), 242.

14. Tosaka Jun, “Kaishaku-gaku no hyōka to hihan” (1936), <http://www.soc.nii.ac.jp/gslc/85kaisyakugakuhihan/tosaka.kaisyakugakunohyokatohihan.html> (accessed May 13, 2009).

into the Good, 1911), met the Zeitgeist of intellectuals, but its (and contemporary philosophy's in general) onward academization detached it from its "journalistic and progressive appeal" by being "corralled into the academic ivory tower."<sup>15</sup> In a similar way to the neo-idealist or phenomenologist philosophies in Germany criticized by Adorno, to Tosaka this kind of "bourgeois" philosophy thereby also lost its original mission to "arouse" the people "for the sake of truth."<sup>16</sup> In this sense, Tosaka concludes, Nishida's philosophy, though neither fascist nor feudal, was essentially "romantic" (*romantīku*) and "orthodox" (*seitō-teki*).<sup>17</sup> According to Nishida specialist Toshiaki Kobayashi, Nishida had (as he found in the works of Goethe or Novalis) the "typical romantic idea that conception or intuition respectively [*chokkan*] can be extended into a macro cosmos by means of the Gemüth [*gemyūto*]."<sup>18</sup>

No different than much of the rest of philosophy produced at academic institutions, Nishida's thought to Tosaka was an idealistic-metaphysical "bourgeois philosophy" that was merely an "ideational systematization and organization of fundamental concepts or categories of reality," an "interpretation of the world" (*sekai no kaishaku*), and therefore not interested in actual reality—to say nothing of possessing the impetus to change it.<sup>19</sup> Instead of "clarifying the real order of things," Nishida applies a clever "trick" (*teguchi*) that allows him "to establish and maintain an order of meaning (*imi no chitsujo*) corresponding with reality."<sup>20</sup>

## The Actuality of Journalism

As academic philosophy had detached itself from actual everyday reality, it was in journalism that Tosaka believed he had found an intellectual activity that, in its essential form, could fulfill the task originally destined for philosophy. In a newspaper article written for the *Yomiuri shinbun*, Tosaka insisted that "the common sense [understanding] of journalism is

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15. Tosaka Jun, *Nihon ideorogiron* (1977; Tokyo: Iwanami bunko, 2005), 39.

16. *Ibid.*, 235.

17. *Ibid.*, 240.

18. Toshiaki Kobayashi, *Denken des Fremden: Am Beispiel Kitaro Nishida* (Frankfurt am Main and Basel: Stromfeld / Nexus, 2002), 62.

19. Tosaka, *Nihon ideorogiron*, 239.

20. *Ibid.*, 21–22.

[too] narrow!” (*Jōshiki ni yoru jaanarizumu ha semai!*) Tosaka considers the commonsense understanding of journalism as too narrow because the term is only related to journalism’s most contemporary form, which is the bourgeois and capitalist mass press. To Tosaka, the most important feature of journalism lies in its actuality and the critique of the everyday. Journalism, Tosaka explains, from the outset had a different social function than academic philosophy since it was based on the “everyday life of the people” “inhabiting” a world that is “quotidian, social, external, and sometimes profane as well.” The interest of the common public in journalism is thus directed by its interest in current, not persistent, matters.<sup>21</sup> To Tosaka, already the etymological origin of the term “journalism” in the French word “*jour*” is indicative of this relationship.<sup>22</sup> Tosaka explains the particularity of journalism by comparing it with academism:

In contrast to academism, journalism, despite its internal antagonistic moments, is generally based on the principle of . . . actuality, a consciousness that originates in the activity of everyday social life [*nichijō shakai seikatsu katsudō*].<sup>23</sup>

Accordingly, the most distinct difference between journalism and academism can be found in the ways in which they view (and portray) the world. Other than philosophy, journalism “is an immediate expression of how people see the world. Within journalism, social circumstances [*sesō*] appear in a lively way.”<sup>24</sup> Apparently having in mind the great journalistic accounts of the social problems of the Meiji period, such as Matsuhara Iwagorō’s *Saiankoku no Tōkyō* (*In Darkest Tokyo*, 1893) and Yokoyama Gennosuke’s *Nihon no kasō shakai* (*Japan’s Lower-Class Society*, 1899), Tosaka concludes that journalism, based on its relatedness with the actual social circumstances and current matters, is, unlike philosophy or the academy in general, essentially related to what he describes as the “principle of everydayness” (*nichijōsei no genri*).

If seen from the perspective of this philosophy of everydayness, Tosaka can derive what he calls two fundamental functions of journalism—namely journalism as an instrument of daily news coverage (the “every-

21. Tosaka, “Akademī to jānarizumu,” in *TJz*, 3:147–148.

22. *Ibid.*, 147.

23. Tosaka Jun, “Shinbungenshō no bunseki” (Analysis of the Press Phenomenon), in *TJz*, 3:131.

24. Tosaka, “Akademī to jānarizumu,” in *TJz*, 3:148.

dayness” [*nichijō-sei*] of the press) and as an instrument of political and social criticism (the “politicality” [*seiji-sei*] of the press)—that could also counteract the negative aspects of contemporary academic philosophy.<sup>25</sup>

Regarding the former, Tosaka gives a typological and an etymological explanation of why the press was essentially linked to everydayness. The typological argument consisted basically of a linguistic homonymy between the widely accepted typology of the modern press that defined “actuality” as an essential characteristic of the newspaper business and his own philosophical idea of “actuality.”<sup>26</sup> According to Tosaka, the “actuality” of the press and the “actuality” of everydayness determine each other mutually: On the one hand, the experience of everydayness in modern societies depended to a certain degree on the daily frequency of newspapers; on the other, the daily appearance of the press was in principle determined by the succession of days. The second argument—as already mentioned—was etymological: The Japanese term *shinbun* (literally, “listening to the new”) originally did not convey the contemporary meaning of “newspaper” but of “news” (*atarashii mono*) or “novelty” (*shinki naru mono*).<sup>27</sup> Based on this etymological meaning, Tosaka concluded that the newness of the newspaper was necessarily based on the succession of days, since something can only appear as new if “it wasn’t already there yesterday.” In other words, something could only appear as new if the “the daybreak of another day” changed the perspective on things. Therefore, newness was preconditioned by the experience of everydayness;

25. Tosaka, “Shinbungenshō no bunseki,” in *TJz*, 3:131–134.

26. Tosaka was well informed about the contemporary discourses of *shinbungaku* and *Zeitungswissenschaft* in Japan and Germany. Proponents of this new academic field emerging in the 1920s typologized the newspaper by defining its most important features, namely periodicity (*Periodizität*, *teikikankō-sei*); publicity (*Publizität*, *kōgai-sei*); topicality/actuality (*Aktualität*, *jigi-sei*); versatility (*Vielseitigkeit*, *tahōmen-sei*); and commonality of interest (*Allgemeinheit des Interesses*, *kyōtsū-sei*); see Fabian Schäfer, *Public Opinion, Propaganda Ideology: Social Theories of the Press in Interwar Japan*, 1918–1934 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), 34–67. See also Yoshimi Shun’ya, “The Development of ‘Newspaper Studies’ as an Academic Discipline in the Discursive Space of 1930s Japan,” *Social Science Japan Journal* 5, no. 2 (2002): 199–214, for an account of this new discipline and the related discursive space in Japan.

27. In this respect, the etymological development of the term in Japanese is similar to that in German. The term *Zeitung* (newspaper) originally conveyed the simple meaning of “news” as well (cf. a quote from Friedrich Schiller [1781], *Die Räuber*, Act 2, Scene 2: “Er bittet, vorgelassen zu werden, er hab’ Euch eine wichtige Zeitung”). Only toward the end of the eighteenth century did the term acquire the meaning of “newspaper” in German.

only in the context of the “triviality of a mundane everyday life” could news appear as new or unusual and thus draw sensational attention.<sup>28</sup>

The latter fundamental function of the press, its “politicality,” becomes comprehensible against the background of Tosaka’s rather broad idea of politics. He understood politics not only as macropolitics, namely (bourgeois) parliamentary democracy, but in Aristotelian terms—as the most fundamental activity of man as a “political animal” (*zoon politikon*). To Tosaka, politics thus meant the “politics of the everyday.” This understanding enabled him to interpret critical discussion within the contemporary press as its politicality:

The press is political in both a narrow meaning—that of so-called politics—and a fundamental meaning—as a fundamental feature of social everyday life. It goes without saying that partisan papers are political in the narrower sense. But the fact that the general press is considered as an instrument of thought, public opinion, and social education represents nothing else but the politicality of the press phenomenon in the latter, fundamental meaning. Actually, notwithstanding how much the modern mass press focuses on news coverage, political matters in the narrower and fundamental meaning will still remain fundamental for this news coverage. Moreover, at least some people believe that most of the press articles are written from a socioeducational—namely political—perspective. For that reason, the newspaper is not merely an instrument of news coverage but must also be considered an instrument of criticism.<sup>29</sup>

Against this background, Tosaka can consider the political and social criticism of the press not just as a superficial cultural product of liberal-democratic modernity, but rather as something rooted deeper in the fundamental political character of the social life of humanity itself, namely on a level below class antagonisms. Tantalizing to the concept of micropolitics, Tosaka asserts that “everyday life, based on everydayness, has always as well possessed a political character.”<sup>30</sup> Accordingly, the representative governments of modern liberal-democratic societies remained

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28. Tosaka, “Shinbungenshō no bunseki,” in *TJz*, 3:131.

29. *Ibid.*, 133.

30. *Ibid.*, 132.

nothing but “domains that have detached [from] and alienated” the “fundamental and distinctive feature of social life.”<sup>31</sup> Based on his idea of the political character of everyday life, Tosaka claims that “basically every human being, in its capability as a human, is necessarily a journalist. In this sense, because humans beings are social animals, they are a journalistic existence [*jānaristo-teki sonzai*].”<sup>32</sup>

This definition of the function of modern journalism put forth here by Tosaka is particularly unique against the background of the debates over the role of a proletarian press among Japanese Marxists in the 1920s. At the two ends of the debate over the press and the role of a vanguard party were Yamakawa Hitoshi, the ideological leader of the Bolshevik faction of the Japanese Marxist movement, and Fukumoto Kazuo, Leninist and leading member of the Japanese Communist Party since his return from a government-sponsored study trip to Germany. On the one hand, Yamakawa, criticizing the “idealist revolution” (*kan’nen-teki kakumei*) of anarcho-syndicalist Ōsugi Sakae, proposed “a tactical solution to both the isolation of the vanguard [i.e., the Communist Party or the workers’ unions] from the masses and the political passivity and fickleness of both” in his famous 1922 essay “A Change in Course for the Proletarian Movement” (*Musan kaikyū undō no hōkō tenkan*). Peter Duus and Irwin Scheiner describe Yamakawa’s position of getting “into the masses” (*taishū no naka e*) as follows:

Even though the “movement must become more practical” in order to bring the vanguard and masses together through their mutual struggle, he hoped that the vanguard could raise the demands of the workers and persuade them to expand their goals. “Change of Course” did not signal, Yamakawa insisted, “a fall from the principle of revolution to reformism” but, rather, an accommodation to worker demands in order to build a “concrete” movement for the achievement of the final goal. The vanguard must therefore take its ideology to the masses, retain its revolutionary consciousness, and, he insisted, never dissolve within the masses.<sup>33</sup>

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31. Ibid.

32. Ibid., 156.

33. Peter Duus and Irwin Scheiner, “Socialism, Liberalism, and Marxism, 1901–31,” in *Modern Japanese Thought*, ed. B. T. Wakabayashi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 195.

On the other hand, despite departing from the idea of a spontaneous socialist revolution proposed by Ōsugi, in the eyes of Yamakawa's rival Fukumoto, Yamakawa's "change of course" didn't reach far enough. He accused Yamakawa of being an "economist" (or Kautskyan, in Fukumoto's words)—that is, someone who believes that economic struggle alone could lead to political transformation. Fukumoto also criticized Yamakawa's idea of a "united front party" (a proletarian party [*musan kaikyū seitō*] uniting peasants and workers) that not only organizes the various workers' movements, but also "serve[s] the broad democratic interest of the *lumpen*, all the unorganized, the colonial masses, the outcaste *burakumin*, and even the lower elements of the petty bourgeoisie." Fukumoto labeled such a party as "disastrous" and argued that "the proletarian movement must shift from trade union struggles to socialist political struggle." It was Fukumoto's opinion that only if the Japanese Communist Party, though still lacking an organic cohesion with the masses, became a "true vanguard party" and "veritable source of socialist consciousness" could a genuine proletarian class consciousness be created.

This debate over the different ways to create a common class consciousness and the role of the vanguard reverberated also in the discussion on the role of a proletarian press in the 1920s. While the two "Yamakawaists" Hayasaka Jirō and Aono Suekichi emphasized that the spontaneous consciousness of the yet unorganized proletarian "masses" should be elevated to a socialist class consciousness through a proletarian *mass press*, Fukumoto himself (under the pseudonym Hōjō Kazuo) and "Fukumotoist" Kadoya Hiroshi directly attacked Aono's and Hayasaka's view, defining the proletarian press as the all-Japanese *political organ* of the refounded Japanese Communist Party, which would help foster, by means of agitation, the national unification for class struggle under the exclusive guidance of the vanguard party.<sup>34</sup> It was particularly the latter camp that assimilated Lenin's view on the role of the press. Lenin, who had put forth his idea of the press already at the beginning of the twentieth century, identifying an "all-Russian" press in his two famous essays "Where to Begin?" (1901) and "What Is to Be Done?" (1902) as the key instrument

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34. See Kōuchi Saburō, "Taishō gōki no 'musan kaikyū' shinbun-ron," in *Shinbungaku hyōron* 18 (1969): 76–87; and Yamamoto Akira, "Taishō makki no musan kaikyū shinbun ronsō o megutte," in *Kirisutokyō shakai mondai kenkyū* 14/15 (March 1969): 130–158.



of the unification of the proletariat in Russia—namely as that of “collective propagandist,” “agitator,” and “organizer.” Naturally, this idea put forth by Lenin was related to the problem of how to create a common class consciousness among the many separated groups of workers, unions, and the Bolshevik party. Kadoya, quoting from Lenin’s article entitled “On Freedom of the Press,” published in 1917, claimed that “‘freedom of the press’ in bourgeois society means freedom for the *rich* systematically, unremittingly, daily, in millions of copies, to deceive, corrupt and fool the exploited and oppressed mass of the people, the poor.”<sup>35</sup> Consequently, he envisaged the proletarian press as a necessary antidote to the overwhelming power of the capitalist bourgeois mass press. Yamamoto Takeshi is right to conclude that this “viewpoint originated from an understanding that divided society into two different networks of communication, a bourgeois and a proletarian one.”<sup>36</sup> Eventually, this dichotomous perspective was the climax of the fruitful discussion on the meaning of the proletarian press in the 1920s and defined the Japanese Communist Party’s position on the matter of the press for the time being.<sup>37</sup>

However, Tosaka, never having been an official member of the Communist Party himself, developed a much more refined Marxist theory of the press from outside the exclusive Communist theoretical discourse. Based on his idea of the political character of everyday life, Tosaka claimed that “basically every human being, in his capability as a human, is necessary a journalist. In this sense, the fact that humans beings are social animals, they are a journalistic existence [*jānaristo-teki sonzai*].”<sup>38</sup> Thus, by endowing human beings with the capability to think critically (which Tosaka had defined as one the most important functions of journalism), form their own consciousness, and be actively involved into the process of communication, he also offered an approach to overcome the problematic dichotomy between the intellectual elite and the unconscious

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35. Vladimir Lenin, “On Freedom of the Press,” in *Lenin Collected Works* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1977).

36. Yamamoto, “Taishō makki no musan kaikyū,” 155.

37. The organ of the Japanese Communist Party, the *Musansha shinbun*, was founded already in 1925. Upon being banned temporarily, it was eventually absorbed by the new organ of the Japanese Communist Party, *Akahata*, in 1932. Though not comparable to the daily Japanese mass press of the time, the initial issue of the newspaper had a circulation of 25,000 copies; see Yamamoto, “Taishō makki no musan kaikyū,” 146–147.

38. Tosaka Jun, “Jānaristo-ron” (1935), in *TJz*, 4:156.

masses of orthodox Marxism that underlay the debate on Proletarian newspapers in the 1920s.<sup>39</sup>

In this sense, Tosaka's perspective is thus closer to that of Yamakawa, Aono, and Hayasaka, or even Ōsugi Sakae, who, more or less, shared the belief that the masses will rise to a revolutionary consciousness themselves through the everyday struggle in a capitalist society. This becomes even more obvious in Tosaka's discussion of the terms *minshū* (the people) and *taishū* (the masses).<sup>40</sup> Tosaka considered the former a key concept of bourgeois democratic liberalism as a "nonreliable scientific concept."<sup>41</sup> According to Tosaka, the idea of "the people" was something that was merely "imposed on the majority of the people who, in fact, possessed heterogeneous political and cultural tendencies." It was particularly the "popularization" (*minshū-ka*) of "knowledge" and "opinion"—originally "the exclusive privileges of the rulers or the ruling class"—by means of the bourgeois mass press that the unitary idea of "the people" assumed its shape.<sup>42</sup> However, this superficial "popularization" of knowledge and opinions must be differentiated from a "true" popularization. Tosaka juxtaposed this idea of a passive "popularization" (which, in fact,

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39. Interestingly, Walter Benjamin, on the other side of the globe, proposed a very similar idea:

With the increasing extension of the press, which kept placing new political, religious, scientific, professional, and local organs before the readers, an increasing number of readers became writers—at first, occasional ones. It began with the daily press opening to its readers space for "letters to the editor." And today there is hardly a gainfully employed European who could not, in principle, find an opportunity to publish somewhere or other comments on his work, grievances, documentary reports, or that sort of thing. Thus the distinction between author and public is about to lose its basic character. The difference becomes merely functional; it may vary from case to case. At any moment the reader is ready to turn into a writer. As expert, which he had to become willy-nilly in an extremely specialized work process, even if only in some minor respect, the reader gains access to authorship. In the Soviet Union work itself is given a voice. To present it verbally is part of a man's ability to perform the work. Literary license is now founded on polytechnic rather than specialized training and thus becomes common property" (Walter Benjamin, *Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit, dritte Fassung* [*The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*], [Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1936], 29).

40. Baba Shū'ichi has pointed out the uniqueness of Tosaka's conception of the masses in a number of articles; see Baba Shū'ichi, "Taishū-ka no ronri to shūdan-teki shutai-sei: Tosaka Jun, Nakai Masakazu, Miki Kiyoshi no ba'ai," in *Komyunikēshon no tenkei*, eds. F. Etō, S. Tsurumi, and A. Yamamoto (Tokyo: Kenkyū-sha, 1973).

41. Tosaka, "Shinbungenshō no bunseki," in *TJL*, 3:137.

42. *Ibid.*

is merely a “vulgarization” [*zokuryū-ka*] of knowledge and opinion through bourgeois journalism) that presupposes the existence of an already “accomplished (*dekiagatta*) *minshū*” whose individuals already formed “a unity through their qualification as a *minshū*” with the idea of an active or spontaneous cultural and political massification (*taishū-ka*).<sup>43</sup> In this regard, Tosaka’s understanding of “massification” resembles Rosa Luxemburg’s dialectic of spontaneity and organization.<sup>44</sup> Tosaka—similar to Luxemburg—described “massification” as the spontaneous formation and organization of (political) masses:

[Massification] is *true popularization*. . . . The [idea of] the mass is not imposed. . . . Masses organize themselves—*politically*—into masses. In accordance with this [political] *massification*, *massification* is also the—*cultural*—introduction of news coverage and criticism into the already massed and massifying mass. . . . If a (cultural) massification of knowl-

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43. *Taishū* (the masses) was one of the most disputed terms of the 1920s and 1930s. Marxists like Yamakawa Hatoshi or Fukumoto Kazuo in the 1920s politicized the term by identifying the masses as the potential subjects of a proletarian revolution. However, by then the word had already deeply penetrated everyday language to the extent that leftist intellectuals like Takabatake Motoyuki (1886–1928), in a 1928 special issue of *Chūō kōron* entitled *Taishū bungei kenkyū*, lamented that since the Great Kantō Earthquake in 1923, *taishū* had “started to circulate in a fashionable way and it became trendy to refer to a bargain sale at a *shiroko* (sweet red-bean soup) restaurant as ‘*taishū* day’ instead of [using the word to refer to] mass arts and mass performances”; see Takabatake Motoyuki, “Taishūshugi to shihonshugi,” *Chūō kōron* (April 1928). For a comprehensive discussion of the different uses of *minshū* and *taishū* in connection to the mass media, see Ariyama Teruo, “‘Minshū’ no jidai kara ‘taishū’ no jidai e: Meiji makki kara Taishōki no media” (“From the Time of ‘the People’ to the Time of ‘the Masses’: The Media from the Late Meiji Period to the Taishō Period”), in *Mediashi wo manabu hito tame ni*, ed. T. Ariyama and A. Takeyama (Tokyo: Sekai shisō-sha, 2004).

44. Luxemburg described this dialectic most lucidly in the program of the *Spartakusbund*:

The masses must learn how to use power by using power. There is no other way. We have, happily, advanced since the days when it was proposed to “educate” the proletariat socialistically. Marxists of Kautsky’s school are, it would seem, still living in those vanished days. To educate the proletarian masses socialistically meant to deliver lectures to them, to circulate leaflets and pamphlets among them. But it is not by such means that the proletarians will be schooled. The workers today will learn in the school of action” (Rosa Luxemburg, “Unser Programm und die politische Situation. Rede auf dem Gründungsparteitag der KPD [Spartakusbund]” [Our Program and the Political Situation: Speech Given on Foundation Day of the KPD (Spartakusbund)], in *Politische Schriften*, ed. O. K. Flechtheim [Frankfurt am Main: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1966], 200).

edge and opinions does not go hand in hand with a (political) organization of a mass into a mass, this massification . . . would not be able to put into effect the instructional and socioeducational—cultural—side of the social function—the ideological function—of the press.<sup>45</sup>

Tosaka's critical differentiation between "the people" (*minshū*) and "the masses" (*taishū*) becomes even more comprehensible against the background of contemporary mass phenomena such as strikes or riots and Tosaka's criticism of the dominant sociological discourses of that time. On the one hand, Tosaka seems to have had in mind the great spontaneous political mass unrest and demonstrations such as the rice riots of 1918 and mass protests for suffrage at Hibiya Park in 1922 when emphasizing the activity and spontaneity of a mass.<sup>46</sup> On the other hand, Tosaka's critical perspective on the mass-psychological differentiation between "the mass" and "the public" that dominated Japanese sociological discourses of the time was also decisive for his differentiation between "the people" and "the masses." In a short essay entitled "Meditations on Public Opinion" (*Yoron no kōsatsu*), Tosaka explicitly referred to Gabriel Tarde's work *L'opinion et la foule* (*Opinion and the Crowd*).<sup>47</sup> Here, Tosaka criticized Tarde's differentiation (which had already acquired a paradigmatic status in Japan) between "the crowd"—"a collection of psychic connections produced essentially by physical contact"—and "the public"—a "purely spiritual collectivity, a dispersion of individuals who are physically sepa-

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45. Tosaka, "Shinbungenshō no bunseki," in *TJz*, 3:137.

46. Katō Shūichi describes the nature of these upheavals in the following manner:

Deprived of the possibility of participation in politics in the system, the Japanese urban mass had no other choice than desperate revolt or resignation. The former was typical in the case of the "Rice Riots," which broke out in 1918 when the price of rice went up because of wartime speculation. In one sense the riots were a revolt of the urban masses against authority. They were completely spontaneous, occurring all over the country, violent, utterly unorganized and without any leadership (Katō Shūichi, "Taishō Democracy as the Pre-Stage for Japanese Militarism," in *Japan in Crisis: Essays on Taishō Democracy*, eds. B. S. Silberman, H. D. Harootunian, and G. L. Bernstein [Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1974], 230).

Nevertheless, according to the leader of the Dai Nihon Rōdō Sōdōmei Yūaikai, Suzuki Bunji: "The rice riots made the people aware of their own power and gave them self-confidence as a proletarian class" (see Ishida Takeshi, *Nihon no shakai kagaku* [*Social Sciences in Japan*] [Tokyo: Tokyo daigaku shuppan-sha, 1984]).

47. Tosaka, "Yoron no kōsatsu," in *TJz*, 3:211.

rated and whose cohesion is entirely mental.”<sup>48</sup> To Tosaka, Tarde thereby introduced and facilitated a normative demarcation between an educated public (the bourgeoisie), those who were able to enunciate their opinions in the modern press, and a passive and other-directed crowd (i.e., the proletarian mass). In particular, he rejected the inherent assumption of this dichotomization that individuals unable to express or discuss their opinions through the organs of public opinion (the bourgeois press) did not participate in political debate. It was Tosaka’s opinion that the proletarian masses found a unique mode of expressing their opinions exactly through the spatial accumulations (such as mass demonstrations, strikes, or rallies) that were disparaged by Tarde’s distinction. By referring to German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies, who hinted at the necessity to differentiate between a “published” opinion and the “public” opinion in his book *Kritik der öffentlichen Meinung (A Critique of Public Opinion, 1922)*, Tosaka criticized the contemporary pejorative meaning of the mass, which was based on bourgeois sociological concepts that merely equated “public opinion” with “published opinions” and thereby either disparaged or entirely ignored alternative opinions that were not published in the bourgeois mass press.<sup>49</sup>

### “Philosophical Journalism” and “Journalistic Philosophy”

As already mentioned, Tosaka, in a way that was very similar to the proponents of the early Frankfurt School, saw the most fundamental meaning

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48. Gabriel de Tarde, *On Communication and Social Influence: Selected Papers*, trans. T. N. Clark (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 53.

49. Tosaka, “Yoron no kōsatsu,” in *TJz*, 3:208–209. Much of Tosaka’s argument and “scientific” method was enunciated by socialist Ōyama Ikuo already in the 1920s:

Concepts like “people” [*kokumin*], “public interest” [*kōri kōeki*], “national morality” [*kokka dōtoku*], and “national spirit” [*kokumin seishin*], which had been so much a part of Ōyama’s analytical vocabulary in the 1910s, he now regarded as inventions of the dominant bourgeoisie to deflect resistance by the working class. In adopting a theory of conflict to explain politics, Ōyama saw himself as trading a sentimental or idealistic position for one that was “empirical” and “scientific” (Duus and Scheiner, “Socialism, Liberalism, and Marxism, 1901–31,” 181).

For a precise discussion of Ōyama’s viewpoint, see Hans Peter Kümmel, “Ōyama Ikuo: Sein Beitrag zum japanischen Sozialismus” (Ōyama Ikuo: His Contribution to Japanese Socialism), PhD diss., University of Hamburg, 1962; and Peter Duus, “Ōyama Ikuo and the Search for Democracy,” in *Dilemmas of Growth in Prewar Japan*, ed. J. W. Morley (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971).

of both journalism and philosophy in the critique of the everyday. According to Tosaka, “only if we consider the function of criticism as the fundamental issue of journalism, can one problematize and analyze the relationship between journalism and philosophy, namely the philosophical meaning of journalism or the journalistic necessity of philosophy, respectively.”<sup>50</sup>

On the one hand, the similarity between the criticism of journalism and philosophy is based on his entirely unique interpretation of “philosophy” (*tetsugaku*). To Tosaka, “philosophy,” which was basically equated with the study of Western thought in prewar Japan, should not restrict its studies to these “traditional” (Tosaka would also say “metaphysical”) fields but must refer to “thought” in more general terms, namely as “culture as a whole.” Despite what are usually considered as “mere formless ideas” (*katachi no nai tada no kannen*) or consistent theoretical frameworks (“social thought”), respectively, Tosaka understood “thought” as ideas that are based on concrete experiences of social reality.<sup>51</sup>

The task of philosophy, according to Tosaka, is to deal with these various forms of thought/culture, including everything from literature to sports. He further enunciated this conception of thought and philosophy in his later book *Shisō to fūzoku (Thought and Customs)*, published in 1936. In this book (which includes much of his journalistic cultural critique published in the most important intellectual journals and daily newspapers of his time and dealing with topics from literature, film, education, and sports to religion), Tosaka understands all customs as a form of thought in the aforementioned manner. Based on this assumption, he states that “one can sensitively extract the breath and movement of the various strains of thought in a period from the bends, distortions, and wriggles of customs in the world.” Moreover, to him, customs, as well as thought/culture/ideas, have to be understood as social phenomena that “symbolize the worldview of the period, of generations, and of social class.”<sup>52</sup>

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50. Tosaka Jun, “Jānarizumu to tetsugaku to no kōshō,” in *TJZ*, 4:146. Tosaka admits that people might object to philosophical and journalistic critiques that do not have exactly the same meaning. Although people might agree with the fact that the critique is the common ground of journalism and philosophy, journalistic critique is a “critique of current matters” (*fiji-teki hihyō, jihyō, Zeitkritik*), while philosophical critique is “theoretical” or “based on principles” (*genri-teki*).

51. Tosaka writes: “If one tries to think of it more openheartedly,” one understands that thought refers to “ideas with a certain tendency, being developed and scrutinized” through the “absorption” or “expulsion” of “certain experiences” (see *ibid.*, 147).

52. Tosaka Jun, “Shisō to fūzoku” (*Thought and Customs*), in *TJZ*, 4:271.

Critical theory, as it was understood by Horkheimer, was oriented toward radical social change, in contradistinction to “traditional theory”—that is, theory in the positivistic, scientific, or purely observational mode. To Tosaka as well, customs cannot be studied from a “sociological” viewpoint that “extracts and presents ordinary shared symptoms and phenomena of society as if they were essential elements of society.” (Tosaka explicitly refers to Kon Wajirō’s approach of “modernology” in this regard.) Thought and culture need to be analyzed from the perspective of the “method of historical materialism,”<sup>53</sup> because only then could many of the contemporary customs (thought/culture/ideas) be understood as “highly complex phenomena that bear a kind of secondarily manipulation/operation” (*fukuji-teki sōsa*) of something different. To Tosaka, these ideological manipulations were based on the selfish and individualized morals (*dōtoku*) of modern bourgeois and capitalist society.<sup>54</sup> Philosophy, as Tosaka envisaged it, thus needed to turn into a “science of thought” (*shisō no*

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53. *Ibid.*, 275. Tosaka explains the difference between sociology (*shakaigaku*) and materialist social science (*shakai kagaku*) as follows:

Let us assume that sociology represents the science to deal with the universal phenomena of society; the preceding materials and theories it uses are nothing else but findings borrowed from the preceding sciences. Rather than claiming a dominant position toward the other sciences on the basis of its universality, sociology ends up being a parasite of these sciences. . . . Contrary to sociology, Marxist social science in the sense of a materialist view of history is a unification of all social sciences. But Marxist social science is not a mere unification or synthesis; it is the dialectical unification of all fields. Marxist social science does not depend on the findings and theories of the various social sciences . . . that are merely bourgeois sciences. Rather, it offers a theory through which the theories of other fields become valid in the first place. In fact, the materialist view of history and Marxist social science, respectively, are a unified science and not the knowledge of a certain field [*ichi-bunka no gaku*]. . . . Not to mention the theory of Marxist social science—contrary to sociology—always implies a political practice . . . Marxist social science in the sense of a materialist view of history is not merely a transformation of economics into politics, it is a transformation of political theory into political practice (see Tosaka Jun, *Shakai kagaku-ron*, in *TJz*, 3:376–378).

54. Similar to Georg Lukacs on literary criticism, Tosaka claimed that it was the egoistic and subjective moral presented in modern literature that reflected these morals:

First of all, morality (morality as a literary category) is not separate from the self (the self = self-awakening = self-awareness). When the object becomes a moral problem (which is to say that it becomes literary) that object is of course seen through the eyes of the author or the reader following the author, but the author becomes an increasingly unique “self” or “I” the more the author has eyes that are popular and universal (Tosaka, “Shisō to fūzoku,” in *TJz*, 4:300).

*kagaku*)<sup>55</sup> that performs a “scientific critique” (i.e., based on historical materialism) of these manipulating morals that whitewash actual antagonisms within society. Only then, Tosaka concluded, can philosophy comply with its task to unfold “an effect upon society” by questioning and unveiling the ideological nature of received customs and morals.

Tosaka asserts that his conclusion that the “*raison d’être* of philosophy for society lies in its scientific function,” namely criticism, is also true for journalism.<sup>56</sup> Despite its distortion from its original function of everyday critique due to its contemporary capitalist shape (to be discussed below), even in the 1930s Tosaka held journalism in a much higher esteem than contemporary academic philosophy. It was particularly as a result of the so-called fall of the university (*daigaku no tenraku*)—when many universities dismissed their professorial staff in large numbers, forcing many (mostly leftist or liberal) intellectuals and young unemployed academics to change their jobs and switch to the profession of journalist—that a sphere of “theoretical journalism” or “scientific journalism” (a “theoretical force standing in opposition to the academy”) assumed its shape. Tosaka obviously refers here to a number of incidents at Japanese universities that triggered a long struggle over academic freedom in the 1920s and 1930s—namely the cases of Morito Tetsuo (Morito Jiken) in 1920 and the “three Tarōs” (San Tarō) at the end of the 1920s in which all four professors of economics at Tokyo Imperial University were forced to resign because of their support of Marxist viewpoints.<sup>57</sup>

[T]he authority and the prestige the academy once possessed are ignored, and it faces the fate that its achievements are assessed and criticized at length by journalism. Theoretical journalism has assumed an “intercollegiate” [*intākarejji*] shape through the [academic] talents within print capital—literally, the only driving force within journalism—having enhanced journalism’s quantitative sphere of influence constantly. Nowadays, the

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55. Tosaka, “Jānarizumu to tetsugaku to no kōshō (On the Relationship between Journalism and Philosophy),” in *TJz*, 4:147.

56. *Ibid.*, 148.

57. For an insightful discussion of these two and other subsequent cases, see Byron K. Marshall, *Academic Freedom and the Japanese Imperial University, 1868–1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992). On the purges of Marxist scholars and left-wing students, see Henry D. Smith, *Japan’s First Student Radicals* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972).



academy is forced to acknowledge theoretic journalism as its quantitative competitor. To the same extent that the academy has lost its theoretical power, journalism has gained new theoretical importance.<sup>58</sup>

In a certain sense, not only Tosaka himself, but also many of the critical intellectuals of the Frankfurt School, can be considered proponents of what Tosaka optimistically termed the “intercollegiate shape” of a “theoretical journalism.” They envisaged the development of a new form of journalism whose proponents would penetrate and analyze the actual conditions of everyday existence and thereby carry out a task that philosophy had neglected because of its focus on idealist philosophy. In this sense, they shared the idea that journalism might counteract the crisis of academic philosophy. Walter Benjamin, Siegfried Kracauer, and Ernst Bloch—all leading writers for the most prestigious German left-wing liberal newspaper, *Frankfurter Zeitung*, until their emigration in 1933—basically shared Tosaka’s general belief in journalistic forms of expression.<sup>59</sup> Benjamin, like Tosaka, appreciated journalism’s inherent possibility of social criticism. Kracauer also believed in the possibilities of daily journalism, particularly in the prestigious *Frankfurter Zeitung*, which still provided a forum for critical journalism up to the early 1930s. According to Helmut Stalder, Kracauer’s journalistic style can be described as “philosophy in newspaper columns”; his intention was to use the *Frankfurter Zeitung* “as a place of philosophic debate, an instrument of social enlightenment and change.” Especially after his embrace of Marxism in the 1920s, Kracauer’s journalistic writings turned into “philosophical bombshells,” exploding within the “fissures” of society.<sup>60</sup> In a letter to Ernst Bloch, Kracauer

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58. Tosaka, “Akademī to Jānarizumu,” in *TJz*, 3:146.

59. Even Adorno regarded more journalistic forms of expression to be adequate to counteract the lacking actuality of philosophy. He described the “philosophical essay,” which “ties onto the limited, contoured and unsymbolic interpretations of aesthetic essays,” as the most appropriate form of expression to match his demand for a philosophy related to actual reality and praxis; see Theodor W. Adorno, “The Actuality of Philosophy,” in *The Adorno Reader* (Oxford and Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2000), 38. Not only Adorno but also his close friend Bloch saw in Benjamin’s work an adequate answer to philosophy’s disengagement with concrete actuality; in particular, see Ernst Bloch, *Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 4 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp), 368–371. Bloch considered the philosophic style—in particular, the improvisations, sudden changes of perspective, particularizations, and fragments—of Benjamin’s 1928 collection of aphorisms entitled *Einbahnstraße* (Bloch called it the “revue form of philosophy”) to be an immediate consequence of the collapse of the closed schemes and systems of idealistic philosophy.

60. Helmut Stalder, *Siegfried Kracauer: Das journalistische Werk in der “Frankfurter Zeitung,” 1921–1933* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2003), 15.

described his intellectual production as that of an “anarchist” who “blows up the accustomed images of the everyday” in order “to assemble the images meaningful from the pieces.”<sup>61</sup> He understood his work as a form of political praxis, using the intellect as “an instrument for the destruction of all mythical assets around and within us.”<sup>62</sup> Similar to Tosaka, he saw the basis for this approach in “dialectical materialism, which takes its aim for action from the analysis of the given situation.”<sup>63</sup> One may conclude that Kracauer’s, Tosaka’s, and Benjamin’s understandings of the use of journalism were similar in their proposed connectedness to the everyday as tools of social criticism based on dialectical/historical materialism and the opinion that journalism could be considered an instrument of social enlightenment and change.

### Distorted Journalism: Sensationalism and “Culinary Criticism”

In Germany and Japan, despite some exceptions such as the *Frankfurter Zeitung* in Germany and Japanese semiacademic intellectual journals such as *Chūō kōron* or *Kaizō* (which supported the formation of an “inter-collegiate” intellectual sphere envisaged by Tosaka), the condition of bourgeois-capitalist societies had already strongly distorted journalism’s and academism’s fundamental nature of criticism and news reporting. In Japan, on the one hand, the contemporary academy lost its “fundamental and basic character” because it was based on the “political system” of the modern university, which had to be considered an “organ of the [yet semi-feudal] state.” On the other hand, journalism had become disconnected from its critical, actual, and quotidian attitude through what Tosaka termed the influence of the “economic nature of the print capital [*shuppan shihon*].<sup>64</sup>

With regard to the press, Tosaka remarked that the aforementioned social functions of journalism, that is, news coverage and criticism, were actually already mingled with the economic function of profit maximization. He concluded that

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61. *Ibid.*, 16.

62. Siegfried Kracauer, “Minimalforderung an die Intellektuellen,” in *Siegfried Kracauer: Schriften* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1990 [1931]), 353.

63. *Ibid.*, 352.

64. *TJz.*, 3:150–151.

as for contemporary journalism, the newspaper and the press, respectively, represent nothing but the enormous commodity of a capitalist society. Accordingly, the newspaper became a modern commodity that possesses a particular (journalistic) ideological use-value [*shiyō kachi*]. Bourgeois newspapers and the bourgeois press, respectively, have become completely subordinated to the economical relations of the capitalist system, for instance, free competition and the monopolization of the news commodity. This, in fact, turned into the most fundamental . . . social function of the—contemporary—bourgeois press.<sup>65</sup>

Put differently, the modern newspaper business turned news—the philosophical “actuality” of journalism proposed by Tosaka—into a mere commodity. For the sake of higher sales, “the news-value became abstracted from its practical use-value, . . . just as the exchange-value of commodities became abstracted from its practical use-value.” Sensationalism, instead of objective and accurate news coverage, transformed journalism into a modern capitalist enterprise. It was especially during the press’s coverage of “the Sino-Japanese War, the Russo-Japanese War, and the World War,” which “perfectly matched the evocation of primitive instincts and an underdeveloped national consciousness,” that the publishing houses were able to undergo their rapid economic and technological progress. Tosaka sarcastically concluded that nowadays “criticism is completely suppressed by the sensational and sentimental reports on the Olympics or the arrival of a zeppelin.”<sup>66</sup>

Moreover, the sound political and social criticism that once shaped the unique (political) character of the newspaper (particularly the *ō-shinbun* of the Meiji period) had been replaced by the superficial “newspaper personality” (*shinbunshikaku*, *Zeitungspersönlichkeit*) that was merely expressed by the respective selection of news and methods of news coverage. Tosaka particularly criticized here the ideological function of the motto of the modern press, of “impartiality and nonpartisanship [*fuhen futō*],” to which modern journalism had subscribed itself in order to sell their products to a greater readership.<sup>67</sup> Thus, he suggested, modern jour-

65. Tosaka, “Shinbungenshō no bunseki,” in *TJz*, 3:138.

66. *Ibid.*, 138–139.

67. For a discussion of the ideological character of *fuhen futō*, see Ariyama, “‘Minshū’ no jidai kara ‘taishū’ no jidai e,” 241–242. Ariyama argues that it was a fundamental problem of the motto of “impartiality and nonpartisanship” that it did not offer certain norms for

nalism finally lost its function to discuss political subjects and degenerated into merely “impassive organs of news coverage” (*reisei na hōdō kikan*).<sup>68</sup> The intention behind the creation of a “newspaper personality” was purely economic. Somewhat akin to the brand of a commodity, the journalists and publishers hoped that this personality would leave “an immediate impression on the reader” and thereby assure a “fixed readership” of subscribers. However, Tosaka complained, since the newspaper was required to adhere to this personality in the times to come, journalism lost its progressivity and adaptability. The press restricted itself to a “moderate social consciousness and political view” in order to avoid disturbing the “indolent social consciousness” of its fixed readership. Tosaka concluded that in such rare cases “when the bourgeois press advocates the interests of farmers or workers . . . in nine out of ten cases this advocacy represents nothing else but this stage of a commodified news coverage.”<sup>69</sup>

Similarly, Walter Benjamin had realized as well that the mainstream press had already lost this critical function in the mid-1930s. This was especially true of literary criticism, an important cultural product of journalism, which had degenerated into negative scorches of literary works or superficial summarizations of book contents—far from what Tosaka understood as “scientific” critique. In this respect, Benjamin would have agreed with Tosaka that despite “advertisements for new books . . . in the national newspapers, [being] of great importance to intelligent readers,”

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journalists to judge their own reporting. Despite claiming to be “neutral,” even the liberal newspaper *Ōsaka asahi shinbun* had declared an antirevolutionary and pro-emperor stance since the 1920s. Thus the mass media imposed on itself a system of unenforced self-censorship. Historian Carol Gluck describes this process as follows:

At the same time the distinctive editorial stance that still characterizes Japanese journalism emerged more decisively. It combined frequently crusading anti-establishment positions—often as critical of the parties as of the government—with an ever-stronger insistence on “impartial and non-partisan” editorial policy. Even the aggressively progressive *Ōsaka asahi shinbun* adopted the motto that it had earlier avoided and became *fuhen futō* in the aftermath of government suppression in 1918. But this combination of conscientious opposition with the sometimes Herculean effort to remain editorially unaligned was not a product of censorship alone. Rather, like the censorship itself, it was a legacy of Meiji politics and ideology: the stance of opposition was inherited from the long popular crusade against the government, and that of non-alignment from the cumulative effects of the identification of party politics with civically unworthy partisanship (Carol Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985], 233).

68. Tosaka, “Shinbungenshō no bunseki,” in *TJz*, 3:135.

69. *Ibid.*, 139.

their “interest in the literary criticism and presentations of new books in the feuilletons [*bungei-ran*, the literary and arts column] is extremely low.”<sup>70</sup> Both condemned the “commodification” of criticism as much as that of news as it restricted its place to the merely superficial presentation of new books instead of sound literary social criticism. Benjamin, in his note on “False Criticism” (*Falsche Kritik*), remarked that “it was the aimlessness and nondecisiveness of its review activity by which journalism has bankrupted criticism.”<sup>71</sup> According to his friend playwright Bertolt Brecht, any reflective and strategic concept of criticism had been replaced by the individual taste of the journalist, which Brecht dubbed “culinary criticism.”<sup>72</sup> Criticism had degenerated into “mere description,” in particular through its separation from the so-called *belles lettres*.<sup>73</sup>

### Conclusion: “Eastern” Marxism and Tosaka as a Nonconformist Intellectual

It is generally known that the importance of the study of culture for an adequate Marxist understanding of society lies at the core of what has been termed Western Marxism. Western Marxists have elaborated variations on the theories of ideology and superstructure that are only thinly sketched in the writings of Marx and Engels. According to Douglas Kellner, this intellectual formation, which has also been termed cultural Marxism, employed Marxian theory to analyze cultural forms in relation to their production, their imbrications with society and history, and their impact and influences on audiences and social life.

As we have seen, due to the contextualization of critical thinkers in Germany, many features of cultural Marxism developed under comparable conditions in Japan, namely as an antipode to the dawn of fascism in the 1930s. It was particularly Tosaka Jun who realized this condition on an unprecedented stage of global capitalism—one dominated by growing monopolies and increasing governmental intervention in the economy—

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70. *Ibid.*, 127.

71. Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1991), 6:176.

72. Bertolt Brecht, *Werke*, ed. Werner Hecht (Berlin: Aufbau-Verlag, 1988), 11:250, 434–435.

73. *Ibid.*, 403.

and developed Marxist theory in a similar direction. In one of his last essays published before he was forced to cease his writing in 1938 due to the pressure of the fascist regime, Tosaka basically acknowledged that Japanese society was based on the logic of global capitalism as much as other capitalist countries in the world “because the productive forces [*seisanryoku*] of the world have developed to a level at which almost all productive technologies and productive mechanisms share aspects that are common internationally.”<sup>74</sup> Moreover, Tosaka also realized that it was tremendously important to analyze the particular cultural/ideological formations that were produced through this capitalist transformation of society. As we have seen, he considered materialism the only legitimate scientific method to analyze these cultural formations. This was particularly true for fascism because only by applying the universal theory of Marxism to the particularization and essentialization of Japanese culture by the proponents of Nipponism would one be able to understand this process.

If one asserts that Japan was unable to completely digest European civilization or that foreigners have never understood the Japanese spirit, we need to remember that this is the demagogy of those people who do not know the significance of the translation of logic [of global capitalism] and who have the habit of employing the logic of ancient India or China to contemporary Japan without compunction.<sup>75</sup>

Despite the idea that theory was understood not as the antithesis to praxis but as something that is embodied by it—an idea that was described at length here with regard to Tosaka’s comparably critical stance toward the positivistic, scientific, or purely observational mode of academia and philosophy or sociology in particular—Tosaka launched a similar attack on the rigid understanding of the basis and the superstructure proposed by orthodox Marxists by recognizing ideology (“superstructure”) as part of the foundations of social structure (morals, aesthetics) and the respective role of the mass media. Tosaka’s critical approach to the mass media in relation to his theoretical development of the concept of ideology is of great importance. In a similar way to the nondogmatic Marxian thinker Antonio Gramsci, whose idea of the “integral state” not only incorporates

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74. Tosaka, *Nihon ideorogiron*, 59.

75. *Ibid.*

political society (the sphere of political institutions and legal constitutional control), but also civil society, Tosaka developed a conception of the mass media and institutions of education as “ideological agents” comparable to French Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser’s theory of “ideological state apparatuses” (excluding Althusser’s concept of interpellation, of course).<sup>76</sup> To Tosaka, as well as to Althusser, who based this approach on Gramsci’s thought, the state does not include the repressive state apparatuses such as the military, police, courts, and prisons or the ideological state apparatuses such as religion, education, literature, art, sports, and the mass media. This necessarily implied a broadening of the concept of ideology from merely political worldviews to aspects of culture, thought, or customs. Moreover, Tosaka’s critical approach to the mass media approaches the problem of capitalist mass media in a similar fashion to critical thinkers in Europe. In general, critical media theory can be divided into two prominent approaches: the “mass manipulation paradigm” (Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse, Habermas) and the “emancipatory paradigm” (Brecht, Benjamin, Enzensberger). Tosaka’s thought combines both approaches. On the one hand, he emphasized the ideological character of bourgeois journalism that was based on the capitalist structure of the newspaper business. On the other, however, he also emphasized that journalism potentially can have two positive social functions—namely critical and informative (news).

Similar to that of his contemporaries of the Frankfurt School in Germany, Tosaka’s critical and antiacademic stance led to social and professional marginalization. However, the reason for this marginalization was not only based on external factors, such as the growing repression by the fascist state, but also on a dissatisfaction with the contemporary university and the role of bourgeois-liberal intellectuals in general. The members of Yuibutsuron Kenkyūkai (or Yuiken, the Materialism Research Association) of which Tosaka was a leading member, all agreed that the time of neutral and presuppositionless scholarship—as it was supposedly practiced within the modern university and philosophy in particular—had passed.

After his dismissal from Hōsei University, Tosaka was unable to find regular employment at a Japanese university. He shared this marginalized academic position with most of the other members of Yuiken. Despite this

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76. Tosaka, “Shinbungenshō no bunseki,” in *TJZ*, 3:121.

status, however, he and his comrades remained upbeat—at least in the moderate period of the early 1930s.<sup>77</sup> Oka Kunio states:

None of the committee members [of Yuiken] had official connections with any academic institutions, and naturally we suffered from lack of funds. We always equally shared the expenses, such as office rent and equipment. . . . Despite fascist pressures and our inefficient methods, preparations for the establishment of Yuiken progressed steadily. . . . It was clear that, even in difficult times, there were supporters of our movement. From the very beginning, the thought police kept a close watch on our activities. . . . But we were not afraid of the authorities, since we had no academic status.<sup>78</sup>

Such “nonconformity,” as Alex Demirović labeled this distinct feature of the members of the Frankfurt School, resulted in activities in a “quasi-academic sphere.”<sup>79</sup> Tosaka shared this belief in what he termed an “inter-collegiate” sphere between journalism and academism (philosophical journalism/journalistic philosophy), actively participating through his semiacademic journalistic writing as much as the proponents of the Frankfurt School in Germany.

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77. For a precise account of the historical development of thought control in prewar Japan, see Richard H. Mitchell, *Thought Control in Prewar Japan* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976).

78. Oka Kunio, “Society for the Study of Materialism: Yuiken,” in *Science and Society in Modern Japan: Selected Historical Sources*, eds. S. Nakayama, D. L. Swain, and E. Yagi (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1973), 151.

79. Alex Demirović, *Der nonkonformistische Intellektuelle: Die Entwicklung der Kritischen Theorie zur Frankfurter Schule (The Non-conformist Intellectual: The Development of Critical Theory into the Frankfurt School)* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1999).



# The Dialectic of Laughter and Tosaka's Critical Theory

*Katsuya Hirano*

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Tosaka Jun wrote the short essay “Laughter, Comedy, and Humor” when the Japanese military government was tightening its grip on the freedom of expression, in particular on proletarian literature and Marxist writings. From 1931 to 1934, the government carried out a series of persecutions against Marxist associations and organizations: The Japanese Association for Proletarian Culture, formed in November 1931, was outlawed in March 1932; the Association for Japanese Proletarian Writers was pressured to announce its disbandment in February 1934; and the Institute of Proletarian Science was dissolved in April of the same year. While these repressive policies were in progress, the government established the Institute for National Spirit and Culture in July 1932, a state effort that later culminated in the official movement for the Total Mobilization of National Spirit in 1937 under the Kono cabinet. In light of this repressive trend, Tosaka’s brief allusion in “Laughter, Comedy, and Humor” to the late-Tokugawa regulation of popular literature and art and the ways in which popular cultural expressions responded to it with mordant wit and satire was surely not coincidental. He likely saw homologous political conditions reflected in Tokugawa literary restrictions and his own repressive present. In Tosaka’s writings on laughter and comedy, his underlying concern was to theorize clearly the possibility of culture—or, more precisely, literary work as a praxis of critique or intervention—at a time when

the basic right to freedom of speech threatened to disappear under the increasingly authoritarian militarist regime.

This essay's task is therefore to consider what Tosaka saw in literature that could make it a possibility of critical praxis and how he articulated it as a materialist thinker. This goal requires an understanding of the place the essays on laughter, comedy, and humor occupy in the larger context of his critical theory, in particular other writings on popular custom (*fūzoku*) and morality (*dōtoku*). Furthermore, given the depth and generality of his theoretical reflections, the importance of Tosaka's thought should not be considered limited to the particular historical circumstances of 1930s Japan. Rather it is precisely because of its sustaining relevance to our own times, our cultural and political situation, that our engagement with his thought remains imperative. It is in this spirit that I refer to other Marxist thinkers—namely Althusser, Jameson, and Volosinov—whose work continues to shape our critical thinking and presents a profound similitude to Tosaka's materialist formulation of culture.

Tosaka's distinct contribution to the theory of laughter lies in his exposition of where the "criticality" of laughter comes from. To find this criticality, he first identifies three different rhetorical forms that represent the logical structure of laughter: humor, irony, and critique. The difference between the three forms reflects how the relationship between affirmation/"frontside" and negation/"backside" plays out and the degree to which *paradox* guides this relationship. (Tosaka is not very clear about the distinctions between humor and the other rhetorical forms as he sometimes sees irony and critique as a variation of humor.) For instance, "humor is situated in the contemplation of the synchronous, interim indeterminacy of the affirmative and the negative—a thing's frontside and backside"; further, "it takes the affirmative side in attempting to regulate its relationship with the negative." In this case, paradox exists only to the extent that humor must pretend to take the side of the negative for it to maintain the interim indeterminacy that produces laughter. Thus "humor" does not prompt frontal engagement with reality. It is rather what Tosaka calls "an escape from general reality."

"Irony, in contrast, takes the negative side in attempting to regulate its relationship with the affirmative." But "irony must appear to favor the affirmative" in such a way that "disparagement is thus for the sake of praise, and praise for the sake of disparagement." In irony, paradox therefore

appears in the form of sarcasm or mockery (“jesting or witticism”). In this regard, irony does engage with reality but never analyzes that reality, swallowing it instead.

The most active paradox occurs in a form called “critique.” Critique is where “negative and affirmative become identical and people can arbitrarily put forward either one.” This is a form of paradox in which, “the frontside is expressed by the backside, the backside is expressed by the frontside,” both sides in existence *at the same time*. The simultaneity of this form of paradox distinguishes it from the logical structure of humor; with humor, the relation of the backside of a thing—negativity and wickedness—to the frontside is completely passive. (“The betrayer is enveloped in a peaceful ambiance, the betrayer plays the role of nothing more than the fool.”) But critique brings forth the backside of a thing in which the negative associated with the backside “is tinged with an aggressive quality.” “The logic of laughter gradually makes plain the viciousness, negativity, and criticalness that is inherent in its logicity. Thus, ultimately as a consequence, from within the affirmative, a thing must come to contain the negative. This is what constitutes *criticality*.” In other words, the criticality of laughter emerges from a dialectic in which the affirmative gives birth to the negative *within its own logic*. Tosaka sees the critical effect of negation—the aggressive quality of laughter—in the maximum application of the logic of paradox.

Since Tosaka recognizes the importance of Henri Bergson’s exposition of laughter as a social occurrence, it is useful here to consider, for our purpose of identifying Tosaka’s distinct contribution, the ways in which Tosaka’s and Bergson’s ideas intersect and diverge. Bergson argues that rigidity and inelasticity in thought and behavior work as the major catalyst for laughter. Bergson writes: “The laughable element . . . consists of a certain mechanical inelasticity, just where one would expect to find the wide-awake adaptability and living pliability of a human being.”<sup>1</sup> To take the case of Tokugawa Japan to which Tosaka briefly alludes as exemplary for Bergson’s theory of laughter and humor, by the laws of decorum carefully formulated by the official discourse of status distinctions, different social groups had their prescribed styles of manners and speech. These laws of decorum represented a range of clearly delineated social types and

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1. Henri Bergson, *Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic*, trans. Cloudesley Brereton and Fred Rothwell (Boston: Green Integer, 1998), 11–12.

supported a concept of order that asserted its cohesion and totality by claiming to predict, know, and catalog the behavior of all kinds and types of people. A parade of stereotypes afforded popular writers and artists in Tokugawa Japan the opportunity to poke fun at the inelasticity and lack of living pliability evident in the normative discourses and behaviors prescribed to reflect the official values of eternal harmony, unity, and stability of society. When satirist and comic writers such as Hiraga Gennai (1728–1779) and Shikitei Sanba (1776–1822) mocked contemporary Confucian scholars, Buddhists, physicians, nativist poets, and others for their uncritical devotion to antiquated knowledge and disjointed sensibilities, they were referring precisely to what Bergson calls “mechanical inelasticity.” Or again when the Edo ukiyo-e master Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849) satirized the rigidity of the hierarchy between the samurai master and his retainers in his woodblock prints or when the satirist and ukiyo-e artist Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797–1861) mocked the intended splendor of the daimyo procession as an image of lifeless uniformity, the absence of “living pliability” was also the central theme. Bergson’s formulation helps us to further elaborate these writers’ and artists’ work of parody:

“Gestures would never repeat themselves . . . [they] become imitable only when we cease to be ourselves . . . our gestures can only be imitated in their mechanical uniformity, and therefore exactly in what is alien to our living personality. To imitate any one is to bring out the element of automatism he has allowed to creep into this person.”<sup>2</sup>

Bergson’s insight may seem to impart a dimension of social analysis to Tosaka’s theory of laughter by spelling out social conditions—not the logic—that bring forth laughter. For Bergson, laughter is the recognition of “automatism” or the lack of “living personality”—the morbid symptom of social stagnation and paralysis effected by the rigid rules, regulations, and rituals that sustain a static social order.<sup>3</sup> The thrust of Bergson’s explication follows the general theory of laughter as a form of recognizing incongruence between premise (life/living personality) and reality (automa-

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2. *Ibid.*, 34.

3. It should be noted that Bergson’s notion of personality refers specifically to the problem of automatism in the positivistic intellectual current of the late nineteenth century. Although Tokugawa society’s conventionalized behavior had nothing to do with this problematic, it had the problem of automatism under a different kind of register: rigid norms and rituals.

tism). Any incongruence can be perceived as comical as long as it pertains to that between what is alive and what is mechanical.

Looking deeper into Tosaka's exposition of the logic of laughter, it becomes clear that it does not in fact share Bergson's idea of incongruence as the catalyst for laughter. For Tosaka, it is not incongruence—a static gap or disjuncture—but contradiction/paradox, an active inner logic and its dynamics that give rise to laughter. Bergson's nondialectical thought is primarily concerned with identifying the location of humor in the general character of humanity. For Bergson, laughter is merely an interim phenomenon that flashes up in an ephemeral moment of recognizing the irony or bitterness of truth or reality. He explains this in the image of a child playing on the beach on which the receding waves have left behind a residue of foam:

The child . . . picks up a handful, and the next moment, is astonished to find that nothing remains in his grasp but a few drops of water. . . . Laughter comes into being in the self-same fashion. It indicates a slight revolt on the surface of social life. . . . It, also, is a froth with a saline base. Like froth, it sparkles. It is gaiety itself. But the philosopher who gathers a handful to taste may find that the substance is scanty, and the aftertaste bitter.<sup>4</sup>

Bergson's definition corresponds to only one kind of laughter for Tosaka, one which signifies an uneasy compromise between affirmation and negation—that is, “an escape from general reality.” Tosaka's dialectical formulation of laughter allows him to explicate different degrees to which the paradoxical logic of laughter engenders and exerts a critical, thus evaluative, engagement with a received reality. As seen above, Tosaka argues that humorous laughter is the product of an indeterminate middle position between the affirmation and the negation of what is laughed at. “Humor” sustains this indeterminate position by demonstrating affirmation through the appearance of negativity (this corresponds to Bergsonian laughter). In doing so, it avoids direct engagement with the reality (what Tosaka calls “the feeling of escapist satisfaction”). But when the negative impulse of laughter prevails over the logic of affirmation, abolishing the balance of an indeterminate middle position and becoming the principal catalyst for

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4. Bergson, *Laughter*, 182.

laughter, humor takes on the form of irony or satire.<sup>5</sup> It transforms the humorous laughter of absurdity into the laughter of mockery. But since mockery is still a form of demonstrating negativity via the appearance of affirmation, it occupies and speaks from a peripheral position in reality. Although it addresses reality, that reality retains its centrality. Thus “reality is not being analyzed in the least; rather, it is being swallowed in its actual condition.”

Only laughter in its most active form of paradox can work as the most distinct logic of critique, Tosaka concludes, because “the most important condition of laughter lies in its function of exposing.”<sup>6</sup> The most effective use of laughter-as-paradox is discernible, for example, in the works of superb critics, virtuoso discoverers of paradox, and masters of irony and humor such as Marx, Lenin, and Erasmus—thinkers in whom social criticism constitutes the key component of their discourse. They contain the element of what Tosaka calls the negation of reality or “humor tinged with aggressiveness,” a shifting focal point from humorous comedy to critical comedy.<sup>7</sup> Critical comedy actively engages with reality in the manner of analysis. The function of negation in this sense pertains to the Freudian definition of it as a form of realism. Negation, according to Freud, “is a way of taking cognizance of what is repressed; indeed, it is already a lifting of repression, though not, of course, an acceptance of what is repressed.”<sup>8</sup> What is at stake in this Freudian negation is the logic of exposure of the repressed. Just like Freud’s celebrated concept of “the return of the repressed,” negation brings to the fore what is repressed by lifting away the dominant perception of reality. Indeed, the essence of critical laughter engendered through comic art and literature lies precisely in its function of exposing the mechanism of the authoritative discourse that represses certain truth or aspects of reality.

For Tosaka, laughter is then primarily a weapon of critique of social reality. Laughter unhinges all transcendental claims and pretensions and makes them confront their inner contradictions. Nothing escapes this critical convulsion of laughter. Recognizing and exposing incompleteness

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5. Tosaka Jun, “Warai, kigeki, oyobi yūmoa,” in *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1966), 4:75 (hereafter cited as *TJz*); see also Christopher Ahn’s translation in this volume.

6. *Ibid.*, 76.

7. *Ibid.*, 75.

8. Sigmund Freud, “Negation,” in *Pelican Freud Library*, vol. 2, ed. A. Richard, trans. J. Strachey (London: Penguin, 1984), 437–438.

and finitude in all human beings, laughter dissolves all the limits, boundaries, and inhibitions. It is for this reason that, to follow Baudelaire, authoritarian regimes or dogmas tend to see laughter as a threat to their existence by denouncing it as “generally the attribute of madness” and implying “a greater or lesser degree of ignorance and weakness.”<sup>9</sup> Although they also acknowledge the finitude and deficiencies of humanity, they see them mainly as the exclusive attribute of the weak or the delirious. By representing laughter as the salient symptom of ignorance, madness, and stupidity, dominant ideology seeks to contain its criticality and open-endedness.

Therefore, because he pays attention to the dialectical logic of laughter and the various degrees to which the logic manifests itself, Tosaka breaks from the Bergsonian position that reduces laughter’s evaluative engagement with the given social reality to a generality of static human nature (a sociopsychological reading of laughter). Since Tosaka is primarily concerned with laughter’s active relationship with the social reality, Bergson’s nondialectical sociopsychological formulation of laughter is alien to him. To further understand Tosaka’s approach, especially why he viewed literature as possessing a unique force in the politics of culture, we must look into his general theory of popular custom and morality.

In discussing popular custom as the essential aspect of everyday life, Tosaka defines it as follows:

Popular custom is a product of the fundamental structure of society. . . . It is never simply a society’s custom, convention, or consensus in the ordinary sense of these words. Nor is it what is generically called a trend. Popular custom not only designates the fact that the majority of people tend to do a certain thing together, but it also reveals that this very fact works as a regulatory force, as a moral and ethical authority, and thus incites the pleasure of conformity among those who follow it. . . . Fashion, demeanors, appearance, sexuality, and mannerisms of ladyship and gentlemanship are all connected consistently with the ritualism and solemnity of the ruling power. They all carry specific moral implications. . . . This is why the disruption of popular custom is seen as antisocial . . . and it raises great concerns for political moralists and police authorities. . . . It is dan-

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9. Charles Baudelaire, *Selected Writings on Art and Literature*, trans. Patrick Edward Charvet (London: Penguin Books, 1992), 143.

gerous to accept the common assumption that popular custom is an expression or a manifestation of the [collective] thought of the nation or “nationality” as if it were a seamless whole organically formed by an agglomeration of individuals. . . . In other words, the point I am making here is a seemingly commonsensical conclusion that popular custom carries with it a moral essence and constitutes a particular form of thought.<sup>10</sup>

Tosaka's suggestion that popular custom should be understood as the product of social structure is of great importance. By arguing against the commonly held view that popular custom constitutes a natural basis for collective thought and national community, Tosaka rejects an organicist theory of culture and proposes a social understanding of it. If the organicist theory renders popular custom into a foundation of national community, into a reified category of collective identity, Tosaka seeks to locate it in a complex ensemble of social relations or structures to underscore the regulatory force the custom/culture exercises via its moral and ethical authority. Tosaka's observation of the close link between popular custom and “the ritualism and solemnity of ruling power”—as well as his formulation of the custom as carrying “with it a moral essence and constitut[ing] a particular form of thought” that “incites the pleasure of conformity among those who follow it”—comes very close to the ideological effects theorized by Althusser and Antonio Gramsci. (It suffices to say here that ideology for Althusser and Gramsci does not mean a form of deception, lie, or false consciousness about the social reality, but rather both discourse and practice working as a constitutive material force of reality—the “lived experience.”)

The unique quality of popular custom is precisely its efficacy to provide social structures with “exuberant or ugly flesh and skin” and to help them finish the final task of putting on costumes through “(f)ashion, demeanor, appearance, sexuality, and mannerism of ladyship and gentlemanship” as the given reality in the form of “common sense” (Gramsci) or “the unconscious” (Althusser).<sup>11</sup> In other words, popular custom is a complex field where relations of power—“essences of social structure”—not only manifest themselves as a surface phenomenon, but also are actu-

10. Tosaka Jun, *Shisō to fūzoku* (Tokyo: Tōyō Bunko, 2001), 15–16, 20–21.

11. Antonio Gramsci, “The Study of Philosophy,” in *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 325–333; Louis Althusser, *For Marx* (London: Verso, 1969), 233.



ally lived by people on a daily basis as an unconscious or commonsensical reality.

Yet this outwardly given reality of popular custom does not always remain self-evident, according to Tosaka, as it is constantly evaluated through diverse and divergent literary representations of the custom, especially its perceived moral authority. Literature then is a site where the regulatory forces of popular custom and its underlying morality are examined and analyzed. Tosaka continues:

But this conclusion alerts us to a unique characteristic of the social reality of popular custom—a characteristic that not only calls attention to the social and historical nature of the popular, but also illuminates the theoretical importance of the logic and function of literature with regard to the concepts, representations, and categories [the literature deploys]. . . . The attractiveness of romance novels, for instance, stems from the realistic tone that the narrative of the story creates. This realism speaks to how the narrative represents the reality of popular custom. . . . The attractiveness of literary representation is determined by the ways in which the representation disrupts or reinforces the widely received morality.<sup>12</sup>

Tosaka further elaborates this special evaluative quality of literary work in *On Morals* that “since morality expressed in literary ideas is critical of ordinary morality, it is not moral according to moral views of ordinary morality. It must be this kind of morality that can persuasively negate [ordinary] morality.”<sup>13</sup> Just as Marx argues in *The German Ideology*, for Tosaka (ordinary) morality is a variation of ideology because it helps reproduce social norms and order by shaping and directing the consciousness of individuals in conformity with them. Yet literary work creates a moral world that negates ordinary morality.

Tosaka argued that a literary work’s distinct moral world, in which common sense is denaturalized and the everyday is recast into a precarious drama, can be effectively created only when the work succeeds in making a distinction and explicating the relationship between individual (*kojin*) and self (*jibun*), or sociohistorical consciousness and self-consciousness. “Individual” is a product of sociohistorical consciousness

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12. Tosaka, *Shisō to fūzoku*, 27–28.

13. Tosaka, “Dōtoku no kannen,” in *TJz*, 4:211–268.

whereas “self” is where the confluence of sociohistorical consciousness and self-consciousness occurs. When a confluence or self is experienced by individuals as feeling “at home,” as a perfect union of the two consciousnesses, it offers the pleasure of moral conformity. But it can also work as a catalyst to provoke the feeling of oppression when sociohistorical consciousness and self-consciousness are in discord and therefore their merging engenders in the self the effect of not conformity but coercion and imposition. For Tosaka, popular custom and its morality depicted in a literary work are then a theater where the drama of the self unfolds in an indeterminate, unpredictable, and precarious way.

Tosaka sees literature as most capable of capturing this drama. Literature first seeks to grasp “the concreteness of social reality,” that is, both the corporeal and institutional realities of lived experience with the support of scientific concepts. It can then elevate and deepen an understanding of these realities through the creation of “character” (*seikaku*), which exemplifies—condenses in its thought and action—the unfolding of a complex drama of the realities. “Character” becomes equivalent to self as a site where popular custom and its morality are actually put into motion. The task of literature is therefore to expose, examine, and analyze lived experiences through the creation of “characters” that represent the precarious (not harmonious) link between corporeal and institutional realities, self- and sociohistorical consciousnesses, in the most arresting way. It is also an elevation and deepening of scientific inquiry and an investigation of morality at the level of the consciousness of self, not just that of individuals.

Implicit in Tosaka’s theorization of the self as consisting of sociohistorical consciousness and self-consciousness is a direct critique of the bourgeois ideology of individualism that hid the workings of popular custom and its morality as a primary regulatory and normalizing force, legitimating the emergent fascist social order in the second half of the 1930s. Individualism erases any dissonance between people’s lives and their real conditions of existence by representing life as a matter of personal consciousness and choice. It specifically represents popular custom and its morality as a collective expression of individuals’ free wills and values. It posits the self as being grounded in self-consciousness alone and thus estranges it from the social, historical, and ideological conditions of its formation (self-occultation or self-estrangement). This disembodied or unhistorical conception of self is exactly the most blatant characteristic

of “literature-ism” (*bungakushugi*), which, for Tosaka, was rooted deeply in the bourgeois ideology of individualism and practiced by people such as Nishida Kitarō (1870–1945), Kobayashi Hideo (1902–1983), and Bergson.<sup>14</sup> What Tosaka meant by the term was a tendency to mobilize literary representation in the guise of scientific concepts (such as personhood and personality) to draw a “scientific conclusion” (a universal claim of human conditions and humanity). “Literature-ism” was then a pretention or an inverted logic to theorize with scientific concepts and then make an abrupt move to euphuistic rhetoric (such as “emptiness”/*mu* and “ephemerality of life”/*mujō*) to dramatize or aestheticize statements and incite people’s minds.<sup>15</sup> This use of literature meant nothing less than demagoguery that gave life and credence to the feverish lure of fascism for Tosaka. Literature should instead be a form of active, evaluative engagement with reality in terms of making visible the ideological workings of bourgeois individualism and its political effects.

Even though Tosaka never explained how his theory of “character” and “the self” fit into that of “laughter” in his overall critique of the rising tide of fascist culture during the 1930s, we can infer that they all came together as a trinity in his critical literary theory. The dialectic of laughter can find its vitality in the incessant contradictory unfolding of the harmonizing and dis-harmonizing relationship between sociohistorical and self-consciousnesses in and of the self/character. Laughter surges forth by recognizing the varying degree of the self/character’s engagement with the pleasure and displeasure of moral conformity, the embracing and rejection of moral authority, and the reinforcement and negation of “being at home.” Laughter blasts open, as Bakhtin once articulated so eloquently, the solemnity and oppressiveness of authoritarian words and conduct that seek to announce the closure of an active and open-ended historical process of negotiation and struggle. Perhaps Tosaka intended to keep this historical process alive by offering a theory of laughter, a dialectical and dialogical engagement with the present.

For our final analysis of Tosaka’s theory of laughter and the literary representation of it, it is important for us to understand how he understood the concept of contradiction. Tosaka’s recognition of literature as a method of representing popular custom as a site where the confluence and interac-

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14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

tion of many contradictory elements—societal norms, state regulations, thought, economy, fashion, daily practice, and so on—takes place gives us a clue to this question. Tosaka's understanding of lived experience as a site of paradox and contradiction corresponds to Althusser's elucidation of contradiction as an overdetermined historical condition. To help us understand Tosaka further, let us first look at the concept of overdetermination. According to Althusser, it is "the effect of the contradictions in each practice constituting the social formation on the social formation as a whole, and hence back on each practice and each contradiction, defining the pattern of domination and subordination, antagonism and non-antagonism of the contradictions in the structure in dominance at any given historical moment."<sup>16</sup> In other words, overdetermination explains the historical contingency of social formation as determined by multiple contradictions, especially in the dominant structure (the structure in dominance). But this dominant structure is only one of many structures constituting the infinitely complex whole, and it is not fixed but varies according to the overdetermination of the contradictions and their uneven development (i.e., domination and subordination, antagonism and nonantagonism). The structure is displaced by a crisis or revolutionary change occasioned by the "condensation" and the "ruptural unity" of contradictions.<sup>17</sup> Such an occurrence depends on whether a condensation of contradictions remains at the level of "antagonism" or whether the ruptural unity of contradictions reaches its "explosive" level. In the state of "normalcy," the overdetermination of a contradiction remains dispersed and thus has yet to congeal into such a nodality. These different phases do not follow the chain of any particular causal law or developmental path. An understanding of crisis in any given space and time, for Althusser, requires a *historical* analysis of "many conditions of the existence of the complex whole itself."<sup>18</sup> Here, there is neither dogmatic division of base and superstructure nor the privileging of the former over the latter as the orthodox Marxist paradigm often posits. "Each practice" possesses a distinct logic of contradiction in the complex whole, but by virtue of constituting part of the complex whole, it is the condition of existence of all other practices that have their own forms of contradictions. In this regard, Althusser's

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16. Althusser, *For Marx*, 253.

17. *Ibid.*, 215.

18. *Ibid.*, 205.

concept of structure is different from the Hegelian totality that “presupposes an original, primary essence that lies behind the complex appearance that it has produced by externalization in history; it is a structure with a center.”<sup>19</sup> For Hegel, each element constituting the whole exists simply as a phenomenon or an epiphenomenon of the universal essence (Spirit), thus expressing the organic totality. Althusserian structure or totality, on the contrary, is constituted by the *uneven relations* among practices, elements—many sites of contradictions thus with no center, only a dominant element.<sup>20</sup> And those relations are neither defined by the logic of homology nor regulated by a timeless essence and a telos. Instead, they are historically formed. This is why Althusser warns that while his theory of the difference of contradictions is crucial to the understanding of the complex whole as constituted by the multitudes of contradictions and their uneven development, it does not lead us to the conclusion that social reality is infinitely random or “equivocal.”<sup>21</sup> What the materialist reading of history can achieve then is to unpack multiple sites of contradictions and their uneven relations that constitute a social formation and that provoke the transformations of structure(s).

What is valuable about Althusser’s conception of overdetermination for my analysis of Tosaka’s theorization of laughter and literary representation of it is that it enables us to understand the theorization as an attempt to identify the “ruptural unity,” or a “fusion of an ‘accumulation’ of contradictions” in and of structures that made itself a salient symptom of “crises” under the rise of Japanese fascism.<sup>22</sup> Tosaka seems to have regarded popular custom as a nodal point (functioning both as effect and catalyst) of the whole complex of relations of contradictions, as a site where contradictions are *condensed* (effect) and *articulated* (catalyst). If so, not only does his concept forsake the reductive understanding of culture within the law of economic determinism—whether the economy is the sole determinant in any given historical formation—as simply reflecting or expressing the economy (i.e., a reductive concept of class consciousness), but it also suggests a way to think of culture as a distinct yet deeply interrelated structure with other structures, especially the structure

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19. *Ibid.*, 254–255.

20. *Ibid.*, 147–151.

21. *Ibid.*, 209.

22. *Ibid.*, 99.

in dominance. It was precisely this theoretical perspective of overdetermination that made it possible for Tosaka to probe the politicality of culture beyond the idealist/humanist definition of the free-willed individual subject—the abstract subjectivity—as the basis of politics.

But it is important to point out crucial differences between Tosaka's theory of popular custom and Althusser's concept of overdetermination. This is the problem of *articulation*. How do the multitudes of contradictions, their uneven relations, and the tensions and conflicts stemming from those contradictions get articulated? How is articulation itself overdetermined by contradictions and their uneven relations? Although Althusser never delved into these questions, there are some clues in his discussion of ideology as to how these questions may be approached within the logical parameter of overdetermination. Althusser understands ideology in a dual sense: It is "a structure essential to the historical life of societies" (unconsciousness)—"not an aberration or a contingent excrescence of History"—yet one that can be simultaneously transformed "into an instrument of deliberate action on history" through "the recognition of its necessity" (consciousness).<sup>23</sup> "It is *in* ideology," *in* the unconscious, that humans "*become conscious* of their place in the world and in history."<sup>24</sup> His recognition of the duality of ideology—as the "perceived-accepted" structure into which humans are born and live their world and as the instrument that humans mobilize to act on history—opens up the possibility of conceiving of ideology as an overdetermined field of signification, especially as a field wherein signification gives rise to divergent articulations of society as a complex whole.<sup>25</sup> It is in accordance with this logic, I believe, that Althusser defined ideology as the "overdetermined unity of the real relation and the imaginary relation between (men) and their real conditions of existence." "In ideology" argues Althusser:

the (real) relation (between men and their real conditions of existence) is inevitably invested in the imaginary relation, a relation that *expresses a will* (conservative, conformist, reformist or revolutionary), a hope or a nostalgia, rather than describing it. It is in this overdetermination of the

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23. *Ibid.*, 232.

24. *Ibid.*, 233.

25. *Ibid.*

real by the imaginary and of the imaginary by the real that ideology is *active* in principle, that it reinforces or modifies the relation between men and their conditions of existence.”<sup>26</sup>

The problem of Althusser’s formulation is his tendency to associate the active forces of ideology, or the variant forms of articulation—“expression,” “reinforcement,” or “modification”—exclusively with the ruling class and the ruling ideology.<sup>27</sup> It does not offer how such an overdetermined interplay between the real and the imaginary in the articulation of “lived experience” (“the way people live the relation between them and their conditions of existence”) may inadvertently produce divergent and contestatory articulations.<sup>28</sup> For Althusser, ideology remains a monolith as well as a privileged site for dominant power. In other words, his theory is, as Terry Eagleton puts it, “too monistic, passing over the discrepant, contradictory ways in which subjects may be ideologically accosted—partially, wholly, or hardly at all—by discourses which themselves form no obvious cohesive unity.”<sup>29</sup>

Tosaka, on the contrary, had greater confidence in the efficacy of literature in articulating divergent and contestatory views of popular custom and its morality as the problematic of ideology. His discussion of laughter, comedy, and humor in terms of the logic of paradox that actively engages in evaluative activity comes very close to the Marxist linguist V. N. Volosinov (M. M. Bakhtin). Volosinov conceptualizes signification, or the practice of meaning, as “a function of the sign,” “the expression of a semiotic relationship between a particular piece of reality and another kind of reality that it stands for, represents, or depicts.”<sup>30</sup> And the expression of a semiotic relationship is not univocal but creates multiple “social accents,”<sup>31</sup> or various value orientations, because the sign is “itself a material seg-

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26. *Ibid.*, 233–234.

27. Terry Hall has also made a penetrating critique of Althusser’s concept of ideology and overdetermination in “Signification, Representation, Ideology: Althusser and the Post-Structuralist Debates,” in *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 2, no. 2 (June 1985): 91–114.

28. *Ibid.*

29. Terry Eagleton, “Ideology and Its Vicissitudes in Western Marxism,” in *Mapping Ideology*, ed. Slavoj Žižek (London: Verso, 1994), 217.

30. V. N. Volosinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 28.

31. *Ibid.*, 22.

ment of reality” that is inseparably linked with “concrete forms of social interaction” conditioned by “the pressures of the social struggle.”<sup>32</sup> In other words, each sign is inevitably invested in overdetermined social realities (“contradictions and their uneven development” in Althusser’s words) and thus conveys conflicting and contentious social values and perspectives as reflected and refracted in the complex and contradictory conditions of existence. Volosinov calls the multiplicity of accents of a sign the “multiaccentuality of the ideological sign.”<sup>33</sup> Based on this concept, Volosinov sees idioms, jargon, rhetoric, and visual images (i.e., iconography) as constituting the site where “differently oriented accents intersect in every ideological sign.”<sup>34</sup> “As a result,” Volosinov states, “sign becomes an arena of the class struggle,” or more broadly social conflict.<sup>35</sup> He concludes:

In actual fact, each living ideological sign has two faces, like Janus. Any current curse word can become a word of praise, any current truth must inevitably sound to many other people as the greatest lie. This *inner dialectical quality* of the sign comes out fully in the open only in times of social crises or revolutionary changes.<sup>36</sup>

The concept of multiaccentuality supports Tosaka’s multilayered theorization of laughter as having different “degrees” of paradoxical accents. And it supplements Althusser’s overdetermination in that it elucidates the sign, whether literal, verbal, or visual, as a form of overdetermination of *meaning*, which is capable of articulating overdetermined social realities. Volosinov’s formulation of social accent points to the understanding of society, just like Tosaka’s theory of popular custom, as composed of a multitude of enunciations of contradictions and their uneven developments. But more importantly, it helps explain how these enunciations of contradictions are always accompanied by voices of *contention* and *contestation* over the conditions of social reality.

As seen above, Tosaka viewed in literature the crucial task of articulating the crises and ruptural unity of contradictions in wartime Japan. His

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32. *Ibid.*, 11, 23.

33. *Ibid.*, 23

34. *Ibid.*

35. *Ibid.*

36. *Ibid.*



recognition of literature as possessing this special task is echoed by how Fredric Jameson theorizes the role of aesthetics or culture in the postmodern age.<sup>37</sup> By identifying distinctively postmodern aesthetic forms of representation in various media, Jameson shows the interface between postmodern cultural formations and the logic of late capitalism. “The base,” as Jameson puts it, “in the third stage of capitalism, generates its superstructures with a new kind of dynamic.”<sup>38</sup> Through his repeated emphasis on the postmodern’s distinct place in history, Jameson makes the postmodern moment an exemplary case of what Althusser calls the “great lesson of practice (history),” which is that “if the structure in dominance remains constant, the disposition of the roles within it changes; the principle contradiction becomes a secondary one, a secondary contradiction takes its place.”<sup>39</sup> Indeed, Jameson draws on Althusser’s “structure in dominance” in reference to capitalism and uses his insistence on a certain “semi-autonomy” of the various elements of the structure, including theory, ideology, and politics, from the realm of the economic to explain the shift in the principle contradiction. In fact, Jameson seems to view, following Raymond Williams’s idea of “structure of feeling,” the contradictions within the cultural or aesthetic world as the principle contradiction of our time (of course, “our” here refers to those who live in societies of late capitalism) insofar as they shape and prefigure any political praxis. His observation of mediatic art forms as the site of principle contradiction is based on his conviction that they urge us to reflect on the conditions of existence under late capitalism both “positively and negatively all at once.”<sup>40</sup>

Jameson’s observation of aesthetic practice as playing a crucial role in stimulating dialectical reflections on the historicity of late capitalism corresponds, as explained earlier, to the way Tosaka saw the unique potency of literature and the significance of a study of popular custom and culture in the context of the early 1930s. It is precisely this noncausal dialectical observation of culture, as in the case of Althusser, Volonsinov, and Jameson, as having its own dynamics of contradiction irreducible to, yet refractive of, socioeconomic formations of power that allowed Tosaka to articu-

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37. Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991).

38. *Ibid.*, xvi.

39. *Ibid.*, 211.

40. *Ibid.*, 47.

late through minute instances of the everyday world the critical exigencies of larger political and ideological problematics such as fascism. Tosaka's insight into such mundane yet deeply socioideological matters as laughter can be fully appreciated only when it is considered within the general framework of his critical theory. Tosaka's analytical method and insight can serve as an important and much-needed corrective to the currently prevalent paradigm of cultural studies that often avoids or overlooks the interlocking relationship between cultural and socioeconomic circuits of power by privileging the performativity of language and the potency of the aesthetic as the site of the political.

# Immaterial Technique and Mass Intelligence

## *Tosaka Jun on Technology*

*Takeshi Kimoto*

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Tosaka Jun's theory of technology forms the systematic focus of his entire philosophy. While it represents a major development in his theory of science, an issue that had concerned him since the beginning of his career, this theory, as a central component of his materialism, also provided the principle for his ideological critique of the Kyoto School of philosophy. It is significant that his last publications were concerned with the theory of technology, and undoubtedly it lies at heart of his philosophizing.

At the basis of his technology theory was Tosaka's ontological and ideological standpoint that presupposed a principal opposition between materialism and idealism and claimed the truth of the former over the latter. His theory also heavily relied upon the traditional mode of Marxism that insisted on the determination of the ideological superstructure by the material base as the final instance. In this framework, orthodox Marxists tended to understand technology as belonging to the material mode of production as opposed to the ideological formations, thereby reducing all forms of technologies to the former. However, Tosaka's discussion of technology, especially as it was articulated in his debate with contemporary Japanese leftists, shows that his thinking was far from such a dogmatic, objectivist, and reductionist argument. In his theorizing, Tosaka never failed to take into account the subjective and social dimensions of

technology. His discussion, sometimes despite his own intentions, exceeded the rigid notion of materialism, leading to a rethinking of matter and materiality per se. Specifically, Tosaka anticipated, beyond the confines of traditional materialism, recent discussions of immaterial labor and the general intellect by theorists such as Antonio Negri and Paolo Virno. Significantly enough, Tosaka indeed uses the term “immaterial technique of production” in his 1935 essay “Theory of the Intelligentsia and Theory of Technology,” which is included in this volume.

In this essay, I will critically analyze implications of Tosaka’s discussion by situating it within the debate on technology in the 1930s and using today’s conceptions of immateriality for theoretical points of reference. In my reading, I will look at a crucial inconsistency and ambiguity concerning the notions of materiality and ideality, which, however, allowed him to conceive of immateriality. Tosaka was able to provide insights into the basic conditions of social life under advanced technology, both material and immaterial, because he was paying keen attention to the emergent trend in political economy and the changing class composition in mid-1930s Japan. At stake in Tosaka’s discussion was, theoretically, how to understand categories of Marx’s *Capital* in the dynamics of modern capitalism and, practically, how to organize a different kind of politics based on a broad coalition of the masses.

## 1. Ontology of the Technical

In a series of essays published in *Gijutsu no tetsugaku* (*Philosophy of Technology*, 1933), Tosaka analyzes various forms of technique and technology in general.<sup>1</sup> Tosaka begins by pointing out the fact that the term *gijutsu* in common language refers to “tools” and “machines” on the one hand and “skills” and “methods” on the other.<sup>2</sup> Suggesting the elusiveness of the “vernacular word” (*zokugo*), he elsewhere rephrases it as the “phenomenon of technique” (*gijutsu genshō*). Moreover, Tosaka names it as

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1. Tosaka Jun, *Gijutsu no tetsugaku*, in *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1966), 1:229–297 (hereafter cited as *TJZ*).

2. Here Tosaka is paying attention to the everyday use of language rather than providing a rigid definition of technique or technology from a dogmatic standpoint. Despite his harsh criticism of hermeneutics as a contemporary form of idealism, he does not neglect rhetorical dimensions.

*gijutsu teki na mono* (the technical) or *gijutsusei* (technicality) in a way somewhat reminiscent of Heideggerian language.<sup>3</sup>

In order to pin down this everyday concept, he then practices a *diairesis* of the term, dividing technique in terms of its “mode of being” (*sonzai yōshiki*), first into subjective and objective types and then the subjective type further into the “ideational” (*kannen teki*) and material. On the other hand, he assigns the objective type to the material alone. In this scheme, whereas material technique can have both subjective and objective aspects, he excludes the possibility for an ideational *and* objective (or material) technique.<sup>4</sup> In making these distinctions, furthermore, he posits a certain hierarchy between the binaries:

Without any exception, *actual* [*genjitsu teki*] technique always has a certain *objective* mode of being within certain relations of production and social organization. This represents the *material* moment of technique. Its *ideational*, *subjective*, and *potential* [*kanō teki*] moments obtain their own concreteness only as something that should be mediated by material, objective, and actual moments, or has already been mediated.<sup>5</sup>

To be sure, Tosaka does not exclude the possibility that ideational, subjective, and potential moments of technique can affect reality through a certain mediation. From his standpoint, however, the primary determination of technique lies in the objective mode of being, while its subjective and ideational mode of being is secondary and even passive as something to be mediated.

What Tosaka is claiming here is a paradigmatically ontological standpoint that affirms the primacy of the present and actual reality.<sup>6</sup> For Tosaka, this presentist ontology of technology provided the important principle for criticizing idealist and hermeneutic philosophies, including Nishida Kitarō’s logic of nothingness. Tosaka argued that the very failure of the

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3. See Tosaka Jun, *Nihon ideorogiron* (*The Japanese Ideology*, 1935), in *TJz*, 2:388–889; see also Tosaka Jun, *Kagakuron* (*Theory of Science*, 1935), in *TJz*, 1:192.

4. See Tosaka, *Gijutsu no tetsugaku*, in *TJz*, 1:255.

5. *Ibid.*, 236–237.

6. In fact, Tosaka himself employed the term “ontology” in his first book, *Kagaku hōhōron* (*Methodology of Science*, 1928), which in part was a response to Heidegger’s *Being and Time*. It is significant that Tosaka’s so-called transition to materialism was preceded by, and took place as a result of, his ontological questioning.

latter lies in its sheer inability to affect actual reality.<sup>7</sup> On the contrary, those categories based on the actual ontology, he claims, possess technical and technological effectiveness. Interestingly, while most contemporary Marxists represented the opposition between materialism and idealism as the final instance of ideological struggle, Tosaka, by contrast, regarded this opposition as a consequence of a prior ontological decision.

Regarding a more specific apparatus for a social scientific analysis of technology, however, Tosaka turns to historical materialism, according to which the mode of production as the material base determines the superstructure, including the ideological formations. Starting with this formula, he not only locates technology primarily within the infrastructure, but also believes in the progress of technology leading to the increased forces of production and thus emancipation of the working class. In these respects, Tosaka's point of departure comes close to the orthodox formulation of Marxism as dialectical materialism that served as the official doctrine for the Soviet Union. As Moishe Postone critically points out, the dominant features of this traditional Marxism derive from a productivist notion of labor and production. This view not only understands production primarily as instrumental action vis-à-vis nature as objects, but dissociates it from the social relations of production. As a result, this standpoint regards production "as purely technical process, intrinsically independent of capitalism."<sup>8</sup> Rather than critically examining labor and production in capitalism, this reified view leads to technological determinism that posits automatic and unlimited growth, on the one hand, and justifies scientism and the technocratic rule by experts, on the other. With this problematic in mind, therefore, it is necessary to ask whether or not Tosaka's theory of technology falls into this sort of objectivism and technological determinism.

As I will argue, however, Tosaka's writings on technology do not necessarily follow his neatly delineated categorical distinction and hierarchy

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7. See Tosaka, *Nihon ideorogiron*, in *TJz*, 2:331–336; Tosaka, *Gijutsu no tetsugaku*, in *TJz*, 1:263–264.

8. Moishe Postone, *Time, Labor, and Social Domination: A Reinterpretation of Marx's Critical Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 9. Paradoxically enough, in traditional Marxism, the transition from capitalism to socialism becomes a mere matter of changing the mode of distribution (i.e., abolition of private property), not the mode of production. However, Postone's rigorous reconstitution intends to show not only "that Marx was *not* productivist," but also "how Marx's theory itself provides a powerful critique of the productivist paradigm"; see *ibid.*, 17.

between actuality and potentiality, the material and the ideational, as well as the schema of the base/superstructure and technological determinism. In this regard, Jacques Derrida's discussion of Marx provides a suggestive reading strategy for us. In *Specters of Marx*, Derrida introduces the term "spectrality" to deconstruct Marx's ontology of presence. At crucial moments, the ideal, which once appeared to be subordinated and reduced to the actual reality of the material substratum, now returns like a specter. Here, to use the title of a symposium on *Specters of Marx*, there are only "ghostly demarcations" between them.<sup>9</sup> Derrida says, "one must perhaps ask oneself whether the *spectrality effect* does not consist in undoing this opposition, or even this dialectic, between actual, effective presence and its other."<sup>10</sup> What Derrida describes about Marxian ontology seems to hold true of Tosaka's to a large extent:

[E]ven as he remains one of the first thinkers of technics, or even, by far and from afar, of the tele-technology that it will always have been, from near or from far, Marx continues to want to ground his critique or his exorcism of the spectral simulacrum in an ontology. It is a—critical but pre-deconstructive—ontology of presence as actual reality and as objectivity.<sup>11</sup>

It is fair to say, however, that Tosaka, unlike other orthodox Marxists, did not make a strong ontological commitment to reduce the ideal (ideational) into the material, which in turn invited their criticism of his idealistic deviation. But, as far as Tosaka's principle of ideological critique is concerned, such pre-deconstructive ontology is undeniably predominant in his writings. At the same time, it is precisely Tosaka's logical analysis itself that reveals these hierarchical binaries to be deconstructible. In other words, it is in his very text where the openness and even the spectrality of the ontological decision are inscribed. Therefore, it is my contention that Tosaka's considerations show crucial inconsistencies and ambiguities that

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9. Jacques Derrida, Terry Eagleton, Fredric Jameson, Antonio Negri et al., *Ghostly Demarcations: A Symposium on Jacques Derrida's Specters of Marx*, ed. Michael Sprinker (London: Verso, 2008).

10. Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (New York/London: Routledge, 1994), 40.

11. *Ibid.*, 170.

critically undermine both the ontology of presence and technological determinism.

There is yet another twist in our discussion of Tosaka's ontology. Paradoxically enough, it is precisely in the ruptures of ontology that Tosaka's philosophizing reveals its tremendous potential for critically examining today's social conditions. As I will show in my reading, Tosaka's discussion of technology virtually overlaps and anticipates what is discussed today under the rubric of "general intellect" and "immaterial labor."

In this regard, it is important for us to mention Antonio Negri, who took issue with Derrida's spectrality in favor of the notion of immateriality. While acknowledging that the old Marxist ontology based on the dichotomy of base/superstructure is "out of date," Negri points out that capital as the movement of abstraction is inherently metaphysical. "Spectral reality of the world produced by capital"<sup>12</sup> develops not only in the forms of value, money, and, notably, technology, but also leads to "the experience of a mobile, flexible, computerized, immaterialized, and spectral labor."<sup>13</sup> Even if the "law of value" is no longer working, "the law of surplus-value and exploitation is, in any case, constitutive of the logic of production."<sup>14</sup> Negri says:

Today, exploitation, or rather, capitalist relations of production, concern a laboring subject amassed in intellectuality and cooperative force. A new paradigm: most definitely exploited, yet new—a different power, a new constituency of laboring energy, an accumulation of cooperative energy. This is a new—post-deconstructive—ontology.<sup>15</sup>

Here is not the place to decide for or against the word "ontology." However, I will demonstrate that Tosaka's philosophizing of technology did not remain pre-deconstructive, but can be read as post-deconstructive. I will also refer to those (mostly) Italian thinkers who elaborated the con-

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12. Antonio Negri, "The Specter's Smile," in Derrida et al., *Ghostly Demarcations*, 7.

13. *Ibid.*, 9.

14. *Ibid.*, 10.

15. *Ibid.*, 12. Here is Derrida's response to Negri: "I agree, agree about everything with the exception of one word, 'ontology.' . . . Perhaps the two of us could, from now on, agree to regard the word 'ontology' as a password, a word arbitrarily established by convention, a shibboleth [sic], which only pretends to mean what the word 'ontology' has always meant"; see Jacques Derrida, "Marx & Sons," in Derrida et al., *Ghostly Demarcations*, 257, 261.



cept of immaterial labor and general intellect such as Antonio Negri, Michael Hardt, Paolo Virno, and so on. In addition, the fact that Tosaka, despite some historical restrictions, goes beyond orthodox Marxism will be especially clear when one contrasts him with his contemporary leftists.

## 2. Objective Technology and the Categories of *Capital*

### (a) *Sociality of Technology*

Let us first examine objective and material technique, because Tosaka, based on his materialist ontology, considers technique in its objective mode of being as the most proper and representative area of technology. Obviously, it is in this area that Tosaka relies most heavily on the materialist view of history in its orthodox formulation. However, it will turn out that Tosaka's discussion here is not limited to a modern model of technology to which traditional Marxism also subscribed—that is, the model that defines technology strictly as the instrumental action, means, and process of transforming material nature as the object.

In opposition to a conventional view that technology is a mere application of the natural sciences, Tosaka stresses that objective technology becomes meaningful only within certain social and historical contexts of the forces and relations of production. Technology, he argues, is therefore a social scientific and historical category. This allows him to say that “machines in themselves, which are of course mere physical bodies, are not technique [technology] *per se*.”<sup>16</sup> This somewhat provocative statement is certainly very different from the widespread view identifying technology primarily with machines, which invited critical comments from other Marxists. For Tosaka, such a view means a mechanistic fallacy. The machines, he claims, must be related to and understood within the labor process as the social context.

That is to say, machines (in which instruments may be included), especially in large-scale industry, are the most representative *means of labor*, and therefore count as one of the most crucial means of production. The objective material technique lies in the *labor process* or production process that is carried out through the means of labor or means of production.

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16. Tosaka, *Gijutsu no tetsugaku*, in *TJz*, 1:239.

He also adds, “We should not forget to include human and subjective factors here.”<sup>17</sup> By human and subjective factors Tosaka means *labor power*. Therefore, objective technology represented in machinery constitutes one of two major components of the productive forces, along with labor power. In actual production, labor power and machines are connected and unified.

From Tosaka’s descriptions we can derive several important characteristics about the objective mode of technology. First, he emphasizes the *labor process* in which material techniques are employed. For this reason, Tosaka finds it a mistake to separate and isolate technique and labor power. Second, machinery, for its part, can never exist in and for itself either. A single machine alone cannot operate. In order to function, machines need to be organized in such a way to form a systematic network with other items in the environment like equipment, a factory, electric power, a transportation system, and so on. And again, this system of machinery must be socially combined with labor power. Third, Tosaka grasps such a systematic and social network of technology in its potentiality for development. He names this dynamism *gijutsu sui jun* (the technical [technological] standard) of a society, whose development he believes is both promoted and prevented by the current capitalist system.<sup>18</sup> I will come back to this later when exploring Tosaka’s use of the concept “technical standard,” which represents his mature understanding of technology.

### (b) *The 1933 Debate on Technology Theory*

Tosaka’s view, which denied technicality to the machines in themselves, represents a social, rather than purely material, understanding of technology and makes a sharp contrast with, if not departure from, traditional Marxism. It was for this reason that leftist theorist Aikawa Haruki challenged Tosaka’s view, which led to an internal controversy called *gijutsuron ronsō* (the debate on technology theory) within Yuibutsuron kenkyūkai.<sup>19</sup> Let us take a brief look at Aikawa’s intervention as far as it is helpful to clarify what is at stake in Tosaka’s theory.

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17. Ibid.

18. Ibid., 242.

19. Yuibutsuron kenkyūkai was founded by Tosaka Jun, Oka Kunio, and others in 1932 and is often described as one of the last sites of intellectual resistance under Japanese fascism. Aikawa Haruki not only was a member of the group, but also belonged to the Kōza-ha

In his essay “The Concept of Technique and Technology,” Aikawa criticized Tosaka’s discussion of subjective and ideational techniques as committing an idealistic deviation. Insisting that technology must be defined in a strictly objective and material manner, Aikawa proposed an alternative definition of it as *rōdō shudan no taisei*, or “the organization of the means of labor.”<sup>20</sup> Although Aikawa acknowledged that the largest constituent of the “forces of production” is the “proletariat” as the subjective factor of labor, he rather put more and exclusive emphasis on the objective moment of technology: “The organization of labor that is technology is always essentially opposed to labor power, which represents another major element, along with the former, of the material productive forces in the material process of production.”<sup>21</sup> Aikawa ascribes technology as the means of labor entirely to what Marx called “constant capital” (the value of the means of production), while labor power corresponds to the other component called “variable capital” (the value of labor power).<sup>22</sup> If the means of production themselves are products of past, accumulated labor, constant capital is nothing but dead labor. Therefore, the distinction between variable and constant capital is, in Marx’s words, the opposition of “living labor” and “dead labor.”<sup>23</sup>

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Marxists (or the Lecturer School), participating in the famous debate on Japanese capitalism with the Rōnō-ha camp (the Labor-Farmer Faction).

20. Aikawa Haruki, “Gijutsu oyobi tekunorogī no gainen,” (The Concept of Technique and Technology), *Yuibutsuron kenkyū* 8 (June 1933): 69. Aikawa uses a German phrase for “technology”: *Organisation des Arbeitsmittel*.

21. *Ibid.*, 68.

22. Aikawa then emphasizes the historicity of technology: “It . . . refers to a certain organization of the means of labor in a certain stage of development of the material forces of production of a society” (*ibid.*). Moreover, he points to a developmental tendency of technology: “This technology always has a material mode of being, whose organization has the developmental tendency to gradually increase its objective components vis-à-vis its subjective components” (*ibid.*). These tendencies express what Marx called the “law of the rise in the organic composition of capital,” which derives from the development of the “production of relative surplus value” exemplified by modern large-scale industry; see Karl Marx, *Capital*, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin, 1976), 762; see also Aikawa, “Gijutsu oyobi tekunorogī no gainen,” 62.

23. Oka Kunio made an important intervention to this debate in his essay “Rōdō shudan no taisei to gijutsu” (The Organization of the Means of Labor and Technique) in *Yuibutsuron kenkyū* 15 (January 1934): 5–23. While acknowledging the importance of Aikawa’s definition of technology as the “organization of the means of labor,” Oka sought to critically delimit it from both a historical perspective and a standpoint of “living labor.” Oka first historicizes this definition: Aikawa’s thesis does not hold true for the precapitalist mode of

In this way, the whole debate revolved around the exegetic question of how to understand technique or technology in terms of the categories of *Capital*. Aikawa's remark represents the then-dominant objectivist reading, which reified technology by identifying it with "constant capital" in a mechanistic manner. Arguably his excessive emphasis on the dichotomy between subjectivity (labor power) and objectivity (technology) was motivated by a political strategy to stress the class opposition between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie (which, I would add, was slightly at odds with his Kōza-ha recognition of Japanese capitalism as a semifeudal, late developer). While his interpretation is based on Marx's own tendency to a large degree, it is obvious that his equation of technology with constant capital derived from the stage of industrial capitalism and therefore seems to be very inadequate—or at least to have only limited value for today's advanced postindustrial capitalism.

### (c) *General Intellect*

From the present perspective, however, this debate has a different meaning from mere dogmatics. What is at stake in my reading is to show the implications of the debate for today's basic conditions of social life under highly developed technology.

In this respect, recent discussions of the so-called general intellect are extremely relevant. It was a number of Italian Marxists, such as Antonio Negri and Paolo Virno, who sought to critically reexamine and renew Marxian political economy in light of the emergence of so-called post-Fordism in the late 1970s; one of their key concepts is "general intellect,"

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production because there the separation of labor and the means of labor, as well as the commodification of labor power, still does not exist. In other words, it merely corresponds to the establishment of industrial capitalism in which the machinery as dead labor is opposed to living labor power, a historical shift that Marx called the "real subsumption of labor under capital." Second, however, Oka emphasizes the standpoint of living labor, criticizing Aikawa for downplaying its role in the development of productive forces. Oka claims that the intelligence and skills of workers exist as "a potential within labor power" (*ibid.*, 15). According to him, the organization of means of labor should never be regarded as fixed and stable because the relations of production can and will affect it. What makes the technological system fluid and dynamic is "none other than technique whose origin lies in the subjective, living labor, while at the same time belonging to the means of labor" (*ibid.*, 16). This fundamental standpoint of "living labor" as a "potential" is not only shared by Tosaka's discussion of subjective technique, but also will be repeated by Paolo Virno and others.

which was taken from Marx's *Grundrisse: Foundations of Critique of Political Economy*, the first draft of *Capital*. Marx wrote:

Nature builds no machines, no locomotives, railways, electric telegraphs, self-acting mules, etc. . . . They are *organs of the human brain, created by the human hand*; the power of knowledge, objectified. The development of fixed capital indicates to what degree general social knowledge has become a *direct force of production*, and to what degree, hence, the conditions of the process of social life itself have come under the control of the general intellect and been transformed in accordance with it."<sup>24</sup>

Marx is describing the way in which the power of science and technology constitutes a crucial part of social production in the form of fixed (i.e., constant) capital. While Marx himself saw in the concept of the "general intellect" both an emancipatory potential to reduce labor time as well as the risk of subsuming science and technology under capital, he certainly identified it with constant capital.

Paolo Virno proposes a wholly different use and understanding of the term "general intellect" in order to revive it in the current situation in which modes of living everywhere are increasingly mediated by shared knowledge. He first criticizes Marx's simple identification of the general intellect with constant capital. General intellect as abstract and common knowledge is generalized to the extent that it permeates every sphere of social life: "We should consider the dimension where the general intellect, instead of being incarnated (or rather, *cast in iron*) into the system of machines, exists as an attribute of living labor."<sup>25</sup> He goes on to say:

The *general intellect* manifests itself today, above all, as the communication, abstraction, self-reflection of living subjects. It seems legitimate to maintain that, according to the very logic of economic development, it is necessary that a part of the *general intellect* not congeal as fixed capital

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24. Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of Critique of Political Economy*, trans. Martin Nicolaus (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), 706. Originally written in 1857–1858, the book was first published in 1939.

25. Paolo Virno, *A Grammar of the Multitude*, trans. Isabella Bertolotti, James Cascaito, and Andrea Casson (New York: Semiotext(e), 2004), 65.

but unfold in communicative interaction, under the guise of epistemic paradigms, dialogical *performances*, linguistic games.<sup>26</sup>

These capacities are the general conditions without which no social interaction and production would be possible. As Virno points out, post-Fordism is a mode of production that cannot survive without constantly developing, exploiting, and expropriating very generic faculties of language, for instance, that are common to and shared by the “multitude.” In other words, post-Fordism exploits living labor as a pure potentiality. Insofar as it is a pure, incalculable and excessive potentiality, labor power as such is something “non-present,” “non-real,” and thus “immaterial.”<sup>27</sup>

Now in light of Virno’s reinterpretation, it becomes clear that Aikawa represents the very limitation that Virno tries to overcome in terms of Marx. I will argue that what differentiates Tosaka from Aikawa is precisely the former’s conception of technique and technology as a dynamic, mutual transaction of subjectivity and objectivity. His theorizing of subjective technology in particular contains elements that are most significant from today’s viewpoint. Therefore, in the next section, I will clarify how Tosaka understands subjectivity in technology.

### 3. Subjective Techniques and Immaterial Labor

#### (a) *Material and Ideational Techniques*

What makes Tosaka’s theorizing not only distinct from other contemporary theorists but also relevant for our present concerns is his analysis of “technique in its subjective mode of being.”

“Technique in its subjective mode of being” expresses the skills and capability of a subject. While here, too, Tosaka divides technique into material and ideational aspects, he mentions the tremendous role of “hands” in the history of human development, both physical and mental. That means he emphasizes that the development of “intelligence” (*chinō*) is inseparable from its physical conditions. In turn, the notion of intelligence, thus understood, plays a central part in his theory and functions as

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26. Ibid.

27. Ibid., 83.

a mediator between material and ideational, subjective and objective, individual and collective, aspects of technique, thereby culminating in the concept of “intelligence” of the “masses” (*taishū no chinō*).<sup>28</sup>

For subjective and material technique, Tosaka takes, for example, skills of engineers and “performances of musicians,” which represent “high intelligence that is made instinctive (habits in the highest sense).”<sup>29</sup> Subjective techniques are basically physically acquired ones and therefore described as “material.”

Furthermore, Tosaka argues that one can think of “ideational technique” (*kannen teki gijutsu*). He mentions examples such as “diagnosis of clinical doctors,” “calculation by mathematicians,” “rhetorical description by writers,” and significantly, “analysis by theorists.”

These seemingly ordinary examples are far from insignificant in the context of social theory of technique. As I will show shortly, many of these physical and intellectual skills and capabilities are recently categorized as immaterial labor. However, even as Tosaka anticipates this new category, this concept of ideational technique poses a serious problem that evades his materialist ontology. Let me here examine Tosaka’s ontological predicament first.

### (b) *Spectral Ontology*

It is precisely the ideational technique that resists the operation of *diairesis* or division. In other words, the binary opposition that is constitutive of Tosaka’s materialist ontology reaches an impasse. He writes:

These *procedures* and *methods* of processing ideas have a quality of technique in that they are dependent upon the sensory and kinetic mechanism of the brain that is acquired by constant repetition, training, and improvement—that is to say, because they are made possible only through mediation of such ideational instruments or machines, as it were [*iwaba*].<sup>30</sup>

Here Tosaka adds “as it were.” Therefore, he is speaking of a metaphor. But what is metaphorical about this remains unclear. Is it because it compares the brain to the “instruments or machines” or because it ascribes

28. See my conclusion, “Tosaka’s Politics of Mass Intelligence.”

29. Tosaka, *Gijutsu no tetsugaku*, in *TJL*, 1:236.

30. *Ibid.*, 237.

ideality to the latter? In addition, Tosaka affirms that theoretical “*formulas* and *categories* are, more or less analogously speaking, sort of—entirely ideational—instruments or machines.”<sup>31</sup> If this is the case, it follows that, even without having the material support of the brain, these can serve as “instruments or machines” because they have a certain systematicity or organization of ideas. What, then, is the ontological difference between ideas and matter? Does Tosaka mean to say that the “machine” serves as a metaphor that brings an analogical unity between them?

So far, the word “machine” can be taken as a mere metaphor. However, perhaps more interestingly, Tosaka mentions another example of a machine: a “logical calculator” (*ronrigaku teki keisanki*) that was invented in the late nineteenth century by the economist William Stanley Jevons.<sup>32</sup> The context of this reference makes clear that Tosaka regards the calculator as ideational. If this is the case, then the current information technology as embodied in the computer should be included in ideational technique. Does he mean that a real, objective, and material body can be ideational? Tosaka certainly would not deny that logical calculation per se, or rather its product, is *not* material, but ideal. But then what is the agent of this calculation? Given that he is not advocating a dualism, is he claiming a strong version of materialism that reduces thinking into the material? The ideal would then be a ghost in the machine. Or is he saying that the machine can think in an idealist manner? Apart from the question of ideality in calculation, the machine itself can at least be regarded as a product of human intellect. The machine, as produced by a past, dead labor, would not only house the ghost in itself, but also be itself a ghost. Above all, the question remains: What is the ontological status of the machine, the machine-making intellect, and its technology? Do they represent something ideal (ideational) or material or rather a third principle that is neither? Where is the border between the ideal and the material, the present and the past in the machine?

Tosaka thus left many questions unanswered. Of all the ambiguities, however, one inconsistency is at least clear: Although he excluded the possibility of an ideational *and* objective (or material) technique, the example of the logical calculator makes an exception to his classification.

In this regard, too, Aikawa Haruki criticized Tosaka. Here again, Ai-

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31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.



kawa claims any technology must be derived from objective and material dimensions.

Even so, so-called ideational techniques in mental processes never completely fall under the ideational subjective mode of being as objective entities such as letters, papers, paints, medical machines, and “calculators,” and so on show. Among technology in the subjective mode of being, “the sensory, kinetic mechanism of the brain” itself or human power itself exists materially.<sup>33</sup>

Consistent as it may be, Aikawa presupposes a strict ontological hierarchy between the material and the ideal, reducing the latter to the former. To use Derrida’s term, Aikawa, like Marx, is trying to “exorcize” the specter of the ideal.

By contrast, Tosaka has invited this spectral ambiguity between ideas and matter by trying to demarcate the phenomena logically and ontologically. Without being able to decide the ontological nature of these phenomena, Tosaka nonetheless provided these examples that do not follow the dichotomy between materialism and idealism.

### *(c) Tosaka’s Immaterial Labor*

At the same time, however, it is important to emphasize that, precisely through this seemingly failed theoretical practice, Tosaka virtually reached what is today called “immateriality.” In other words, what Tosaka called “ideational technique” represents a form of “immaterial labor.”

According to the influential definition by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, immaterial labor is “labor that creates immaterial products, such as knowledge, information, communication, a relationship, or an emotional response.”<sup>34</sup> It is a form of labor that became dominant in the late twentieth century, when industrial labor lost its hegemony. What has been categorized as service work, intellectual labor, and cognitive labor are all traditional forms of immaterial labor.

Obviously, Virno’s conception of general intellect has much to do with immaterial labor. Both categories characterize highly advanced capitalism: While immaterial labor names the specific mode of labor predomi-

33. Aikawa, “Gijutsu oyobi tekunorogī no gainen,” 69.

34. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude* (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 108.

nant in today's capitalist society, general intellect describes the way in which knowledge and technology become generalized and common to all areas of social life, most notably in relation to labor power.

However, Hardt and Negri identify as immaterial another important type: affective labor that “produces or manipulates affects such as a feeling of ease, well-being, satisfaction, excitement, or passion,” such as health-care work and the entertainment industry.<sup>35</sup> They acknowledge that there is an ambiguity about the term “immaterial”: The reason why this type of labor is called immaterial is that its *products*, not the labor, are intangible; it does not deny that labor itself remains material and involves both mind and body.

Thus, provided that what Tosaka called ideational technique concerns primarily intellectual labor, it is quite natural that his conception qualifies as a prototype of immaterial labor. In fact, Tosaka was trying to theorize this newly emerging social category, or at least one of its areas, when he so often problematized the social status of students, engineers, and the intelligentsia.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, what he discussed under the term “subjective and material technique” also falls into immaterial labor because, while Tosaka looked at this technique's aspect as a physically acquired skill, its product can be described as immaterial. In this sense, although Tosaka did not pay much attention to affectivity in general, some of this technique, for instance, musical performance, may qualify as affective labor.

In fact, in the last essay included in *Gijutsu no tetsugaku*, Tosaka himself tries to define subjective techniques, both material and ideational, in a unified way: They both primarily signify the “ability in general to transform” matter or ideas (*henkō nōryoku ippan*).<sup>37</sup> In this way, technique in Tosaka cannot be reduced to merely objective, real, material entities but is rather understood as the ability to change and produce them. To use Virno's words, these techniques are *dynamis* and potentialities, which are not reducible to actual technical practices but enable the latter. Thus it can be said that Tosaka virtually exceeded the ontology of presence that divides reality and possibility, putting the primacy of the former over the latter.

Furthermore, Tosaka not only anticipated the concept—later he quite surprisingly used the very words “immaterial technique of production.” In

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35. Ibid.

36. See Tosaka Jun, “Gijutsuka no shakai teki chii” (The Social Status of Engineers) and “Gijutsu to chinō” (Technique and Intelligence), in *Gijutsu no tetsugaku*, in *TJz*, 1:268–297.

37. Ibid., 289.

his “Theory of the Intelligentsia and Theory of Technology,” he not only responded to Aikawa’s criticism, but also reformulated his reflection of technology in a comprehensive way.

#### 4. “Technical Standard” as Tosaka’s “General Intellect”

Here I will demonstrate how Tosaka theorized the dynamic relationship between objectivity and subjectivity in technique and technology and pre-figured today’s discussions in a surprising way.

In his important essay “Theory of the Intelligentsia and Theory of Technology,” included in *The Japanese Ideology* (1935), Tosaka elaborates his major concept, the “technical [technological] standard,” by responding to Aikawa’s critique in a fair and fundamental manner. While accepting Aikawa’s two points—first, that technique in general centers on that of material production and, second, that subjective and objective techniques must be distinguished—he contradicts Aikawa, saying that technique and technology cannot be reduced into a mere organization of the means of labor. He begins by confirming the fact that the word *gijutsu* is a vernacular. It is in this context that he speaks of “immaterial technique of production” (*hi-busshitsu-teki seisan gjijutsu*):

Perhaps what is usually named *gijutsu* vaguely includes skills and methods for one thing and *immaterial technique of production* for another. It is usually not considered that the organization of means of labor (machines, instruments, factory, transportation facilities, and so forth) alone would comprise technique.<sup>38</sup>

Conceivably Tosaka replaces the adjective “ideational” with “immaterial.” One possible reason why he avoided using the latter term was because it was one of the points contained in Aikawa’s criticism. However, it is also possible that Tosaka might have realized that “immaterial” can signify a wider delimitation of meaning—everything *not* limited to “material”—than “ideational,” which is used in opposition to “material.” This

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38. Tosaka Jun, “Interigencharon to gjijutsuron” (Theory of the Intelligentsia and Theory of Technology), in *Nihon ideorogiron*, in *TJz*, 2:386 (my italics).

would also mean the expansion of the concept of “production” along the same lines.<sup>39</sup> Significantly, this expansion represents an exact parallel move to Paolo Virno’s reinterpretation of “general intellect.” Just as Virno removed the restricted use of the term in order to include living labor, Tosaka expanded the concept of production into something *unlimited* and *infinite*. These negative prefixes are indices for the excessive potentiality of labor power.

Tosaka then contradicts Aikawa by using the latter’s favorite tactic—by quoting Marx, who mentioned Darwin in *Capital* to suggest how productive organs were analogous to material technology. Tosaka goes on to say:

Moreover, if he [Marx] made an essential comparison between technology [technique] and the productive organs of plants, animals, and man, it shows that technology [technique] cannot be explained away merely by a definition, that is, the organization of the means of labor, in an *objectivistic* (or even mechanistic) way.<sup>40</sup>

Moreover, he points out that the essence of technology lies in productive activity for Marx. Here is Marx’s statement:

Technology reveals the active relation of man to nature, the direct process of the production of his life, and thereby it also lays bare the process of the production of the social relations of his life, and the mental conceptions that flow from those relations.<sup>41</sup>

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39. In fact, in the final 1941 essays that he published while he was still alive, Tosaka talked about “production of meaning” in the arts and “production of human beings” in reproduction and education, which, he added, cannot be said to be material production. In this way, Tosaka came extremely close to the conception of immaterial “bio-political production” as Negri and Hardt use it; see Tosaka Jun, “Kagaku to gijutsu no kannen” (The Notions of Science and Technology), in *TJz*, 1:355, and “Gijutsu he iku mondai” (The Problem Leading to Technology), in *ibid.*, 360. Moreover, it is important to note that here Tosaka argues that the primary goal of science is not to know truth but to produce things. This can be regarded as a major epistemological shift in his theory of science. Interestingly, he evidences it by the fact that the discovery of radium by Pierre and Marie Curie was made possible by actually manufacturing it in the first place. Tosaka, who died in prison on August 9, 1945, knew about the possibility of nuclear energy.

40. Tosaka, “Interigencharon to gijutsuron,” in *TJz*, 2:388.

41. Marx, *Capital*, 493.

By this reference, Tosaka emphasized the subjective moment of technology. While he accepts the necessity to posit the “organization of the means of labor” as one essential moment of technology, Tosaka claims that it should not be isolated from entire social and productive relations.

Here Tosaka proposes the concept of a “technical [technological] standard” of a society that mediates both objectivity and subjectivity:

Of course, even if one assumes something like a technological standard, it would not take a specific visible form. In this sense, it does not have materiality such as that which the means of labor has, for instance. But, just as the forces of production in a society are material, it has to be material as well. The technological standard is by far a higher social abstraction [*shakai teki chūshō tai*] than the means of production or its organization and, therefore, it belongs to a more abstract idea of a social institution.<sup>42</sup>

This concept of a technical standard, while being a form of abstraction, has a specific reality and thus a certain materiality. Although having no immediate material presence, it is designated by what Aikawa called the system or organization of the means of labor and will play very important roles both theoretically and practically.

First, it explains how the means of labor and skills of workers need to be connected and mutually mediated. Without standardizing the level of labor skills, it is impossible to design, produce, and use an automobile, for instance. Moreover, there is, he says, constant interaction between these two aspects. If this is the case, he implies the possibility that subjective skills of workers can give feedback to the objective system of the means of labor. Therefore, “the practical interaction between the means of labor and skills takes place by being converted into the technological standard that serves as a sort of *technological equivalent*, as it were.”<sup>43</sup> Tosaka understands the function of equivalence in a very dynamic way because it serves as a goal to raise the subjective skills and intelligence of engineers and workers, which will result in the upgrading of the technical conditions of a society. This is the objective of a science of techniques,

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42. Tosaka, “Interigencharon to gijutsuron,” in *TJz*, 2:389.

43. *Ibid.*

that is, “techno-logy” in its strict sense, which is in itself practical and technical.

In this way, Tosaka’s conception of technical standard plays exactly the same function as Virno’s general intellect. Unlike Marx’s general intellect, the technical standard is not reduced to constant capital as the means of production but is essentially connected to living labor power. At the same time, it is not reducible to the subjectivity of labor power either. Moreover, in the status of social abstraction, it assumes the character of general intellect—what Virno describes as “real abstraction.”<sup>44</sup> To be sure, Virno claims that general intellect under post-Fordism does not represent “commensurability” or “principle of equivalence” between social units.<sup>45</sup> However, what Tosaka calls technical equivalence is a dynamic standard and norm and functions rather as a constructive principle, which Virno ascribes to today’s general intellect.<sup>46</sup> Without such a dynamic interaction, the “common place” for the masses and multitude would be impossible.

Yet one might suspect that this argument of the technical standard and the general intellect represents a form of productivism in a broad sense and doubt whether it can criticize capitalism effectively. To be sure, the technical standard is largely conditioned and promoted by the capitalist mode of production. However, the material and immaterial practices of social production and consumption are not identical with the valorization process per se, which involves the commodification of labor power and the appropriation of surplus value by capital.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, capital, especially in post-Fordism, depends more and more upon the shared, common resources and faculties that have been developed through the (im)material, social production in communication and cooperation of the masses. Therefore, capital faces its limit even as it tries to subsume everything.

Still, what is happening here appears to be a totalization of labor and

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44. Virno, *Grammar of the Multitude*, 64.

45. *Ibid.*, 84.

46. *Ibid.*

47. As Moishe Postone emphasizes, it is vitally important for a critical theory of capital to distinguish value and material wealth, to which I would also add immaterial wealth: “What underlies the central contradiction of capitalism, according to Marx, is that value remains the determining form of wealth and of social relations in capitalism, regardless of developments in productivity; however, value also becomes increasingly anachronistic in terms of the material wealth-producing potential of the productive forces to which it gives rise” (Postone, *Time, Labor and Social Domination*, 197).

technology, as well as the disappearance of its outside. As is well known, the normative distinction that Hannah Arendt once made between action and labor, praxis, and poiesis, has provided an important ground for critiquing instrumental rationality and reification. However, this argument seems to be less effective in view of the current social situation. In fact, what is crucial to understand is not only becoming-poiesis-of-praxis, but rather its reverse side, that is, becoming-praxis-of-poiesis. As Virno says:

In post-Fordism, Labor requires a “publicly organized space” and resembles a virtuosic performance (without end product) . . . . At a certain level in the development of productive social forces, labor cooperation introjects verbal communication into itself, or, more precisely, a complex of *political actions*.<sup>48</sup>

Tosaka’s notion of the technical standard can easily be updated to cope with this new situation because he never fails to take into account the social and communicative aspects of and in production and technology.<sup>49</sup> For these reasons, it is clear that Tosaka’s technological standard is essentially different from the ideology of scientism and technocratic rule.

The abstract and material character of the technical standard expresses the generality of the general intellect. At the same time, it can also be taken as a recasting of that immateriality that Tosaka ascribed to subjective techniques in the societal dimension. In other words, the common is condensed in it. This generality, however, emerges as a result of numerous actions and transactions of the masses. This is Tosaka’s “mass intelligence,” which Negri and Virno would call “mass intellectuality.”

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48. Virno, *A Grammar of the Multitude*, 55.

49. Needless to say, however, there are several historical limitations in Tosaka’s discussion. First, political economy has witnessed major shifts since the conjuncture of the 1930s in terms of the level of technological development and the dominant mode of capital accumulation. For instance, the paradigmatic model of technology is no longer machinery in large-scale industry, which Tosaka had in mind, but information technology and computer engineering. Yet, as I argued in my essay, his discussion of ideational technique can be reinterpreted as anticipating this new technology. Second, Tosaka did not take seriously the emergence of Fordism and the Keynesian interventionist state (see Tosaka Jun, “Gijutsuteki seishin to ha nani ka,” in *TJz*, 1:344). Instead, he took for granted the superiority of socialism as it was represented and experimented by the Soviet Union. However, it seems more productive to evaluate his theoretical potential beyond traditional Marxism than criticize him in hindsight.

## Conclusion: Tosaka's Politics of Mass Intelligence

In this essay, I have clarified how Tosaka's discussion of technology, which culminated in his concept of the technological standard, can and should be reread as going beyond a series of ontological dichotomies inherent in traditional Marxism, between the ideational and the material, the potential and the actual, subjectivity and objectivity, and so on, which, translated into the language of *Capital*, corresponds to the opposition of constant and variable capital, or dead and living labor. In so doing, I stressed the large extent to which his conception refigured recent discussions of immaterial labor and the general intellect. In short, Tosaka's critical theory represents a post-deconstructive ontology. In concluding, I will suggest what was at stake in Tosaka's politics of technology, especially by reflecting upon the notion of the masses.

Harootunian makes a crucial point on Tosaka's politics in the 1930s, which served as a guiding thread for my essay:

[H]e [Tosaka] seemed to reject the powerful claims of historical narrative—currently being produced by the contemporary Marxian debate over the nature of the development of capitalism in Japan—for a view of history written by the space of everyday life.<sup>50</sup>

The 1933 technology debate exemplifies this stark difference between Tosaka Jun and contemporary orthodox Marxists (*Kōza-ha*) such as Aikawa Haruki. Rather than privileging the alliance between the industrial proletariat and feudal peasantry, Tosaka sought to mobilize the newly emerging immaterial workers composed of engineers, intelligentsia, and students, by combining the question of technology with the social status of these figures, as well as the critical functions of their knowledge. Tosaka clarifies his stakes in intervening in the contemporary discourse on the intelligentsia, which tended to see this social stratum as an independent class:

Needless to say, the activeness (*nōdōsei*) and positiveness (*sekk yokusei*) of the technical intelligentsia is currently guaranteed under the conditions of capitalism. As a result, in their consciousness, their activeness is even

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50. H. D. Harootunian, *History's Disquiet: Modernity, Cultural Practice and the Question of Everyday Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 142.



supported by the capitalist ideology. . . . The question is how to make this activeness and positiveness under capitalism independent of capitalism (not of the capitalist class [opposition]).<sup>51</sup>

In this way, Tosaka clearly situated the objective of his theoretical practice in dissociating these new constituencies from the confines of the capitalist mode of production. This strategy involved raising the question of the intelligentsia as “the problem of their subjectivity, that is, the problem of their intelligence.”<sup>52</sup>

At the same time, however, this does not mean that he privileged the status of free-floating intellectuals. Nor did he eliminate the working class and farmers from his political agenda. Instead, he elaborated his unique conception of the “masses” (*taishū*). In his early essay on the masses, Tosaka defines the masses first and foremost as a political category, differentiating it from both *tashū*, that is, a mere multitude or majority without organization, and *minshū*, or the “people,” referring to the dominated class in general. By *taishū*, Tosaka means the overwhelming forces of the common people that will organize themselves as agents of democracy through their practices of everyday life.<sup>53</sup> Moreover, he argues that the masses represent a class concept. In fact, he not only emphasizes the need for the masses to organize themselves into a class, but also mentions the role of a vanguard in this organizing process.

What is crucial, however, is to recognize that Tosaka never reduced the masses to an essentialistic conception of a singular class, such as the working class. In other words, the masses, while centering on the working class, are not reduced to it but comprehend a wide range of social positions from farmers to engineers, from workers to intelligentsia. Tosaka sought to form such a broad coalition because he clearly recognized the tendency of capitalist development that made class composition more and

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51. Tosaka Jun, “Interigencharon ni taisuru gimon” (Doubts about the Theory of the Intelligentsia), in *Nihon ideorogiron*, in *TJz*, 2:383.

52. Tosaka, “Interigencharon to gijutsuron,” in *TJz*, 2:391; see also Tosaka, “Social Status of Engineers” and “Technique and Intelligence,” in *TJz*, 1:268–297.

53. Tosaka Jun, “Kagaku no taishūsei” (The Mass Character of Science), in *Ideorogī no ronrigaku*, in *TJz*, 1:80–94. At the same time, however, Tosaka was fully aware of the danger that the masses, if not organized by themselves, could and actually did support fascist politics; see Tosaka Jun, “Taishū no saikōsatsu” (Reexamination of the Masses), in *Nihon ideorogiron*, 2:424–430. For an incisive and comprehensive discussion of Tosaka’s notion of *taishū*, see Harootunian, *History’s Disquiet*, 140–151.

more fluid, complex, and heterogeneous, rather than simply leading to general proletarianization.

What unites the masses is a certain commonness in heterogeneity, that is, the social standard of technique and technology, or the general intellect in Tosaka's sense. Or rather, this is precisely what Tosaka sought to constitute practically through his politics of mass intelligence.

As the real masses of the present possess instinctive and technical immediacy through their mass character, intelligence can become truly instinctive and technical only when brought into the masses. That is to say, it is only here that intelligence becomes truly intelligent.<sup>54</sup>

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54. Tosaka, "Gijutsu to chinō," in *TJZ*, 1:296.

# Filmic Materiality and Historical Materialism

## *Tosaka Jun and the Prosthetics of Sensation*

Gavin Walker

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*I'm what you call a naive moviegoer. I'm especially hostile to the notion of different levels: a first, a second, and a third level of meaning, understanding, or appreciation. What works on the second level already works on the first. What fails on the first level remains a failure on every level. Every image is literal and must be taken literally. When an image is flat, you must not impart to it, even in thought, a depth that would disfigure it. What is most difficult is grasping images how they are presented, in their immediacy. . . . In any case, an image does not represent some prior reality; it has its own reality.*

—Gilles Deleuze

*Movement is a language in which matter speaks through bodies.*

—Tosaka Jun

In a well-known and incessantly recirculated moment, Jacques Derrida deploys the term *paléonymie* for the utilization of an existing, sedimented word or phrase to indicate and develop a new and unaddressed problem-

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All translations from languages other than English are mine unless otherwise indicated.

atic.<sup>1</sup> In precisely the same sense, I want to argue here that the decisive sequence for the theorization of the problem in question is nothing other than the possibility of the renewal and intensification of a certain paleonym: historical materialism. But historical materialism in what sense? Between the Marx and Engels of historical necessity (the “inevitable” transition to socialism through the development of the productive forces) and the Marx and Engels of the revolutionary workers’ movement (“the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle”), we might profitably question today certain new forms of social organization and their accompanying ordering apparatuses, by returning to all the “original questions”: the materiality of the social-historical; the historicity of the articulation process of practice between the extensive traces of the past sedimented in matter; and the intensive, unstable, hazardous zone of the present. In recent years, it has been a well-known theoretical task to draw attention to the immaterial moment conditioning the newly emerging forms of labor that capitalism still now, and for the foreseeable future, continues to rely on. But there is also another task, a task that has an essential genealogy within Marxian theoretical writing, one intimately related to the work and project of Tosaka Jun: to draw attention, to place renewed emphasis and investigation on the essential and central material moment at the core of the immaterial forms and phenomena rapidly becoming the hegemonic social reality. Increasingly, what is being put into question from a variety of theoretical vantage points is precisely the *materiality* of capitalism, the materiality of social relations that obtain under its aegis, and the central role of matter itself in its analysis. Tosaka’s thought, and in particular, the unique position of film within his analysis of the everyday, can be a pivotal site from which to attempt to renew the force and decisive meaning of historical materialism today, a site from which we can learn a great deal about the inexhaustible creative potential still latent in the critical analysis of the present.

From the outset it must be said that Tosaka’s discussion of film is not comprehensive. Because of his untimely death and his short period of theoretical production, we can only treat his film-theoretical discussions as an outlining of a sequence of problems rather than as a developed and

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1. Jacques Derrida, “Hors livre, préfaces,” in *La dissémination* (Paris: Seuil, 1972), especially 9–12; see also Gerhard Richter’s related extension of this problematic toward the *Denkbild*, or “thought-image,” in his recent *Thought-Images: Frankfurt School Writers’ Reflections from Damaged Life* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007).

exhaustive system. In this sense, “film” in Tosaka functions as a productive absence, something *we* can develop, a set of relations and connections *we* can articulate. It is a term that *enables* our analysis precisely because it remains a name for an open and productive site of possibility. Rather than merely registering our regret that Tosaka never devoted a full book-length treatment to the problem of film, we ought to develop ourselves the meaning and significance of the fact that Tosaka considered film such a crucial site of analysis for the epistemic grasp of social life in general, a problem that surely remains decisive today. In this sense we should, at the very outset, draw attention to the order of presentation of the primary text under consideration here: Tosaka’s 1936 *Thought and Custom* (*Shisō to fūzoku*), a text in which, after Tosaka broadly defines the concept, the very first demonstration of the question of custom is effected through the example of film in the essay “Eiga no shajitsuteki tokusei to fūzokusei oyobi taishūsei.” Further, the final text appended to the republication of this volume is Tosaka’s only other sustained writing on film, the 1937 essay “Eiga to eiga geijutsu: Abusutorakushon no sayō e,” essentially locating the point of departure as well as the culmination of the text in the question of film.<sup>2</sup> That is, even merely from the order of presentation in this work we can see the conceptual centrality and importance of film for Tosaka as a moment or instance of the broader problematic of custom—the historical materiality of social practices.

As one of the central animators of the influential Tokyo-based pre- and interwar Marxist theoretical organization Yuibutsuron kenkyūkai (Yuiken), or Materialism Research Group,<sup>3</sup> Tosaka would certainly have been familiar with the existing film theoretical debates of the time, and the two aforementioned articles that he specifically devoted to film were originally published in the journal *Eiga sōzō*, a periodical closely associated with Yuiken. These articles sparked a short-lived debate amongst some Yuiken members and other intellectuals on the epistemology of film (*eiga ninshikiron ronsō*),<sup>4</sup> but Tosaka himself would not revisit the question of

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2. See the translation in this volume.

3. On the history of Yuiken, see for instance Kozai Yoshishige, *Senjika no yuibutsuronsha tachi* (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, 1982).

4. My object in the present essay is to examine and develop the filmic moment in Tosaka’s philosophy rather than to examine the specific historical circumstances and historical trajectory of film theory in Japan of the 1920s and ’30s. Abé Mark Normes has already extensively

film in an extended way again before his untimely death in prison in 1945. Tosaka did, however, refer to film in other writings of his: in his discussion and overview of epistemology, *Ninshikiron to wa nani ka*, and in a variety of shorter, journalistic pieces (such as his 1936 article “Thought and Custom under Censorship” [Ken’etsuka no shisō to fūzoku],<sup>5</sup> wherein he examines the censorship of the Japanese film industry as the exemplary case of the censoring of life custom in general).

What I have already stated from the very outset is that for Tosaka, film, or more specifically, the social materiality encountered in the filmic situation, was the quintessential location of custom, and that custom was the key to his characteristic theoretical interventions into historical materialism itself. Thus we need to establish the contours of the sense of historical materialism I intend here. As the starting point of historical materialism, we can accept Engels’ foundational point that the “real unity of the world consists in its materiality, and this is proved not by a few juggled phrases, but by a long and wearisome development of philosophy and natural science.”<sup>6</sup> But the question thus becomes: In what does this materiality consist, in what ways is matter thus cognizable, and what is the fundamental relation between this “materiality” of the “real unity” and the “immateriality” of other “unities” of the world? The basic programmatic statement that “the materialist conception of history starts from the proposition that the production, and next to production, the exchange of things produced, is the basis of all social structure,” is well known and was largely the basic starting point of historical materialism as a doctrine. But, as Derek Sayer, among others, has pointed out, it is entirely debatable whether historical materialism was ever meant to be articulated as a philosophy of history in its sense of the full and conclusive level of the concept—for Marx and Engels, it is rather the “guiding thread,” an “orientation” in research.<sup>7</sup>

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detailed the circumstances, groups, debates, and movements in which Tosaka’s essays can be historically situated; see his *Japanese Documentary Film: The Meiji Era through Hiroshima* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), especially his comprehensive discussion of Iwasaki Akira’s, Tosaka’s, and Nakai Masakazu’s engagements with film, 125–147.

5. See “Ken’etsuka no shisō to fūzoku,” in *Sekai no ikkan toshite no Nihon*, in *Tosaka Jun zenshū*, vol. 5 (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1966) (hereafter cited as *TJz*).

6. Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, in *Marx/Engels Collected Works* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1987), 25:41 (hereafter cited as *MECW*).

7. Derek Sayer, *The Violence of Abstraction* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987), 13–14.

This is precisely the sense in which Engels later extensively disclosed his misgivings as to the “utilization” of this notion:

According to the materialist view of history, the determining factor in history is, in the *final analysis* [*das in letzter Instanz bestimmende Moment*], the production and reproduction of actual life [*wirklichen Lebens*]. More than that was never maintained by Marx or myself. Now if someone distorts this by declaring the economic moment to be the *only* determining factor, he changes that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, ridiculous piece of jargon.<sup>8</sup>

This clarification of the task and role of historical materialism is essential, in my view, for a complex understanding of Tosaka’s thought. A selective and violent reading of Tosaka’s work (especially up until the early to mid-1930s) can create an image of his materialism as a staid, orthodox, and formalistic doctrine. But Tosaka’s subtle grasp of this problem of the “reproduction of actual life [*wirklichen Lebens*],” in particular his implicit attempt to read this reproduction in a productive deviation through film (the camera’s “reproduction” of social life, or *jissasei*), demonstrates to us the novelty and dynamism of his thought—a thought that gives us powerful tools for the redeployment of historical materialism. Harootunian has effectively summarized Tosaka’s grasp of this problem in general as follows:

With Tosaka, the refiguring of historical materialism revealed the shadow of both Kant and Heidegger (as it did Benjamin) rather than Hegel and Lukács and allowed him to emplot a history from the present, rather than a fixed past, from material existence in the now, the “current situation” that would subsequently recall a certain past, rather than from a past that would undoubtedly forget the present. . . . Tosaka’s program hinged on a critique of received categories of historical temporality that all historicisms presumed as given: the temporality that mediated both the trajectory of the succession of events and the causal relationships supplying it coherence.<sup>9</sup>

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8. Engels, letter of September 21, 1890, to Joseph Bloch, in *Marx-Engels Werke* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1967), 37:463–465 (hereafter cited as *MEW*); *MECW* (New York: International Publishers, 2005), 49:34–36.

9. Harry D. Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 137.

In precisely the sense that Harootunian outlines here, we might positively juxtapose and imbricate Tosaka's historical materialism with the tasks set forward by Althusser thirty years later. Althusser's claim, contrary to its typical or superficial presentation, was in this sense not to demonstrate the primacy of the dialectical materialist method over the "doctrine" of historical materialism, but rather *to restore to historical materialism the dimension of history itself*, which is irretrievably lost in one-dimensional subjectivist understandings (such as those of Sorel, Marcuse, etc.) of historical materialism as the "philosophy of the proletariat." Such a reduction inevitably flattens historical materialism into the mere practice of partisanship, or guiding philosophy of voluntarism and engagement. Rather the historical materialism as "guiding thread" of Althusser (and I would argue, Tosaka) aims at the materiality of historicity itself, that is, the "continent of history," the irreducible material moment that underpins as substratum every irruption of history as contingent evental site within the constantly swaying, nonlinear flow of temporality. Tosaka's theory of historical materialism, therefore, is a complex field of singular crystallizations of matter and time, an analysis of the "infinite number of parallelograms of forces [*Kräfteparallelogrammen*], productive of one result—the historical event [*geschichtliche Ergebnis*]."10

This notion of historical materialism, that is, the historicity of matter and the materiality of historical life, must of necessity demand an epistemology, a theory of knowledge and cognition that can account for ideology, for the cognitive level and experience of the social-conceptual forces in a given conjuncture. On this point, we must begin from the history of epistemology in Marxist theory, and in particular from Lenin. It is unquestionable that Tosaka was in comprehensive agreement with the basic elements of Leninist epistemology, but, I will argue, his discussion and analysis of film, or rather his attempt to place the filmic situation at the core of his social epistemology, marks a decisive break from Lenin in a variety of essential ways. In expounding his highly influential "reflection theory" of knowledge, Lenin developed and defended what he termed his extension of the "general thesis" of historical materialism: that "social consciousness *reflects* social being."<sup>11</sup> As is well known now, this thesis was me-

10. Engels, letter of September 21, 1890, in *MEW*, 37:464; *MECW*, 49:35.

11. V. I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*, in *Collected Works of V. I. Lenin* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1962), 14:323 (hereafter cited as *LCW*).



chanically and formalistically employed in a variety of directions within Marxist theory, resulting in the arid and vacant aesthetic-theoretical apparatus of “socialist realism” and the ludicrous, appalling excesses of forms of “proletarian science” such as Lysenkoism. Nevertheless, for Tosaka and similar Marxist theorists attempting to develop new ways of understanding the concrete social reality of the everyday, Lenin’s basic point remained essential—once you “deny objective reality, given us in sensation, you have lost every weapon against fideism.”<sup>12</sup> But in turning specifically to Tosaka’s grasp of film, I would like to argue that he takes on board Lenin’s basic conceptual point, yet refines it as a tool of analysis for the “reproduction of actual life” by emphasizing the problematic of what he calls “custom” (*fūzoku*).

Rather than a “reflection theory” of epistemology, I would like to refer to Tosaka’s epistemic interventions as a *refraction theory*, one that develops and mobilizes the decisive characteristics of *the film-form as an organ of cognition*. It would be difficult to argue that he effectively and totally overcame the Leninist epistemology of reflection theory, but Tosaka does redirect the question of reflection into one of refraction in order to encompass the *ideational determination of matter in the subject*, that is, the operation *in* cognition of matter. This today is exceptionally important for new materialist theoretical analyses of film and the primacy of the image as the unit of circulation. If reflection theory as exemplified by *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* seems today mechanistic in its theorization of ideation as unilateral reflection of the basic material conjuncture, I would nevertheless like to suggest that, *pace* Tosaka, it is *refraction* that needs to be reconsidered as a dynamic multidirectional operation that can allow us to examine the mutual forms of articulation between the materiality of the image and its ideational structure in cognition. This is why Tosaka’s distinctive placement of the film-form within the logic of custom or everyday morality remains an incisive theoretical wager.

In contrast to the classical mobilization of historical materialism (for example, Stalin’s contribution to the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union [Bolshevik]-Short Course*), to reinvigorate the standpoint and practice of the materialist view of history is to emphasize not the aspect of necessity. Rather, it is contingency that operates here as the decisive problem of history: Tosaka points out the essential role played in the

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12. *Ibid.*, 344.

continual, constant creation of everydayness by film and incisively relates this directly to “custom.” One might well ask—today, at a moment when the domination of film-form (or rather, its successors, the real-time TV image, the online participatory image, etc.), when the primacy of the image and its planar depth is nearly total—why revisit Tosaka’s prewar series of speculative remarks on film as “custom”? An essential reason amongst others is that for Tosaka, the film itself as a planar image was less interesting as a site of analysis than the fullness of the void space lying between the operation of the film in time and the audience’s *practices* of perception—that is, Tosaka was primarily interested in film as one amongst a set of historical, formative-constitutive practices related to the everyday forms of subjectivation that obtained for viewers of films. For him, film is the quintessential moment in which historical materialism becomes the most foundational “guiding thread” for the affirmative, joyous grasp of everyday social-historical life.

He sets in motion his considerations with the statement that what interests him is not the total film-experience—in other words, the cinema as a total social site—but the social-historical implications of “the content that appears on the screen itself.” It is this element of the screen for Tosaka that is essential, the apparatus or surface on and through which content manifests itself into and in relation to the social—that is, it is “the screen” that “gives movement to the visual senses.”<sup>13</sup> Vision and the active, practical dimension of seeing is a critical element for Tosaka for the constitution-formation process and maintenance of the specifically social field, and therefore, it is an essential element of what is particular to film:

Vision itself possesses the characteristics of the touch, the caress. In contrast to the temporal continuity of hearing, it has a feeling of the tension of spatial continuity. Touch is just the same. We can say that, in its general meaning, for the *cognition of actuality*, vision, more than hearing, has a fundamental significance. It is film that places its emphasis on precisely this sense of vision.<sup>14</sup>

In other words, vision, when bracketed by the film-apparatus, immediately encounters a field of sensations that are normally dissociated from

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13. Tosaka Jun, “Eiga no shajitsuteki tokusei to fuzokusei oyobi taishūsei” (1936), in *Shisō to fūzoku*, in *TJz*, 4:283.

14. *Ibid.*

the visual: the tactile, the affective or sensory elements of physical contact, or embodiedness. In the presumed normal order of the senses, vision is both elevated above the other senses, as in the privileging of the visual register of the social field, but simultaneously demoted to the austere, nonsensory, nonintuitive zone of the high “arts.” However, Tosaka attempts to draw our attention precisely to the way in which film immediately gives rise to another sense of vision, one separated from this classical, or traditional, understanding of seeing. That is, in the filmic situation (and its exemplary role as refraction device of the “cognition of actuality” [*jitsuzai no ninshiki*]), vision itself becomes a prosthetic limb, a spatial apparatus through which one “touches” the imbricated spaces of historical content overlapping between the diegetic *socius* and the social body in which the filmic situation intervenes.

In other words, Tosaka argues, “this ‘seeing’ is not merely contemplation, but a practical measure [*jissaiteki shochi*] taken in relation to things.”<sup>15</sup> This practical measure taken by the viewer stems from the particularity of the filmic sense of vision—that is, the viewer encounters the filmic thing (*jibutsu*) through this prosthetic acting-seeing, and in doing so, by objectivizing the filmic object and therefore relativizing it in relation to oneself as filmic subject, encounters the “content on the screen” *in* history and in a practical manner. Within the filmic situation, one can only resort to the contemplative moment in as much as one denies precisely what is filmic; contemplation is an aesthetic comportment superceded by the cinema.

Therefore, for Tosaka, the question that immediately emerges (and which he will return to later in his second essay) is the problem of the aesthetic classification of the filmic in relation to the “arts” or to the “reality” specific to art. He argues: “In other words, what we must consider is not the problem of artistic reality [*geijutsuteki riariti*], but reality in the sense of the regeneration of actual existence [*jitsuzai saisei*]<sup>16</sup>—if we attempt to consider this in relation to film, we can see that in this sense, it is film that fulfills the most real content of vision. The content that appears on the screen is that which is the most concrete.”<sup>16</sup> We must pay close attention here to the term “regeneration” (*saisei*), which we could also translate as “playback,” “replay,” “reproduction,” and so forth. What

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15. Ibid.

16. Ibid., 284.

changes everything for Tosaka in the filmic situation is that in the “emergence” or “birth” (*sei*) of the new, there is a type of repetition (*sai*) in which two or more temporal sequences or crystallizations of historicity smoothly collide in an encounter (the spacing or distance of the seeing and the screen). It is this situation that necessitates a totally different conception of vision because in the repeating oscillation of some aspect of “reality,” the viewing of the filmic situation furnishes the viewer with access to something like the flux of the object in history itself, that is, a flux in which the present and past are articulated to each other in a dense, thick movement that can only be encountered in the content of the screen as social surface.

Tosaka then introduces us to another term for this problematic: “This is what we might call film’s ‘reproduction of the present’ [*shajitsu*], which is nothing other than the reproduction of a random portion (in fact there are already various social, literary, artistic, etc., perspectives on how this portion comes to be chosen, camera angles and so forth) of actual reality as it occurs on the earth.”<sup>17</sup> He does not mean here something naive, such as the notion that the filmic content is an artistic facsimile of some concrete “reality.” Rather, what he is pointing at here is the essential “difference in repetition” through which the film situation allows the viewer to encounter a shard or fragment of historical temporality, not on the level of the concept but on an affective level in which the viewer has no choice but to encounter a process of subjectivation because of the necessity of taking a “practical measure” in relation to the filmic thing. That is, in a broad sense for Tosaka, “repetition is never a historical fact but rather the historical condition under which something new is effectively produced.”<sup>18</sup> Mary Ann Doane has identified on a general level precisely the same overall problematic that Tosaka schematically pointed out in 1936:

The present as point of discontinuity marks the promise of something other, something outside of systematicity. This otherness is perhaps more accurately the lure not only of the nonsystematic but of the anti-systematic. But the present instant also and simultaneously poses a threat, that of meaningless, pure and uncontrollable contingency. Hence, it is contained

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17. *Ibid.*

18. Gilles Deleuze, *Différence et répétition* (Paris: PUF, 1968), 121; *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 90.

but at the same time deployed. Its appeal as that which is asystematic, spontaneous, is, in many respects, deceptive; for chance, contingency, the present moment become themselves the building blocks of a system designed to deal with asystematicity. Such a logic is closer to that of statistics and probability than to that of narrative. But the two logics are subtly interwoven and coordinated in the cinema's "reproduction of the present."<sup>19</sup>

It is exactly this element of contingency that changes everything in the filmic sensation of vision from the contemplative logic of the art object. Because of its element of repetition and reproduction of the present—a present that is cleaved from its existing, sedimented past and “regenerated” in the viewer’s present, thereby forming a new process of articulation to the past as *fait accompli*—film is itself a recombination apparatus for the glimpsing of the contingent combinatory effects of history. As Doane points out, this element of the image-time and its movement is hazardous and full of potential, which is precisely why the struggles to control the space of partial determinacy in the image are so fierce.

But specifically how, and in what ways, does this cinematic space of recombination intersect with the elements of the social field in general? That is, specifically where in the social field are the edges and points of film bisecting the existing situation? Tosaka is constantly reminding his reader that film is something totally new, that film cannot be understood through its aesthetic classification, but only by means of what is proper to film itself. Thus he writes: “The newspapers do not tell us what manners of speech are employed or what color eyes can be seen among the masses at a social event or in the actions of the masses in a plaza, but it is indeed the camera that presents to us precisely this sort of crucial literary spectacle.”<sup>20</sup> In other words, filmic reality has an aesthetic quality, or comes to possess certain artistic characteristics, only in as much as it has a certain fundamental distance, only in as much as it is subtracted from the dimension of “art.” But Tosaka’s compelling example of, for instance, speech patterns and forms (accent, pronunciations, diction, mannerisms, quirks, etc.) and facial expressions and features (mood, disposition, temper, char-

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19. Mary Ann Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time: Modernity, Contingency, the Archive* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 106.

20. Tosaka, “Eiga no shajitsuteki tokusei to fuzokusei oyobi taishūsei,” in *TJz*, 4:285.

acter, eye color, facial movements, tics, etc.) draws our attention to the bracketing dimension of social materiality so crucial to the epistemological consequences of the film-form. Film is thus for Tosaka a surface or plane on which certain social intensities circulate, forming new connections and combinations, where these intensities are removed from the systems of signification in which they are employed on an everyday level and re-routed into different orders of referral. Tosaka constantly therefore emphasizes this separational and recombinatory aspect of the film situation, “especially in the way the affect-image constitutes an order of pure events by separating intensive qualities from bodily states.”<sup>21</sup> By recasting these intensities in different lines of relation, film expresses on the level of its own abstract totality the montage-effect or articulation process of history itself in the historical event’s singular capacity to retrospectively ground its emergence in what were originally contingent circumstances.

It is precisely at such a subtracted moment that film becomes something artistic, irrespective of its genre classification. Thus Tosaka claims: “I certainly want to emphasize that social commentary on current events is another modality with a crucial literary dimension, but that is precisely because it is this *actual reality* [*genjitsuteki riaritī*] *itself*—not ‘artistic’ reality—that possesses this artistic value.”<sup>22</sup> In this sense, the artistic dimension of film stems not from its elements of style, form, or technique, but from its quality of repetition or regeneration. Thus, by initiating sequences of constant regeneration (the “playback” of reality from one crystallized instant to another), the capacity of film to formally parallel the operation of historical temporality places the viewer in a primal artistic situation of direct access to the operation of technique itself.

If this is the case, however, we have to clarify the question of the relation or relay-effect between the “content of the screen,” the screen itself, the viewer, and so forth. Thus when Tosaka inquires into the problem of why film demands a new recombinatory operation for the separation and employment of certain social intensities, he states: “What most basically exemplifies this demand for ‘information-gathering,’ ‘observation,’ ‘examination,’ and so on, is nothing other than the screen itself.”<sup>23</sup> In other words, the screen makes certain demands; the screen itself has a certain

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21. Jacques Rancière. *La fable cinématographique* (Paris: Seuil, 2001); *Film Fables*, trans. Emiliano Battista (New York: Berg, 2006), 112.

22. Tosaka, “Eiga no shajitsuteki tokusei to fuzokusei oyobi taishūsei,” in *TJz*, 4:285.

23. *Ibid.*

detectable intensive relation of affect to the filmic content that circulates on it, and it is the consequent question of prosthesis that emerges to concretize the form of materiality at work here.

In his later essay “Eiga to eiga geijutsu: Abusutorakushon no sayō e” (1937), Tosaka concludes by directing this question to a new focus on the film apparatus as an organ of cognition:

But there is a more foundational determination of film than the question of whether or not it constitutes film art: the fact that it also signifies a new human cognitive capacity [*ninshiki nōryoku*]. Film is a name for a means of cognition [*ninshiki shudan*] or a function of cognition [*ninshiki kinō*].<sup>24</sup>

Tosaka here identifies something critical in the way film operates. That is, it is precisely “the everyday experience of cinema that gives us to ‘see,’ quite unpretentiously, the apodictically reduced, phenomenological object of cognition.”<sup>25</sup> Susan Buck-Morss refers to “the screen as prosthesis” in order to draw our attention to its function as an organ of cognition—“the surface of the cinema screen functions as an artificial organ of cognition. The prosthetic organ of the cinema screen does not merely duplicate human cognitive perception, but changes its nature.”<sup>26</sup> That is, the essential dynamics of film viewing operate at a complex remove from the situation of contemplation: The viewer watches the screen onto which the film is projected, therefore making the screen itself the essential site of mediation between the social situation of viewing and its cognitive intersection on the level of affect with the film-content.

This problematic is fundamentally related to the structure of social-material relationality in general, in other words, the relativizing (or objectifying) moment of relation itself: “When I relate myself to myself as if to something which is directly another, then my relationship is a material one.”<sup>27</sup> Marx’s point can be understood in exactly this sense that Tosaka identifies in film’s “cognitive capacity” and which Buck-Morss refers to

24. Tosaka Jun, “Eiga to eiga geijutsu: Abusutorakushon no sayō e,” in *TJz*, 4:468.

25. Susan Buck-Morss, “The Cinema Screen as Prosthesis of Perception: A Historical Account,” in *The Senses Still: Perception and Memory as Material Culture in Modernity*, ed. C. Nadia Seremetakis (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 46.

26. *Ibid.*, 48.

27. Marx, *The Difference between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature*, in *MECW* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1975), 1:53.

as its “prosthesis.” When I watch a film, I essentially watch something that watches the film on behalf of me, that is, the screen. Thereby I am essentially inserted into a prosthetic vision of myself because in as much as the screen is watching film-content for me, I am encountering myself in a dislocational experience as refracted through a series of “practical measures” in relation to the screen. Immediately, therefore, this objectivized experience of myself *as other* is inserted into a social-material relation to the film-content by means of the screen as organ of cognitive mediation. Thus the relationship between the self and the prosthetic organ of the screen establishes a certain spacing, an opening of the materiality of affect between the self and the social-historical itself. Thus we can quickly understand why Tosaka considered this element of film to be such a powerful site for the analysis of the materiality of social relations in general:

The fundamental problem for film theory is that we must consider film to be first and foremost something epistemological. It is the epistemic modality, under the effect of what is proper to film itself, through which we can first grasp its artistic nature. The fundamental problem is not whether or not film itself is an art, or how a certain film might be considered artistic, but rather prior to this, there is the question of film as a means of cognition, the actual analysis of what role film plays in the history of human cognition. I do not mean here merely that because film has its own particular artistic characteristics or indicates a more general function we ought to respect it. Rather, we require an awareness [*jikaku*] adequate to the fact that film itself is a progressive cognitive function of humanity [*jirinui no shimpōteki na ninshiki kinō*]. Of course, it is entirely correct that film should be understood in a mass sense [*tsūzoku ni*] as an art or (it amounts to the same thing) as leisure, but this cannot serve as a point of departure for the principles of a theory of film. The problem that poses itself to us is that we must precisely grasp the significance of this general artistic sensibility and leisure on the level of a theory of epistemology. For such a question, film is the most suggestive object of analysis.<sup>28</sup>

Film itself, in its role identified here by Tosaka, as a “progressive cognitive function for humanity,” can only be understood in as much as its filmic character is emphasized. Certainly, Tosaka was not hesitant to criti-

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28. Tosaka, “Eiga to eiga geijutsu: Abusutorakushon no sayō e,” in *TJz*, 4:468–469.



cize the film industry, and in particular “big film capital” for its sycophantic and collaborationist relation to government censorship. For instance, he argues:

Even if we talk of the rationalization of censorship, it is not in fact a truly rational rationalization; that is, it is not an attempt at a certain critical resistance to censorship on a rational basis. Rather, big film capital and the authorities enter into an agreement regarding censorship before the fact, and end up rationalizing the most irrational uneconomic things, as in the example of the Nikkatsu Co. talkie *Nozokareta hanayome* [The Missing Bride] for which they re-recorded every single line of dialogue.<sup>29</sup>

But Tosaka was always careful to distinguish this type of critique of the structures of production and circulation of film from his arguments about the film-form, or about the filmic moment of everyday social materiality. I want to emphasize that what is particularly interesting and powerful about Tosaka’s understanding of film is precisely his sense of affirmation, his relentlessly affirmative grasp of the filmic moment’s social potential, and the cognitive operation that it opens and sustains. This separation of the analysis of the power of the cinematic image (whose deployment can function in any number of political contexts, such as the propaganda film) from the epistemological function of film in general as a refraction device of social relationality itself is perhaps the most important methodological intervention Tosaka made in relation to film.

But his emphasis on cognition, and by extension on the processes of subjectivation experienced by the viewer in the filmic situation leads us to position his theoretical discussion in relation to another later trend of film theory, one which Tosaka would find much to agree with and also much that jars with his affirmative grasp of the social potentiality of film as a means of cognition. I mean by this to indicate “apparatus theory,” the trend that characterized the dominant strands of film theoretical writing of the 1970s and 1980s, largely associated with *Cahiers du cinéma* and *Screen* and critics such as Baudry, Mulvey, and so forth. This tendency emphasized the total “apparatus” of the cinematic as a device designed to interpellate specific types of subjects, designed to produce certain effects

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29. Tosaka Jun, “Bunka tōsei no shujusō” (1935), in *Gendai Nihon no shisō tairitsu*, in *TJz*, 5:247.

of subjectivation in the viewer. Apparatus theory certainly strived to produce a strong materialist analysis of the film-situation and quite correctly placed significant emphasis on the institutional elements of this process of viewership, but tended toward a largely negative view of the violent subjectivation of the viewer. Baudry can be considered exemplary of this violent consideration of subjectivation:

The cinematographic apparatus is unique in that it offers the subject perceptions “of a reality” whose status seems similar to that of representations experienced as perception. . . . Cinema, like dream, would seem to correspond to a temporary form of regression, but whereas dream, according to Freud is merely a “normal hallucinatory psychosis,” cinema offers an artificial psychosis without offering the dreamer the possibility of exercising any kind of immediate control.<sup>30</sup>

For Baudry, film operates as a nightmare—a semikinetic, ideational experience of facticity disconnected absolutely from spectator agency, a kind of cognitive straitjacket that both enables a certain realism and yet disables the act. Thus the viewer as social subject, as an individual in the social-historical world, essentially plays no part in the film-situation, but is simply overawed and operated on passively by the parasitic force of the apparatus as a totality. Sean Homer has recently revisited these debates on the history of apparatus theory (in particular, its mobilization of psychoanalysis), arguing that “the idea that there is a single structuring principle that constitutes us as subjects or cinema spectators is probably the most discredited idea of the whole *Screen* project.”<sup>31</sup> This problem of the subjective element of the filmic situation cannot be clarified through the tendency of apparatus theory to place the balance of force into a broad totality of the film-apparatus. Rather for Tosaka, the film “apparatus,” if we can even retain this phraseology, is not a total institutional force, but a

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30. Jean-Louis Baudry, “The Apparatus: Metapsychological Approaches to the Impression of Reality in the Cinema,” in *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology*, ed. Philip Rosen (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 314.

31. Sean Homer, “Cinema and Fetishism: The Disavowal of a Concept,” in *Historical Materialism* 13, no. 1 (2005): 113–114. For reasons of length and topicality, I cannot take up the main arguments of Homer’s article, which are powerfully articulated, and though I have certain misgivings about his concluding remarks in the direction of “culture,” I am in a basic agreement with his attempt to “avoid the over-valorization of representation” while retaining “the idea of underlying structures as constitutive of subjectivity.”

fluctuating surface of relationality on which is inscribed a semisolid recombination of elements that corresponds to—or more specifically, *refracts*—the social field of the prevailing mode of production. He refuses absolutely the *diamat* style of reductivism and functionalism in that he never argues that the film-situation is merely an *expression* of the dominant social relations. Instead, he emphasizes that the film apparatus is a refraction and collage device, a device constantly concretizing and dispersing sketches of relationality itself, a relationality that operates not only through the “determination in the last instance” of the superstructure by the base, but a relationality that images and aggregates into new recombined patterns the material moments of various ideological, physiological, and other intensities, beliefs, everyday practices, habits, styles, attitudes, social improvisations, new encounters, aspirations, and so forth. He calls this entire field “custom,” a problem I will return to shortly.

In as much as I argue that Tosaka’s understanding of the film-subjectivation of the viewer cannot be reduced to the problematics opened by the debates of apparatus theory or its succeeding logics, we must revisit this question of what is actually operative in film aesthetics. Tosaka states as follows:

I want to draw attention to the limitations of the filmic-artistic itself when examined from the vantage point of film as a whole. In other words, it is a fact that when one hears the word “film” within society in general, one immediately thinks of the *art of film*—thus, in common sense, film is considered something internal to art, and this equation itself is considered to be something obvious, something that goes without saying: Of course, this view is mistaken. The cultural commodities offered to us on the streets are for the most part films as film art, but recently, *it is a fact of the streets* [*gaitō no jujitsu*] that the news film has been valued highly, and the news film is already absolutely not a type of film as art, nor representative of film art.<sup>32</sup>

Tosaka considers film under precisely this problem—the “facts of the streets.” In other words, he is less interested in how film might appear on the level of the concept than he is in the actual-material lines of connection drawn by the insertion of the filmic situation into the “streets,” into

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32. Tosaka, “Eiga to eiga geijutsu: Abusutorakushon no sayō e,” in *TJz*, 4:466.

the flux of social life. But what does he mean by this consideration of “film” and “film art”? Essentially, he is drawing our attention to the fact that “in the prosthetic cognition of the cinema, the difference between documentary and fiction is thus effaced. Of course we still ‘know’ that they are different. But they inhabit the surface of the screen as cognitive equivalents. Both the real event and the staged event are absent.”<sup>33</sup> This is precisely why, “if we seriously examine the news film as a form, we can immediately understand that film itself can never be reduced to an art (*eiga ga kesshite geijutsu ni tsukinai koto ga wakaru*).”<sup>34</sup> On the level of the cognitive operation of the content on the screen, there is no meaningful differentiation of genre in as much genre is not something that alters the fundamental filmic situation: “Genre itself can be determined by the given form of art, but whether or not something qualifies as ‘art’ can never be determined solely on the basis of genre.”<sup>35</sup> That is, drawing a series of distinctions between films on the basis of a system of aesthetics derived from the literary arts, the existing visual arts, the theater, and so forth, will inevitably result in an erasure or foreclosure of the specific dynamic motor-force of the filmic, which is the screen:

Thus a doubled consideration of the conception of film art is necessary here. The first point is that the general understanding of film is derived more than anything else from the common sense that it is an “art.” The second point is that film here is foreclosed by a series of stereotypes derived from a notion of the artistic stemming from an extra-filmic common sense.<sup>36</sup>

By forcing film-function through the sieve of the prevailing conventions of aesthetic judgment, precisely the “function” element of film, which depends on the prosthetic cognitive operation of the screen and its simultaneous proximity and distance from the viewer, will be elided and forced into the background. Thus Tosaka starkly differentiates himself from aestheticized notions of the film-form: “I want to emphasize and draw our attention to something of far greater importance than whether or not these forms constitute ‘art’ or not—the fact that before all else, they

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33. Buck-Morss, “The Cinema Screen as Prosthesis of Perception,” 50.

34. Tosaka, “Eiga to eiga geijutsu: Abusutorakushon no sayō e,” in *TJz*, 4:466.

35. *Ibid.*, 467.

36. *Ibid.*, 467–468.

are forms of *film*.<sup>37</sup> In other words, what Tosaka argues essentially is that film constitutes “a place of intrinsic indiscernability between art and non-art”<sup>38</sup> and that it is this undecidable aspect of the filmic situation that is its social-historical potential, the site wherein an encounter with the essential materiality of the everyday becomes possible.

Alain Badiou has strongly emphasized this point in arguing that film’s element of the everyday, the fact that it “gathers around identifiably non-artistic materials, which are ideological indicators of the epoch,” means that film “intrinsically and not empirically”<sup>39</sup> is a *mass* phenomenon. This mass-character (*taishūsei*) is exactly the element Tosaka draws our attention to—it is critical to emphasize that Tosaka means something slightly different than the commonsensical understanding of the mass-character of the filmic situation. That is, he absolutely does not intend by this formulation to enter the discourse of “high” and “low” “culture.” His argument instead is that it is precisely this schematic of aesthetic judgment and contemplation, based on the prevailing hierarchies of taste, that obscures and elides the more fundamental elements of film—what he calls its “material function” and its “social-ontological conditions”:

It is the characteristic of the material function [*butsuriteki kinō*], indeed the condition of its social being [*shakaiteki sonzai jōken*], of film to necessitate a special interaction between some form of the artistic and the nonartistic. Precisely this point requires us to rethink the question of the artistic within the cinema, and this point can be an operation for the general re-examination of the concept as it extends to the totality of the artistic.<sup>40</sup>

Tosaka does not refer to film as a “mass art” but rather points to its “mass-character” because the first formulation remains pegged to the discourse of “art” and thereby enters the configurational zone of aesthetic judgment. Yet Tosaka was not immune to or incapable of aesthetic appreciation and analysis of film. For example, in the May 1, 1937, issue of

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37. *Ibid.*, 467.

38. Alain Badiou, “Considérations sur l’état actuel du cinéma,” in *L’art du cinéma* 24 (March 1999); “Philosophy and Cinema” in *Infinite Thought*, trans. Oliver Feltham and Justin Clemens (London: Continuum, 2003), 111.

39. Badiou, “Philosophy and Cinema,” 113.

40. Tosaka, “Eiga to eiga geijutsu,” in *TJz*, 4:468.

*Yuiken News*, Tosaka reported on the release of two films—*Ramona* (presumably the 1936 version directed by Henry King) and *The Garden of Allah* (1936, directed by Richard Boleslawski; Japanese title: *Sabaku no kaen* [Garden of the Desert]), both of which had been filmed in Technicolor—and wrote a short reflection on the meaning of the advent of the color film.<sup>41</sup>

He begins by arguing that a characteristic aesthetic division between the theater and film had until that point been the role of color; this short piece is not theoretical in intention or in execution, but Tosaka does find something powerful in Technicolor. Although many found it overwrought and gaudy, for Tosaka, the density and saturation of Technicolor is a kind of positive or affirmative exaggeration, one that intersects with the materiality of film itself, a “type of painterly *déformation*” that shows us the “concentrated brilliance equivalent to viewing the reflections projected in the camera obscura.”<sup>42</sup> But again, what Tosaka is interested in here is not necessarily the ability of film to mimic the hitherto existing aesthetic situation of contemplation but rather the cognitive function it represents. Therefore, even in his casual remarks on the advent of Technicolor, Tosaka is keen to emphasize to us that this overwrought coloring itself has a material operation in which it functions to give us a certain epistemological access to the projection-situation itself, by displacing the camera-gaze and allowing viewers to observe as if they were touching directly upon the projection-element of the filmic apparatus. Thus, even in these cursory theorizations of the role of Technicolor, Tosaka asserts that “the projection mechanism allows the differential elements (the discontinuity inscribed by the camera) to be suppressed, bringing the relation into play. The individual images as such disappear so that movement and continuity can

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41. Tosaka in general treats the film as form, that is, the ways in which film-form is constitutive of and mutually imbricated with screen content. However, we should pay attention to the fact that Tosaka’s primary interest in specific films was located in *popular* or *mainstream* film productions. His interest in the “mass” element of film and its relation to the everyday stems from his identification of the film as a site of the concentration and deployment of popular fantasy in terms of the relation of the spectator to the screen as prosthetic organ of cognition. In other words, his film critique focused its attention on what Naoki Sakai has called “the spectator’s scopic drive” and the relation of this concentrated desire to the role of “film as a subjective technology”; see Naoki Sakai, *Nihon/eizō/Beikoku: Kyōkan no kyōdōtai to teikokuteki kokuminshugi* (Tokyo: Seidosha, 2007), 183, 194.

42. See Tosaka, “Tennenshoku eigasan: Shikisai eiga no mondai,” *Yuiken nyūsu*, no. 70 (May 1, 1937), reprinted in *TJZ*, supplemental volume, 300–301.

appear. But movement and continuity are the visible expression of their relations, derived from the tiny discontinuities between the images.”<sup>43</sup> Tosaka continuously and exhaustively emphasizes to us that to situate film in a contemplative, aestheticized manner is to violently disregard the cognitive function of film, the operations in which the film situation itself intersects, interacts, and interpenetrates the social body, forming a zone of flux in which the subjective dimension of matter can be encountered in a frontal fashion. This is why “within the cinema, it is precisely ‘film,’ not ‘art,’ that is the question. That is, the primary and fundamental question is the total function on the epistemic level [*ninshikijō no kinō zenpan*] of this thing we call ‘film.’”<sup>44</sup>

What this epistemic function of film then operates in accordance with is a certain problem of realism. But Tosaka refuses absolutely the sense of realism that is operative within the existing aesthetic discourse. Rather, he wants to emphasize that filmic realism is something highly specific, something unprecedented—something that, as Buck-Morss has also alluded to above, produces a sequence in which the cognitive function of film is not only *responded to* in viewership but in which the filmic situation has actual-material effects on cognition itself. It is this sequence of the realism that inheres in film in which its effect of the “reproduction of the present” (*jisshasei*) appears as a diorama of the reproduction of “actual life” (*wirklichen Lebens*) and thereby creates a line of encounter with the “facts of the streets” (*gaitō no jijitsu*). Thus Tosaka argues:

In other words, film’s specific realism exists at the point when actual reality—just as it becomes artistic reality, and at the same time, at this same point, something else is revealed, something that confers a mass sense of satisfaction [*taishūteki na manzokukan*]<sup>43</sup>—that cannot be duplicated in art. This is something rather different from the question of the theatrical or artistic value that film ought to have—this “something” rather consists in the predetermined conditions [*sore izen no senketsu jōken*] that existed prior to this consideration of value; to ignore these conditions and directly criticize the theatrical or literary essence of film is perhaps to foreclose and reduce the filmic to merely an instance of theater or literature. The

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43. Baudry, “Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus,” in *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology*, 291.

44. Tosaka, “Eiga to eiga geijutsu,” in *TJz*, 4:468.

simple but complex fact that one can observe something on the screen in the same way as one observes the actuality of the world is sufficient to give us what is most interesting and specific to film as a form.<sup>45</sup>

This element of filmic realism is, even more so than in Tosaka's era, a decisive question for our moment. This "simple but complex fact" that the filmic situation as a totality cannot be easily dissociated from the social-historical moment in which the projection-situation exists, nor from the diegetic reproduction of life on the screen-surface, shows us what is most essential in film. It is this prosthetic dimension of the filmic moment that film thinks for us, that we think by means of the filmic brain. This prosthesis is precisely what gives the filmic situation its central and "directorial" role in social life: It shows us frontally and visually how certain intensities are combined in order to form the combinations at the core of social life, the materiality itself in its conditions of flux just prior to concatenation into integral elements.

But Tosaka here also raises the question of "value," exactly in relation to the social field film interacts with. Through the structure of value, film's inherent social role is elided or converted into something other than what is proper to it, something other than the cognitive effect of the prosthetic screen. Indeed, "it is value that converts every product into a social hieroglyphic [*gesellschaftliche Hieroglyphe*]. Later on, we try to decipher the hieroglyphic, to get behind the secret of our own social products; for to stamp an object of utility as a value is just as much a social product as language."<sup>46</sup> In order to "get behind" (we should think seriously of the phrasing here in relation to the screen) the "social hieroglyphic" of film's mass-character, Tosaka refuses to reduce the filmic moment to the category of art, to reduce the historical dynamics of the filmic situation to a balance of "contemplation" or aesthetic distance, a movement that would eliminate precisely the flux of sociality that is so crucial for the position of film within his work. Therefore, in order to see what is behind this "social hieroglyphic" of the film-situation, we need to excavate more comprehensively the term he utilizes to situate film as a category: not "art" (*geijutsu*) but "custom" (*fūzoku*).

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45. Tosaka, "Eiga no shajitsuteki tokusei to fuzokusei oyobi taishūsei," in *TJz*, 4:288–289.

46. Marx, *Das Kapital* 1, in *MEW*, 23:88; *Capital* 1, in *MECW* (New York: International Publishers, 1996), 35:85.



In asking what this realism specific to film is, Tosaka needs to clarify what “real” he relies on in the first place. Thus he asks: “But what sort of thing constitutes the actual reality of society? In general, it appears by and large in the forms of custom [*fūbutsu; fūzoku*]: It is the primary condition of film to show us these forms of custom.”<sup>47</sup> And in turn, we would want to inquire into what “custom” itself is. In this sense, custom for Tosaka is “a ground of material, affective, physical, and social embodiment” (*butteki de kankakuteki de nikutaiteki de shakaiteki na gushōsei no jiban*) and its “sensation” (*kankaku*).<sup>48</sup> Thus, “custom” in Tosaka allows him to produce, like the later Lukács, a contemporary analysis of “typicality” or “typicity,” that is, an analysis of the level of the social itself, or the mediated moment of the social-historical, which intervenes as an oscillating surface or as the “local” moment in the dialectic.<sup>49</sup>

Moreover, Tosaka emphasizes that the cognitive function—in other words, the prosthetic operation of the filmic situation—is a perfect means of encounter with this conception of custom: “What shows us these customs specifically as *form* is nothing other than the screen.”<sup>50</sup> That is, he emphasizes here that by means of the screen, we can encounter, for instance, not the raised eyebrow itself, but the eyebrow-intensity that combines differentially in the diegetic social field. We can thus encounter the abstract raised eyebrow precisely because the screen itself *intuits* the social lines of affect and combination that the eyebrow-intensity relates to. There is no need, in the filmic situation, to “interpret” or to “infer meaning,” such as the notion that the raised eyebrow “connotes” suspicion, surprise, skepticism, distrust, and so forth. In fact, in the cinematic encounter, the eyebrow as a pure intensity in which significations are materially gathered is mobilized as a direct concatenation of various other affective intensities, thereby allowing us to “see” a kind of pure custom—custom in its subtractive dimension, shorn of the need to be “explained.” This element of the direct cognitive function of film is precisely what Tosaka intends by the notion of a “filmic realism” that shows us the sensa-

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47. Tosaka, “Eiga no shajitsuteki tokusei to fuzokusei oyobi taishūsei,” in *TJz*, 4:286.

48. *Ibid.*, 288.

49. See Stefan Morawski, “L’evoluzione della teoria lukacsiana matura dell’estetica,” in *Il marxismo della maturità di Lukács*, ed. Guido Oldrini (Naples: Prismi, 1983), especially 118.

50. Tosaka, “Eiga no shajitsuteki tokusei to fuzokusei oyobi taishūsei,” in *TJz*, 4:286.

tion of custom as form. It is this affective connectivity to materiality that Tosaka finds most powerful in the analysis of custom:

Popular affect is the materialization of habituality [*shūzokusei*] or human relationality [*jinrin*] in consciousness, and custom is its materialization in the material, sensuous forms of clothing, architecture, behavior, facial expressions, and so on.<sup>51</sup>

Custom mobilizes and creates lines of intensity whereby relationality itself appears. Custom in this sense is always a zone of partial determination, one in which the combinatory processes of the social-historical itself are in a state of constant improvisation, or spontaneously regenerated composition. It is in this sense that Tosaka perceives in the field of custom exactly the problems later theorized in terms of “performativity”; for instance, when he discusses “the secret of the uniform (*seifuku no himitsu*) or of garments that express class status.”<sup>52</sup> He makes a particularly interesting aside here in identifying the problem of gender as indicative of the state fear of the flux of custom, the state’s need to control and monitor this zone of improvisation:

In the male–female relation, which is the most primary site of custom, the question of the distinction between male and female clothing is an extremely serious one: The police are, in fact, always on the lookout for men in women’s clothing and women in men’s clothing.<sup>53</sup>

Tosaka does not develop this point further, but we should pay close attention to the fact that he mobilizes this example within his remarks on *film*. That is, the filmic situation is one in which the diegetic performativity of gender identification, through its filmic realism, interacts critically with the “facts of the streets,” by imaging/imagining forms of relation and performance that the state deems too unstable to be allowed. That is, the state necessarily feels the need to control and oversee “distinction” within custom, precisely because custom is a field in which different combinations are as possible as those combinations that have been inherited. The

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51. *Ibid.*

52. *Ibid.*

53. *Ibid.*, 287.

filmic screen, in its intersection and overlapping with the social field, reveals precisely this constitutive instability as potential.

Tosaka further briefly develops this highly topical and political direction at a time and in a conjuncture (1936) when it was no flippant task to call such logic into question, remarking, “Even those who can’t really grasp the abstract ideas of ‘national thought’ [*kokumin shisō*] or the ‘national polity/body’ [*kokutai*], nevertheless have no trouble directly understanding the notion of ‘Japanese customs’ [*Nihonjin no fūzoku*]. In fact, it is precisely in this fact that we might point to the concrete expression of this ‘national thought.’”<sup>54</sup> Tosaka’s crucial point in relation to custom here is that this affective directness of custom as pure form, which circulates on the screen, has far more social force than the abstract propaganda formulations of the state. When the state continually emphasizes the need to serve the “national body” (*kokutai*), there is no difficulty in encountering this body when it appears, subtracted from its conceptual mobilization, as a pure intensity of bodies on the screen. There the national body can be apprehended as a virtuality, but precisely because the film-form mobilizes custom, the most concrete dimension of social-material life, such a national body is at the same time and for the first time understandable in a direct, affective, kinetic manner such that its social effect is seamless: “It is film that first allowed us to see this sensation of custom itself, and it is in this affective sensibility, in other words, in its *sociality*, that we can find the most interesting elements of film. Within actuality, the social phenomenon becomes visible as custom.”<sup>55</sup> Tosaka theorizes this kinetic-affective element of the appearance of custom within the filmic situation as an “erotics,” as a question of “eroticism.” He writes:

If we refer to the erotic (vital-cultural [*seibutsteki bunkateki*]) moment of human society as “eroticism” in a detached manner, we can come to grasp its meaning as the fundamental element of custom as a whole. Thus, it is an obvious fact that film, which enacts the destiny [*shukumei*] of this sensation of custom, which gives it its privileged status, never loses this aspect that constantly pursues the erotic [*fudan ni erotishizumu o tsuikyū suru sokumen*].<sup>56</sup>

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54. Ibid.

55. Ibid.

56. Ibid.

He continues:

Film demands of the audience a confrontation between the audience's consciousness (life-consciousness, social consciousness, and so on) and the forms of custom that appear on the screen. This sense of custom, as has been discerned by numerous people, is connected to mankind through the universality of the sexual relation, and it is precisely this point that we can consider one of the foundations of the mass-character [*taishūsei*] possessed by film-content itself. (Mankind's consciousness of genus [*rui-shiki*] emerges from sexual relations; *Menschengeschlecht* = *Geschlecht* [human species = sex].) The consideration of sexual morality by the masses takes place through the screen.<sup>57</sup>

The screen itself is the enabling device for mass sexual consciousness to cognize itself and thereby, through this movement, produce the reactive dimension of custom, in other words, popular morality:

Thus the mass characteristics of film appeal to the general sensibilities of the members of a society (their sense of actuality, their sense of custom, their eroticism, and so on), and precisely at the point when these sensibilities migrate over into ethics, the sense of morality, and social thought, their mass essence is revealed.<sup>58</sup>

It is this relation of the kinetic-affective form of custom to the diegetic appearance of custom on the screen that fundamentally concretizes film's particular and unique realism; that is, "the cinema shows us what our consciousness is. Our consciousness is an effect of montage. There is no continuous consciousness, there are only compositions of consciousness. . . . There is only collage, cutting, and splicing."<sup>59</sup> I will return to this "splicing" shortly as it is the central argument of Tosaka's understanding of historical temporality, but in examining this element of custom within film, we can clearly see that Tosaka's historical materialism is something quite different from the expected 1930s Comintern-style "philosophy of history." Having said that, however, I think we can also say that it is sig-

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57. *Ibid.*, 288.

58. *Ibid.*

59. Paul Virilio and Sylvère Lotringer, *Pure War* (New York: Semiotext(e), 1983), 49.

nificantly *more* radical, and further, suggestive of a far more comprehensive grasp of the materiality of social relations, bound together by the force of Tosaka's affirmative sense of historical vitality. In short, we can consider Tosaka, like Tarde, who always spoke of the "great stream of custom" (*grande fleuve du coutume*), a decisive thinker of the "history of the materialism of affect," a materialism "of the incorporeal and virtual," someone who thus posed an alternative point of entry and line of inquiry into the constitution of the social by emphasizing the materiality of the *affective* element of social relations.<sup>60</sup> Tosaka both insists on the fundamental and central materiality of an apparently immaterial register of affects, customs, norms, sensations, sentiments, reactions, tendencies, feelings, and so on, precisely by demonstrating how these seemingly immaterial elements operate materially in the filmic situation. That is, by extension, Tosaka locates the essential dimension of film not in immateriality, nor simply in a substantialized sense of materiality, but in the dimension of matter that exists precisely *in* immateriality—that is, the subjective moment of matter, not its natural-scientific "objective" presence. This demonstrates to us again the subtle but total difference between what I have called Tosaka's "refraction theory" of knowledge from Lenin's conception of reflection in consciousness of the dominant relations of the mode of production.

What Tosaka discovers in the refraction of sociality through the camera lens is that "the oscillating image, seeking to render visible the invisibility of time, moves between the inhuman (the nonhuman becomings, the durations that supersede our own) and the human (the limit of our representations), the world of angels (with its absolute memory, able to preserve the monumental and the insignificant) and the world of men (immersed in a time that both constitutes them and exceeds them)."<sup>61</sup> In other words, the formation-process and combination-process of pure singularities (intensities, bodies, organs, surfaces, affects, expressions) on the screen is the operative moment that opens and shows forth the figurational character of the materiality of the present. Thus it is not that film is merely one site in which we can glimpse the figuration of social life through custom, but rather its essential site:

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60. Maurizio Lazzarato, "Gabriel Tarde, un vitalisme politique," postface to *Œuvres de Gabriel Tarde*, vol. 1 (Paris: Les empêcheurs de penser en ronde, 1999), 105, 150.

61. César Guimarães, *Imagens da memória: entre o legível e o visível* (Belo Horizonte: Editora UFMG, 1997), 236.

The artistic novelty and futurity of film is completely rooted in its portrayal of custom through the camera. Film is the quintessential destiny [*uttetsuke no shukumei*] of custom precisely because when the camera's function of reproducing the present [*jisshateki kinō*] is called forth and turned toward the depiction of the social, it immediately becomes a direct depiction of custom itself.<sup>62</sup>

Rancière has effectively summarized this “destinal” element of film, the quality of the film-image that presents itself as the quintessence of the social field and its “infinity” of multiplications and figurations: “Its destiny is to couple this infinity to the order of its own infinity: that of the infinitely small that is equal to the infinitely large. Its exemplary expression is to be found in the “crystal-image,” in the crystal of thought-image that links the actual image to the virtual one, and that differentiates them in their very indiscernibility, which is also the indiscernibility of the real and the imaginary.”<sup>63</sup> This indiscernibility was extensively examined by Tosaka earlier, in his discussion of the inability to differentiate on the level of genre the filmic-cognitive operation of documentary and fiction precisely because in both cases the image as bearer of the materiality of the social field still circulates on the screen identically. Hence, the decisive move in Tosaka's understanding of film-function comes in his location of it within the field he calls “custom.”

Only through clarifying how it is that custom constitutes the essential lens through which the specifically *material* aspect of the film situation operates, can we clarify in the final analysis why film is such a crucial laboratory for Tosaka's understanding of historical materialism. In this vein, Harootunian reminds us of an important theoretical vantage point on this question by arguing that for Tosaka “custom is society's physiognomy, its visage (recalling Benjamin's identification of dates as the physiognomy of history).”<sup>64</sup> Let us return to the earlier example I mentioned of Tosaka's highlighting of the various intensities dispersed in film's calculus of aesthetic subtraction and social recombination: “The newspapers do not tell us what manners of speech are employed, or what color eyes can be seen among the masses in a social event, or in the actions of the masses

62. Tosaka Jun, *Ninshikiron to wa nani ka* (1937), in *TJz*, 3:430.

63. Rancière, *Film Fables*, 113.

64. H. D. Harootunian, *History's Disquiet: Modernity, Cultural Practice, and the Question of Everyday Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 143.

in a plaza”; rather it is “the camera that presents to us precisely this sort of crucial literary spectacle.”<sup>65</sup> What is at work here for Tosaka, and in the “quintessential destiny” (*uttetsuke no shukumei*) of film, is essentially the problem identified by Deleuze and Guattari in the question of “faciality” (*visagéité*):

If human beings have a destiny, it is rather to escape the face, to dismantle the face and facializations, to become imperceptible, to become clandestine, not by returning to animality, nor even by returning to the head, but by quite spiritual and special becoming-animal, by strange true becomings that get past the wall and get out of the black hole, that make *faciality traits* themselves finally elude the organization of the face.<sup>66</sup>

Tosaka’s interest in faciality traits as depicted in the filmic situation stems from the fact that as these traits are re-imaged in the film’s reproduction of the present (*jisshasei*), they constitute new lines of intensity on the screen surface, and it is precisely in the film, that as intensities, these faciality traits can exceed, or “elude,” the hegemony of the organization of the face. Tosaka draws our attention to this moment for its essential materiality, that is, the fact that in this filmic conjuncture, wherein the previously composed elements of a face shed their accepted roles and improvisationally recompose themselves in different articulations, we see the creative potential of historical life itself. This faciality in Tosaka’s consideration of the filmic situation shows us therefore that “the materiality of the commonplace, in which practices are repeated, is never completed, always constitutes a partial historicization, and stands in opposition to the lofty and the profound world beyond custom that is premised on fullness and completion.”<sup>67</sup> We should underline here the dynamics of verticality: Tosaka absolutely refuses in his theoretical framework the logic of depth, preferring to always read the inscribed surface of the social field, this “ciphering” (*chifffrage*)<sup>68</sup> of the surface that characterizes the filmic situation. That is, the reason Tosaka pays particular attention to the

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65. Tosaka, “Eiga no shajitsuteki tokusei to fuzokusei oyobi taishūsei,” in *TJz*, 4:285.

66. Deleuze and Guattari, *Mille plateaux* (Paris: Minuit, 1980), 209; *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 171.

67. Harootunian, *History’s Disquiet*, 147.

68. Deleuze and Guattari, *Mille plateaux*, 215; *A Thousand Plateaus*, 175.

cinema is that what is new in film is not inherently the technical apparatus or the technological level required for the projection-event. Rather it is the “discovery-exploration” of the *socius*, the social body itself, its “elements, surfaces, volumes, and thicknesses,”<sup>69</sup> the “ground of embodiment” (*gushōsei no jiban*), the stratum of bodily traits that have dispersed as intensities and recombined in new fragments of social materiality.

This social, in fact, *historical*, aspect of the filmic situation stems from the employment of a new form of abstraction (as in the making of various dispersed intensities out of the facial trait, intensities that can exceed the face-form) that allows film to encounter the social field and simultaneously function as an organ of its recomposition. Thus Tosaka argues:

However, it is not merely that it is essential for the distinction of various cultural modalities (modalities of cognition)—it is essential because the ground of the operation of abstraction is contained within the function of cognition or the means of cognition. The cinema (not necessarily what we merely understand by “film” as one modality of culture) must possess a unique form of abstraction in order to operate as a function of cognition or means of cognition. Perhaps we might say that this abstraction itself is a mediation that connects film to other means of cognition.<sup>70</sup>

We should recall here the importance for Marx of abstraction, the fact that the decisive shift in his critique of the hitherto existent political economy can be cast precisely as a problem of how abstraction operates within the social field, that is, not at a remove from the situation but immanent to its very reproduction:

Capital as self-expanding value embraces not only class relations, a society of a definite character resting on the existence of labor in the form of wage-labor. It is a movement, a circuit-process [*Kreislaufprozess*]. . . . Therefore it can be understood only as a movement, not as a thing at rest. Those who regard the gaining by value of independent existence [*die*

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69. Michel Foucault, “Sade, sergent du sexe,” in *Dits et écrits*, vol. 1 (Paris: Gallimard, 2001), 1688–1690; “Sade: Sergeant of Sex,” in *Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984*, ed. Paul Rabinow, vol. 2, (New York: The New Press, 1998), 227.

70. Tosaka, “Eiga to eiga geijutsu,” in *TJz*, 4:469.



*Verselbständigung des Werts*] as a mere abstraction forget that the movement of industrial capital *is this abstraction in actu*.<sup>71</sup>

Tosaka's emphasis on the recomposition, specific to film, of matter in movement can be read, in a sense, as a close, dislocational reformulation of Marx's essential methodological point here:

Appearance [*keisō*] and form [*keishiki*] emerge from matter. This is a necessary movement, one prior even to the sense of matter as being. Matter must signify movement itself precisely in as much as it instaurates its own form through a self-development. Thus matter is a type of content that attributes form to itself through its own particular movement.<sup>72</sup>

Matter, as it appears in the filmic situation, is not a referent. It is not the case that film merely "alludes" to the material. Fundamentally, film demonstrates to us that matter, the materiality that is most concrete, most fundamental to the problematic of historical materialism, is precisely this filmic matter; in other words, matter is movement itself. The recomposed intensities on the film screen oscillate and shift phase in a transformational and improvised circuit-process (*Kreislaufsprozess*) in which matter emerges from cognitive rhythm itself. But let us examine more closely Tosaka's particular understanding of matter as a problem. In taking up a materialist analysis of Heidegger in his 1936 *Lectures on Contemporary Materialism*, Tosaka explains his understanding of materiality (*bushitsusei*) in general, in particular in relation to what he calls "everyday space" (*nichijōteki kūkan*) and "space itself" (*kūkan jitai*):

The material cannot be clearly apperceived as belonging to universal philosophical categories through the common-sense concept of matter.

71. Marx, *Das Kapital* 2, in *MEW*, 24:109; *Capital* 2, in *MECW* (New York: International Publishers, 1998), 36:110 (translation modified).

72. Tosaka, *Gendai yuibutsuron kōwa* (1934), in *TJz*, 3:272. We should pay close attention to the term "appearance" (形相 *keisō*) here, which can also be read (形相 *gyōsō*), a term whose everyday meaning could function as a quite accurate translation of exactly what Deleuze and Guattari intend by "faciality" (*visagéité*). This materiality of the movement specific to film should be closely connected to Marx's analysis of the form of value, something Deleuze's work makes clear. On this point, see Nagahara Yutaka, "Shinemateki kachi keitairon: Sobyō," in *Gendai shisō*, vol. 36-15 (Tokyo: Seidosha, December 2008), 100-111.

Thus it often loses sight of the connections between everyday space and other phenomenal forms of space (since what provides these connections is the materiality that is always-already contained within everyday space) and confuses it with the concept of physiological matter [*butsurigakuteki busshitsu*]. In contrast we must cognize the materiality possessed by space itself (its *Da*-character) as the most transparent and primal. The nature of space itself is this primal, ultimate materiality (matter as philosophical category), a materiality that comes *from matter itself*.<sup>73</sup>

What Tosaka intends by this formulation was also extensively theorized by his contemporary, theorist Kakehashi Akihide (also a member of Yuiken), who throughout his writing continually emphasized the point that “matter must be understood as simultaneously noematic *and* noetic.”<sup>74</sup> The traditional understanding of matter as merely noematic, in other words, as simply that which is experienced, as dependent on the perceiving subject, cannot account for the materiality of the filmic situation. Rather, the matter encountered through the prosthetic cognitive organ of the screen, and the diegetic “reproduction of the present” that interacts with the broad social field, is a materiality that is both noematic and simultaneously noetic—that is, this matter itself is subjective; this matter itself is experiencing materiality in as much as the screen is the organ that thinks on behalf of the viewer, thereby opening breaches of access to a zone of historical flux.

The absolute cannot be something non-determined but ought to be something capable of determination. In other words, it is absolute, not absolute nothingness. This was Lenin’s philosophical concept of matter. Even if we say that this matter, which Lenin made a philosophical concept, should be determinant, this does not indicate that it is simply objectively [*taishōteki ni*] determined. In noematic determination, by merely relativizing the

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73. Tosaka, *Gendai yuibutsuron kōwa*, in *TJz*, 3:264. On Tosaka’s understanding of space and in particular its commonalities with Deleuze’s theoretical investigations, see Koizumi Yoshiyuki’s “Chokkan kūkan to nōkūkan: Tosaka Jun to Durūzu,” in *Gendai shisō*, vol. 34-8 (July 2006), 158-171; see also the slightly different translation of “On Space” in this volume.

74. Kakehashi Akihide, “Nishida tetsugaku o tataeru,” in *Gakusei hyōron* (May 1937), reprinted in *Kakehashi Akihide keizai tetsugaku chosakushū*, vol. 5 (Miraisha, 1987), 345.

absoluteness of matter, only its natural-scientific concept emerges. As something self-moving, absolute matter must be something in which the self continually determines the self itself.<sup>75</sup>

Here and on this point, Tosaka—in this beautiful expression of affirmation for the social itself—emphasizes that such an experience of the noetic element of matter is gained precisely through the cognitive prosthesis of the cinema screen, the organ that alters and recomposes the essential rhythm of movement of social intensities, the organ through which we can encounter this noetic matter as movement itself:

In terms of natural phenomena, it is the screen that teaches humans the goodness of the materiality of the world, the joy of the movement of matter. By and large, we observe these things everyday, but this element of goodness, this joy, actually occurs to us first when it appears on the screen. Movement is a language in which matter speaks through a body [*undō wa busshitsu ga mi o motte kataru kotoba da*].<sup>76</sup>

This affirmation of matter as movement on the screen demonstrates to us the “joy” of materiality—what Tosaka intends by this formulation is precisely that such a materiality of the rhythm of movement, the pulsations and patterns of the social composition of historical materiality itself, shows us the zone of flux; it shows us how much power we have and how little we need to respect the inherited figurations of social life. Benjamin famously identified the same unique element of film as a “room for play” (*Spielraum*), exactly what I have referred to here as the space of partial determinacy that the filmic situation produces in its interchange with the social field as a whole: “What is lost in the withering of semblance, or decay of the aura, in works of art is matched by a huge gain in room for play [*Spielraum*]. This space for play is widest in film. In film, the element of semblance has been entirely displaced by the element of play.”<sup>77</sup> Benjamin here asks us to heed the “play” that constitutes the forces of historicity itself, in other words, we must pay close attention in this question to “the cinema’s historical dimension. The indexically inscribed contingency

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75. *Ibid.*, 350.

76. Tosaka, “Eiga no shajitsuteki tokusei to fuzokusei oyobi taishūsei,” in *TJz*, 4:286.

77. Walter Benjamin, *Selected Writings*, vol. 3 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 127.

is not the embodiment of history as the mark of the real or referent, but history as the mark of what could have been otherwise.”<sup>78</sup> At the center of this marking of history, and the essential role of film in illustrating it, is the question of time.

Tosaka theorized at length the definition of temporality itself, the differentiation of “time” from “temporality” as defined by the “splice” (*ki-zami*).<sup>79</sup> While I will not extensively examine this theory of the “splice” itself, let us immediately notice that this theoretical grasp of the structure of temporality can be read as inspired by, or as a direct analogy to, the filmic situation, wherein the splicing or cut is precisely the material practice that allows the filmic time of the screen as well as diegetic time to distinguish itself from (yet image itself as commensurable with) everyday social time: “The cut is the mechanism whereby temporality becomes a product of the apparatus, repudiating the role of cinema as a record of a time outside itself. The cinema becomes a Freudian time machine rather than the pure promise of an indexical link to the referent.”<sup>80</sup> Through the splice or cut, history itself becomes a possibility, the infinite multiplication of the hazard inscribes itself in the very center of experience. In the film, “though elided by continuity, and even by the temporal proximity of instantaneous juxtaposition, the splice always inscribes a fissure of discontinuity.”<sup>81</sup> Even in the situation of the film without splicing, as in the long single uncut take, the splice is effected through different visual, aural, and kinetic intensities that make the diegetic situation commensurable with the social field in general. In other words, this splicing, in a sense, is “the property that allows the cinema to actualize the past (not because the image of the cinema is always in the present, but because the past, without the need to utilize a primary procedure such as the image-flux, can be represented such as the present is).”<sup>82</sup> Therefore, in as much as the splice is what effects the operation of time and produces the temporality of the everyday, its filmic mirroring effect through the cut shows us

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78. Doane, *Emergence of Cinematic Time*, 231.

79. Tosaka, “Nichijōsei no genri to rekishiteki jikan,” in *Gendai tetsugaku kōwa*, in *TJz*, 3:96–97. I would like to acknowledge discussions with Travis Workman on this point; see also the translation, “The Principle of Everydayness and Historical Time” in this volume.

80. Doane, *Emergence of Cinematic Time*, 224.

81. Malcom Le Grice, “Towards Temporal Economy” (1980), in *Experimental Cinema in the Digital Age* (London: British Film Institute, 2001), 208.

82. Guimarães, *Imagens da memória*, 183.

a rhythmic-kinetic-affective surface, the filmic screen, on and through which the volatility and hazardous oscillation of life, that is, the everyday, takes place. In this “principle of the everyday,” lies “the crystallized core of historical temporality [*rekishiteki jikan no kesshō no kaku*], the *secret* of history [*rekishi no himitsu*].”<sup>83</sup> Film’s role here is in its doubling effect. In as much as the projection situation “shows” us a diegetic time and space wherein things are composed differently, the filmic situation as a whole, through the prosthesis of the screen, shows us its own process, whereby the screen watches and cognizes the diegetic situation, rotating and generating a partially formed social field that imbricates itself with our own—that is, “film always constitutes the history, the documentary of its fiction.”<sup>84</sup>

Tosaka calls this everydayness as seen in the film-form his “formula for historical materialism” (*yuibutsushikan no kōshiki*),<sup>85</sup> a formula that we ourselves must extend and develop. Jacques Rancière has brilliantly outlined the sense of history such a new formula for historical materialism would require. The film-form as an organ of cognition teaches us that such a conception of history could never be the linear history of the development of the productive forces, nor the “*histoire événementielle*” consistently dismissed by Braudel as a theoretical triviality; in other words, this sense of history could never be a history of “conquerors” but rather must be a history of “the intertwined multiplicity of epochs, gestures, objects, and symbols of ordinary human life.” Film

allows all these forms to be associated and inter-expressed in an indefinite number of combinations, and it also ensures that every one of these combinations can express the collective life that threads together every fact, ordinary object, elementary gesture, speech, and image, whether banal or extraordinary. This particular co-belonging of forms and experience has gone by the very specific name of *history*. It’s over two centuries now since history has designated not the narrative of things past, but a mode of

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83. Tosaka, “The Principle of Everydayness and Historical Time,” in *TJz*, 3:101; translated in this volume.

84. André Gaudreault, “The Cinematograph: A Historiographical Machine,” in *Meanings in Texts and Actions: Questioning Paul Ricoeur*, ed. David E. Klemm and William Schweiker (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1993), 95.

85. Tosaka, “The Principle of Everydayness and Historical Time,” in *TJz*, 3:104; translated in this volume.

co-presence, a way of thinking and experience the co-belonging of experiences and the inter-expressivity of the forms and signs that give them shape.<sup>86</sup>

Tosaka shows us in his reflections on film how this sense of history as a zone of recompositional possibilities, which is the elemental center of the filmic situation, can be a critical point for a renewed conception of historical materialism, one that would begin from the real movement of matter as the space of partial determinacy, a space which, as the film-form demonstrates to us, is always open, always contains a flux that is passing through it.

To consider seriously the decisive practical consequences of the filmic situation outlined by Tosaka would be nothing less than to conceive of a politics today “not as a normative totality to be realized in the future, but as a movement in the present of forms of life, culture, and production subtracted from the totality of capital. This movement in the present, which we can call communism, is itself a form of life that autonomously establishes its own rules and conflicts in order to defend their autonomy, and through this conflict forces capital to modify its equilibrium and its modality of reproduction.”<sup>87</sup> In the possibility of thinking toward such a political moment, we may have to wager with Tosaka on the strength of this old phrase: historical materialism. But the problematic of the grasp of the essential materiality of social life that Tosaka articulated through the example of film as crucial for an understanding of his own conjuncture remains just as decisive for us. Only by holding ourselves immanent to the essential materiality of our everyday historical potential, and the self-movement of this relational space within the realm of image, affect, and custom can we also glimpse the possibilities for a new sociality, the endless zone of recombination that is the potential of historical life itself. Tosaka does not ask us merely to pay attention to film—rather I think we can say that in parallel with Bifo above, Tosaka exhorts us to *live filmically*, to live *in* history, in its material flows and effects, in the hazardous and fluctuating field of the social. In short, he demands that we inhabit a densely layered surface on which we inscribe a set of *political practices*

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86. Rancière, *Film Fables*, 177.

87. Franco Berardi (Bifo), *Il sapiente, il mercante, il guerriero: Dal rifiuto del lavoro all'emergere del cognitario* (Rome: DeriveApprodi, 2004), 167.

*of life*: This demand reaches us today at a time when its exigency is vital. In an era in which we have no choice but to live—one of the shrinking nature of the commodity-unit and its increasing concentration, the fertile and intensive space of the image and its ubiquitous circulation-time, but also an era in which the expansion of global reaction accompanies a situation wherein “the conditions for the capitalization of surplus value clash increasingly with the conditions for the renewal of the aggregate capital”<sup>88</sup>—this demand of Tosaka, put forward not in the form of an injunction, but in the example of his own theoretical practice, could not be more urgent.

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88. Rosa Luxemburg, *The Accumulation of Capital* (London: Routledge, 2003), 347.

# Notes toward a Critical Analysis of Chronic Recession and Ideology

## *Tosaka Jun on the Police Function*

*Ken C. Kawashima*

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In addressing Tosaka Jun's critique of ideology and liberalism in light of what he calls the police function, I'd like to approach two essays of his on the police from the perspective of a historian who has done research on social and labor movements in Japan during the interwar period. My research on Korean workers and their various struggles, notably in the day labor market, as well as in the institutional and semi-institutional world of the Japanese unemployment and welfare systems, has oddly brought me in close touch with some specific, historical aspects of Tosaka's critique of ideology in ways that I did not originally anticipate when I began to think about this essay, but which, upon further reflection and reading of Tosaka's texts, are neither accidental nor particularly surprising. My coming into contact with Tosaka's critique of ideology, however, was not simply the result of an effort on my part to reach his familiar territory of philosophy. Rather, it was Tosaka's own effort to extend the boundaries of materialist inquiry into the state of emergency of his present-day that allowed me to come into contact with his critique halfway, as it were. The reason is that Tosaka's critique of ideology was not simply or even (arguably)



ultimately a critique of the hermeneutic and metaphysical philosophies of the likes of Tanabe, Miki, Watsuji, and especially Nishida. As Harootunian has shown in so many ways in his various texts, especially his *Overcome by Modernity*, the real force of Tosaka's critique of ideology came with his concerted effort to produce a critical analysis of everyday life (*nichijō seikatsu*) in its unfolding present-ness.<sup>1</sup> Or, to borrow a term from the Marxist economist Uno Kōzō, Tosaka was in many ways producing a *genjō bunseki*, an analysis of the present in its everydayness. In the last section of this essay, I will return to the problem of *genjō bunseki*.

## The Historical Question of Cultural Liberalism

As is well known, Tosaka's critique of fascism and its various ideologemes of familialism, Japanism, loyalty to the emperor, and so on, begins with the argument that these mystifying and religious thoughts became ascendant in Japan on the basis of the widespread dissemination of liberalism in Japan. Since the Taishō period, he says, liberalism became a "common sense" way of thinking in Japan, thereby enabling a general pluralism of thought to emerge, out of which religious (and essentially ultranationalist) modes of thought were allowed a chance to appear in a kind of equal and free competition with other modes of thought. The uniqueness of Tosaka's argument is found here, for he says that it was not simply that liberalism as a political or economic way of thought held equal validity compared to other modes of thought (e.g., socialism), but that liberalism itself had become detached from the political and economic spheres and had become an autonomous *cultural common sense* in which freedom of expression and thought could then become a generalized, social norm. The pluralism accompanying this common sense, Tosaka tells us, provided the background for the ascendant hegemony of ideologemes of familialism, Japanism, and loyalty to the emperor. For this reason, Tosaka argued that, in order to articulate a critique of ideology in Japan in the mid-1930s, it was necessary to consider how liberalism was no longer simply a political or economic way of thinking. It was a cultural problem, and for this reason

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1. See H. D. Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

Tosaka discovered a new form of liberalism, what he called cultural liberalism, or *bunkateki jiyūshugi*.

This is all very well known, and there are other thinkers and researchers who know better than I how Tosaka discussed the phenomena of cultural liberalism through a critique of two thinkers representing philosophy and literature, Nishida Kitarō and Kobayashi Hideo, respectively. The only point that I'd like to mention here is that it is interesting to note how Tosaka's critique of Kobayashi leads us to consider how Kobayashi's insistence on creating an autonomous, private space not only for "pure literature," but also for a highly individuated space outside of existing political parties and beyond the far left and far right, ended up in fact corroborating some of the most publicly disseminated ideologemes of the Japanese empire and nation. Tosaka's discussion of cultural liberalism allows us to consider how Kobayashi's attempt to discover an interior space of the private (for literature or criticism) in fact could not clearly or effectively distinguish itself from that which was public, and it is this "zone of indiscernibility" (to borrow a phrase from Deleuze and Guattari in their analysis of fascism) that Tosaka's critique of Kobayashi seems to lead us to consider in more detail. This indiscernibility does not mean simply ambiguity or a slippage of identity, but rather Kobayashi's inability to discern the extent to which a short circuit between private and public was made, as it were, unconsciously and especially when it is made in pronounced quests for an autonomous zone for the individual writer/critic. Tosaka was interested in critiquing Kobayashi for failing not only to detect this indistinction, but also to understand and identify its root cause.

It is on this point that Tosaka, in his discussion of cultural liberalism (and its offshoots such as literary liberalism and philosophical liberalism), poses a simple historical and empirical question that he claims he cannot answer. He asks: Whence the emergence of this cultural liberalism? When did it begin? He says he does not know. He writes: "When we consider philosophical or literary liberalism and the like, I do not have the slightest idea when it began." If we look at his short pieces on the police, however, I would argue that Tosaka in fact had a good clue as to when it started and the forms in which it took on the level of practice and in thought. I believe that these clues can help us produce new *genjō bunseki* of everyday life. In this particular instance, it takes us a few steps into the labyrinth of the police system of prewar Japan.

## Tosaka on the Police and Its Functions

The essay I will consider in detail here is “The Police Function,” written in 1935 and republished in *Japan as a Link in the World* (1937). I will then briefly mention how a second essay on the police, “The [Social] Customs Police and the Culture Police” (Fūzoku keisatsu to bunka keisatsu), which was written in 1937 and published in Tosaka’s *Thought and Custom* (*Shisō to fūzoku*), provides an argument and historical description of the police that is closely related to the first essay.

The first essay on the function of the police is compelling for at least two reasons. First of all, it is here that Tosaka discusses the everyday politics of the police at the historical conjuncture of 1935, but in such a way that he is allowed a critical space to consider the problem not just of violence (*bōryoku*), but more specifically of organized crime, the mob, and more generally violent gangs (*bōryokudan*). In a more philosophical vein, he is interested in the analytical category of what he calls the essence or quality of organized crime (*bōryokudansei*). Second, while this essence or quality is related to the problem of violence and repression, it is not dealing simply with what we could easily imagine to be Tosaka’s natural and immediate concern with the political repression of, or violence against, Communist movements in Japan. It is also equally about how the police in practice *do not repress* certain forms of organized crime, thereby revealing a police function that ultimately allows for the reproduction of a historically existing indistinction between the so-called private and public spheres that is discernible in the essence of violent gangs.

This essay begins with Tosaka’s observation that the police in 1935 were going out of their way to suddenly publicize their efforts to “hunt down” the mob (*bōryokudan gari*). With this publicity campaign, the police acted as if they were starving for public thanks and congratulations for a task that is in fact natural for any police force to carry out. This publicity campaign allowed the public to think that, because violent gangs were often associated with the far right, the police were now taking action to repress right-wing movements (*uyoku undō*). Tosaka points out that the gangs that were being hunted down were relatively insignificant gangs that in fact were held at an arm’s distance by the right wing. Yet the police, by not making public *this* fact, in effect were trying to publicize a notion that the police were working in a space of political neutrality and objectiv-

ity since it was already well known that the main object of police repression was left-wing movements. The so-called hunt for violent gangs was already deceptive in this regard. This, however, is not Tosaka's ultimate aim in this text. "Things become more interesting," Tosaka writes, "when we consider the meaning of organized crime in a wider, philosophical sense, especially in ways that include right-wing provocateurs." Tosaka then asks, "What, then, is the essence of gang-ness?" Tosaka argues that there are essentially two points to consider.

First, the essence or quality of organized crime is not simply a group that carries out acts of violence, Tosaka says. Rather, the proper definition of *bōryokudan* is that it is a group that carries out violence on the basis of a "principle" (*purinshipuru*), a "pretension" (*puritenshon*), or a "platform" (as in a political party's platform). He also says it is based on some kind of "ideal pretension" (*kannenteki puritenshon*). Tosaka writes:

The essential definition of organized crime, broadly conceived, is that its use of violence is based, in one way or another, on a principle. . . . [T]he qualification for a genuine mob is that it must be furnished with an ideal pretension of some sort.<sup>2</sup>

In other words, the true meaning of organized crime is that it is an organization that carries out violence on the basis of some kind of ideal, or what Tosaka also calls a pretension principle. Ideals or principles that Tosaka gives examples of are "socialism," "morality" (*dōtoku*), "habit" (*shūkan*), "code of honor" (*jingi*), "soul" (*tamashi*), and "spirit" (*seishin*). The second point, which is the more important, is that these pretension principles disclose a zone of indiscernibility between that which could be called the truth and that which could be called lies, so much so that those who carry out such violence on the basis of these principles and pretensions are unaware of the distinction between the two.

These phenomena intrinsically do not clearly distinguish that which is the truth and the lie; those involved in disseminating these pretensions and principles thus never understand the difference between the two.<sup>3</sup>

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2. Tosaka Jun, "The Police Function" (Keisatsu kinō), in *Tosaka Jun zenshū* (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1966), 5:15 (hereafter cited as *TJz*).

3. *Ibid.*

More to the point, Tosaka says that in the consciousness of those who carry out this violence on the basis of the pretension principle, it is unclear whether these principles represent positions of being against society or not. Looking at the example of a large mob, Tosaka argues how the ambiguities of being anti-society or pro-society overlap with blurred boundaries between that which is considered public and private. Aren't their actions of violence, touted as a public matter and carried out in the name of society, for society, in fact actions that have clandestinely become transformed into a private matter? These actions of violence only reveal how that which is considered public has in fact become a private matter to the point where the distinction between public and private, societal and anti-societal, becomes lost. The actors or agents involved are unaware of the distinctions between private and public.

Strictly speaking, insofar as gangs are even remotely aware of being against society, they are aware of this from a private social position. However, even for certain gangs that occupy a public social position, this public position is, in actual fact, one that has become private [*shiteki-ka sareru*]. Indeed, it is not uncommon for gangs to derive their defining characteristic from this transformation. In such cases, it goes without saying that those involved in these violent gangs are utterly incapable of seeing where that which is public ends and where that which is private begins.<sup>4</sup>

How should we think of organized violence in light of this transformation into the private? Tosaka makes several crucial points. The first is that this violence is accompanied by a certain unconsciousness or unawareness precisely because those who execute violence under the banner of certain principles or pretensions cannot discern the limits of that which is private and public. Or rather, if they are conscious of what they believe to be societal and public principles, they are not conscious of how these same principles have in fact been transformed into private ones. Second, if the emergence of these principles and pretensions is found in the indistinction between public and private, or in the transformation of that which is public into that which is private, then it is here that they appear in a socially objective way. The violence accompanied by the (political) un-

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4. *Ibid.*, 15–16.

consciousness of the (always already) blurred distinction between public and private is directly related to the way these principles and pretensions emerge and appear in society in a generalized, naturalized, and objective form and not in a particular, artificial, or subjective way. In short, they appear in the most extreme public form, despite the fact that the groups executing violence in the name of these principles have increasingly become “privatized.” In its publicness, it gains the characteristic of social objectivity—in thought and in consciousness but also in material, institutional techniques.

In pointing out these two problems—the political unconscious of the public/private indistinction by those who carry out violence in the name of principles and the social objectivity of these principles—Tosaka highlights two concurrent yet contradictory movements. On the one hand, when he is looking at the groups carrying out violence in the name of a principle, he reveals that their political unconscious resides in a movement toward increasing “privatization” that ultimately blurs the distinction between public and private. On the other hand, when Tosaka considers the principles themselves, he shows that the (blurred) difference between private and public is superceded (or at least disavowed) by the appearance of social objectivity of these principles and in such a way that the principles always already speak exclusively in a public and universal manner. The groups carrying out and organizing violence are not only unconscious of the historical forces that are increasingly “privatizing” their position; they are doubly unaware of how the principles through which they speak, through which they legitimate their actions, and through which they reflect their beliefs, can only exist as such through a historical process—soon to be identified by Tosaka in relation to what he calls the police function—that actively disavows the actual indistinctions between public and private. Liberalism—in its political, economic, and arguably cultural form—does and says exactly the opposite by vehemently insisting on an *a priori* difference or separation between public and private. The police function is one of the most relevant and important sites to unravel and debunk the ideology of liberalism, especially in its cultural manifestations.

Tosaka identifies the state of emergency instituted in Japan after the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923 as a time when organized crime most clearly began to exhibit the indistinction between public and private in their loud pronouncements of principles such as “vigilante spirit” (*ji-*

*keidan seishin*) and “the spirit of national defense” (*kokubō seishin*). As is well known by historians of anarchist and socialist movements in Japan, as well as historians of Korean-led social movements in Japan, the spirit of vigilantism and national defense that was publicly disseminated in the chaotic aftermath of the Kanto earthquake became the apology for the political assassination of the anarchist Ōsugi Sakae and for the mass murder of over six thousand Koreans living in and around Tokyo and Yokohama. These “vigilante groups” were composed of citizens, most of whom, however, were registered in the army reserve system (established in Japan after World War I), which received financial support and (para) military orders from the top brass of the police and the military. Here, we should be quick to remind ourselves of Tosaka’s use and definition of terms such as “organized violence,” “gang,” and “mob,” for to call these organizations vigilante groups merely reproduces the ideology of vigilantism. These groups were nothing other than violent gangs that were condoned by, and organized within, the orbit of the juridical petty police.

What, then, is the function of the police according to Tosaka? The function of the police is precisely not to repress these gangs but to do the very opposite: allow them to proliferate. That was in 1923. Writing in the mid-1930s, Tosaka discusses how the “spirit of vigilantism” had now morphed into a new form, namely into a “spirit of policing,” most conspicuously evident in ostentatious public demonstrations of police squads decked out in full regalia and ordered to proudly sing police songs and marches.

Two years after the publication of “The Police Function” in 1935, Tosaka wrote “The [Social] Customs Police and the Culture Police.” The focus of this short essay is how an understanding of the police in 1937 now requires an analysis of the ways in which the police were increasingly policing culture and customs. While this may seem a banal point to students of fascism in Japan, Tosaka’s arguments here are closely related to the way he wrote about cultural liberalism as well as the function of the police in his 1935 essay. In other words, while the police, as a central embodiment of the public state apparatus, had typically existed in order to protect relations of production and the juridical axiomatic of private property, today they have become severed from the political-economic sphere to exhibit its force and rights not only in the sphere of culture but more crucially in the private sphere. He calls the older mode of policing the “political police” and the new policing mode the “cultural police,” the

latter of which operates under the banner of the public but only to bury itself in the everyday life of the private world to disseminate principles of morality (*dōtoku*), moral training (*shūshinka*), and ethical training (*rinri-rika*). As Tosaka wrote: “Under the banner of enforcing public life, the power of the police today has come to dominate the world of private life in infinite ways. The meaning of the power of the police is thus that it is privatized [*shiteki-ka*].”<sup>5</sup> Similar to Tosaka’s argument on what violent gangs were doing in Japan, the work of the cultural police demonstrates how the boundaries between public and private no longer hold, for the force of the police has so clearly become “privatized” without contradicting its public face as the condition for policing everyday life in a “subjective” (*shukanteki*) and “arbitrary” (*ābitorarina*) manner in order to cultivate principles of ethical behavior and moral reform.

### The Historical Origins of Cultural Liberalism

Let me venture some thoughts on the stakes of Tosaka’s discussion of the police in relation to the “common sense” of cultural liberalism. When Tosaka critiques the thought of Kobayashi Hideo as a representative of cultural liberalism, it is hard not to see a homologous critique waged by Tosaka against violent gangs and the police function. (This is not to really suggest that Kobayashi is akin to some kind of thug.) Rather, the common analytical point Tosaka makes between his critiques of literary liberalism and the cultural police is that liberal thought has become so diffuse in Japanese society that it has come unhinged from its original birth in the spheres of the political, the economic, and the juridical and has gained autonomy in the sphere of culture. The effect of this unhinging, however, is that the distinctions between private and public have become blurred to the point that those who insist on private freedom are unaware or unconscious of how this insistence does not contradict that which appears in public form. The insistence on private freedom and cultural freedom, an insistence that proclaims to have a clear distance from the world of (public) politics, in fact exists unconsciously in none other than in the belly of the public. At the same time, those organizations that formally claim to be public organizations, such as the police, have found themselves detached

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5. Tosaka Jun, “Fūzoku keisatsu to bunka keisatsu,” in *TJz*, 4:327.



from the sphere of the public and exist in the private world while proclaiming to work only for the public good and to the point that they themselves cannot discern whether their actions are private or public, societal or anti-societal. It is this double reversal, or the confluence of this double movement, that Tosaka leads us to consider when he discusses the ascendance of cultural liberalism as the “common sense” ground of fascism. What is really at stake here is a trenchant critique of the ideology of liberalism itself, or better yet the fantasy of the ideology of liberalism and Taisho democracy, an exposure of the illusion of one of the basic tenets of Taisho democracy and parliamentary democratic politics—the separation of public and private, state and civil society. The moment of ideology erupts when either term is proclaimed to be separated from and outside of the other, when an outside is posited. Kobayashi, Tosaka is saying, is the most ideological when he proclaims, in his insistence on the freedoms of the inner, private sphere, to be outside of the public ideology of, say, ultranationalist patriotism. Similarly, the police are the most ideological when they proclaim, in their insistence on taking an objective, neutral position in the public world, to be outside of the private. The Taisho and Showa periods were ideological at least because they fantasized that this indistinction did not exist. It is with this idea in mind that I’d like to finally offer one small empirical answer to Tosaka’s question: When did cultural liberalism begin? My answer is: 1917. Here, I turn again to the police in Japan.

### “The Massification of the Police, and the Policification of the Masses”

The cultural police need to be traced back to the historical context of the years immediately following the end of World War I, for it was then that the proliferation of radical social movements, combined with Japan’s first ever chronic recession and its resulting mass unemployment, compelled a radical reorganization and reconceptualization of the police system in Japan. While the Hibiya Park demonstrations of 1905 and the train fare demonstrations of 1906 alarmed the police in Japan, the real catalysts of police reorganization came in late 1917, with police concerns and fears over the dissemination of Bolshevik thought and practice in Japan. These concerns were further exacerbated by three subsequent developments: the

Rice Riots of 1918; the 1919 Korean Independence Movements and their proliferating movements within Japan, China, and the United States; and lastly the 1920 “Reactionary Crisis” (*handō kyōkō*), which ended the manufacturing boom of the war years and led to mass unemployment on an historically unprecedented scale and depth.

The police system was reorganized under the banner of defending what was called society and the nation. As a result, what were variously called “social problems” (*shakai mondai*), “social crimes” (*shakaiteki hanzai*), “social accidents” (*shakai jiko*), and “social uprisings” (*shakaiteki bōdō*) all fell under the scrutiny of police surveillance and action. Policing became synonymous with maintaining order to better defend and maintain the “peace and order of society” (*shakai no annei to jitsujō*), as well as to better execute “social purification” (*shakai kakusei*). Matsui Shigeru, author of several influential treatises on the Japanese police system and one of the most famous police architects of the interwar period, thus argued that the “Era of the Police State” (*keisatsu kokka jidai*), originally established during the Meiji period, was over and that a new era of the “National” or “People’s Police” (*kokumin keisatsu*) was needed to take into account a new standard to “defend society.”<sup>6</sup> The older era of the police state was based on what Matsui called a “vertical relationship” (*tate no kankei*) of individual obedience to the government and the police that had outlived its original *raison d’être*. No longer capable of “accounting for the conditions of society” and “failing to establish a horizontal relationship [*yoko no kankei*] between the government and the people [*kokumin*],” the older police state was said to be in need of “adjusting this vertical and horizontal relationship” to account for the ways in which the “actual conditions of society are shifting from the standard of the individual [*kojin hon’i*] to the standard of society [*shakai hon’i*], from the consciousness of [individual] rights [*kenri*] to [social] obligation [*gimu*].”<sup>7</sup> While the police increasingly were compelled by the Constitution to expend their energies in protecting (*hogo*) the rights of individuals, “the demand today is for the police to focus on society itself [*keisatsu wa shakai sono mono ni omoki-oku yō ni nari*], and for individuals to sacrifice their individual rights and their notion of individual obligation for the

6. Matsui Shigeru, *Keisatsu dokuhon* (Tokyo: Nihon hyōronsha, 1933), 1.

7. *Ibid.*, 171.

profit of society [*shakai kōeki*].”<sup>8</sup> The reorganization of the police during the immediate years following World War I thus abandoned the notion of the police state and instead followed the banner of the national police, which was said to operate in the name of defending society.

The urgent question, then, was how the new national police should be reorganized into a more horizontal relationship with the masses. For this to succeed, police leaders such as Matsui Shigeru and Maruyama Tsurukichi argued that a double transformation needed to take place that involved a “massification of the police” (*keisatsu no minshūka*) and a “politicification of the masses” (*minshū no keisatsuka*). *Keisatsu no minshūka to minshū no keisatsuka* was the ubiquitous new police slogan reiterated across various police treatises, books, and journals such as *Keimu Ihō*, *Keisatsu Geppō*, and *Keimu Geppō* between 1919 and 1925. No longer could the national police exist above the masses in a vertical relationship of separation demanding absolute obedience from the masses; it had to become—as the title of one of Maruyama’s books attests—a “Kind and Magnanimous Police” (*yasashii keisatsu*), one that existed within the very fabric of the everyday life of the masses. Maruyama wrote that it is not enough “to receive understanding from the masses; the police must take a more active stance toward penetrating into the lives of the masses, to create one harmonious body with masses.”<sup>9</sup> Matsui Shigeru also elaborated on the notion of the transformation of the police into the masses in the preface to his 1933 book *Keisatsu dokuhon* (*Police Reader*). He writes:

For the maintenance of domestic peace and order, it is crucial that the everyday life of everyone in Japan is never neglected. In addressing red movements [*akka undō*], elections, as well as public decency, factories, businesses, fires, and disease, the mission of the police administration today must become one with, and never exist apart from, the everyday life of the masses.<sup>10</sup>

Writing in the police journal *Keimu Ihō*, police bureaucrat Tanaka Takeo noted that the transformation of the masses into the police makes

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8. Ibid.

9. Maruyama Tsurukichi, *Yasashii keisatsuron* (Tokyo: Shinseisha, 1935), 104.

10. Matsui, *Keisatsu dokuhon*, 1.

“the entire national body an indirect supplement to the police [*kokumin zentai wa mina kansetsu ni keisatsu no hojoshu de aru*].”<sup>11</sup> In Maruyama’s words, the masses needed “to be awaken[ed] to police themselves,”<sup>12</sup> theoretically leading to the possibility of eradicating the police force itself. “The social condition in which the police no longer exists,” Maruyama wrote, “is the final and ultimate goal of the police itself.”<sup>13</sup> Imagining the potential of a society in which the police and the masses fused into one body, Maruyama composed a verse of poetry, which he published in *Keimu Ihō*:

Constant vision without form;  
Listening without a voice . . .  
Becoming invisible and silent,  
And from this invisibility and silence,  
Discovering the slightest disturbance of the peace.<sup>14</sup>

The concrete method for realizing the notion of the policification of the masses and the massification of the police was to establish a supplementary police force to the existing juridical police. Similar to nineteenth-century London and post–World War I New York City, this supplementary police force in Japan was called preventive policing. The term “preventive police” can be traced back to an 1829 essay penned by Edwin Chadwick, an energetic critic of the English Poor Laws and close friend of Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill. The basic idea of Chadwick’s concept of the preventive police was that the regular (i.e., juridical, petty) police force would produce enough public knowledge of criminal activity so that “the public at large [would] be converted into a police,” and “each individual member, by being put on his guard, would perform unconsciously a great portion of the duties of a police officer.”<sup>15</sup> In Japan, however, the concept of the preventive police was introduced in 1917, after high-

11. Tanaka Takeo, “Keisatsu no minshūka to minshū no keisatsuka,” *Keimu Ihō* (February 15, 1923): 15.

12. Maruyama, *Yasashii keisatsuron*, 109.

13. Maruyama, “Keisatsu to shakai jigyō,” in *Jikyoku kōenshū*, pt. 2 (Tokyo: Keisatsu Kōshūjo Gakuyūkai, 1919), 2.

14. Maruyama, *Yasashii keisatsuron*, 109.

15. Chadwick, “Preventive Police,” in *London Review* (1829), 278. Chadwick’s influence on the regulation of the poor is discussed in Mitchell Dean, “A Genealogy of the Government of Poverty,” *Economy and Society*, 21, no. 3 (August 1992): 215–251.

ranking Japanese police bureaucrats, notably Maruyama Tsurukichi, toured New York City and learned of the concept from Arthur Woods, then commissioner of the New York City Police Department. Woods had significantly reorganized the NYPD during World War I by implementing a social welfare section as part of the police's everyday bureaucracy and was renowned for his lectures on preventive policing, which he defined as a broadening of police functions to include citizens, especially women, and in particular social work organizations. The broadening of police functions could, he claimed, preempt the outbreak of criminal activity originating in what were deemed probable sources of crime among the poor populations, especially in New York City's East End.<sup>16</sup>

In its manifestation in Japan, preventive policing was carried out between two centers of action: various volunteer groups, youth groups, and what was called *giyū keisatsu*—literally, “brave and courageous police” but also an administrative term for “voluntary police”;<sup>17</sup> and social work and welfare organizations. In this field, Maruyama Tsurukichi was apparently very energetic. Having learned from Arthur Woods in New York, Maruyama returned to Japan, worked briefly as director of the Relief and Protection Section (*Kyūgo Kachō*) in the Ministry of Interior, and was then dispatched to the government-general in Korea, where he became Chief of Personnel in 1919, the year of the Korean Independence Movement. Between 1918 and 1919, Maruyama published two lectures on the relationship between the police and social welfare organizations, specifying the relationship as one of a “shared control of populations in need, and who tend to commit crimes.”<sup>18</sup> The success of the new *yobō keisatsu*, or preventive police, he argued, would depend largely on the extent to which the police could become “one body” with these organizations and the de-

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16. Arthur Woods, introduction to *Police Practice and Procedure*, by Cornelius F. Cahalane (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1914). Woods is also well known for implementing a long-lasting series of athletic events for children of families on various forms of public welfare. This was also considered an integral part of preventive policing.

17. Obinata Sumiō, *Tennōsei keisatsu to minshū* (Tokyo: Nihon hyōronsha, 1987), 115–20. As Obinata has shown in greater detail, the “national police” (*kokumin keisatsu*), in its effort to transform the masses into a police force itself through preventive policing, also enlisted youth groups, fire fighter organizations, veteran's associations, and other groups formed for the purpose of “self-defense” (*jiei*) and “self-policing” (*jikei*) society. The *jikei-dan*, of course, became infamous for its central role in executing the murders of over six thousand Koreans in the immediate, chaotic aftermath of the September 1, 1923, Kanto Earthquake.

18. Maruyama, “*Keisatsu to shakai jigyō*,” 8.

gree to which the two entities could maintain “close communication,” “eliminate accidents before they throw the social order into chaos, and prevent crimes, even before they break out into the open.”<sup>19</sup> Deploying a forensic-entomological metaphor, Maruyama likened the outbreak of crimes to the proliferation of mosquitoes and explained how the preventive police needs to eliminate not the mosquitoes but rather, in an “positive and active way” (*sekkyokuteki ni*), the “stagnant waters” from which the endless reproduction of mosquitoes arises, the mosquitoes whose vast numbers have overwhelmed the finite and limited numbers of the juridical police to such a degree that they can only react to crimes in a “negative and passive way” (*shōkyokuteki ni*), after the crimes have already been hatched.<sup>20</sup>

Here, a few of summary points bear emphasis. First, the preventive police was part of the larger movement of reorganizing the police system in Japan. It was a concrete, institutional effect of the massification of the police and the policification of the masses—*keisatsu no minshūka to minshū no keisatsuka*. In this way, the preventive police was irreducible to either the state police or the masses dwelling in so-called civil society. Rather, it embodied the difference in the binary opposition of the state and civil society; in itself, it was neither and both simultaneously. It was precisely this zone of indiscernibility that allowed for semiprivate and private welfare organizations to function as a disavowed police supplement, a disavowal that allowed for the ideological maintenance of this binary opposition itself.

Second, the notion of the preventive police has to be understood in terms of an inherent and endemic *weakness* on the part of the juridical police, a weakness that emerged in reaction to the growing popularity of Bolshevism among the working classes and in response to the deepening of class contradictions and social crisis in Japan after World War I, themselves a result of the uneven development of the capitalist commodity

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19. Maruyama Tsurukichi, “Kindai shakai jigō no sūsei,” in *Zaisen yonen yūyohan* (Tokyo: Shōzanbō, 1930), 43.

20. As Ranciere has written: “The petty police is just a particular form of a more general order that arranges that tangible reality in which bodies are distributed in the community. It is the weakness and not the strength of this order in certain states that inflates the petty police to the point of putting it in charge of the whole set of police functions. The evolution of Western societies reveals *a contrario* that the policeman is one element in a social mechanism linking medicine, welfare, and culture” (*Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy* [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999], 28).

economy in Japan. This weakness formed the impetus to extend police functions beyond the boundaries of the juridical police to the masses themselves. This extension was also that which allowed for the notion of prevention to quickly slide into preemption. In my historical research on the interwar Japanese urban day labor market, for example, there was a clear turn from prevention to police and police-related preemptive violence in 1925 (following the institution of the Peace Preservation Law). Organizations such as the Sōaikai were clear examples. The Sōaikai was a police-backed “private welfare” organization supporting Korean workers whose practices and actions disclosed para-institutional ambiguities in the notion of policing authority itself. Following Benjamin, here in this suspension of an indistinction between public and private is the suspension between constituting law and constituted law—i.e., a moment of what Benjamin called the ignominy of police violence in the state of exception.<sup>21</sup>

Third and last, my own research into the practices of the preventive police in interwar Japan strongly shows that it is difficult, if not impossible, to separate clearly the cultural work of the police (e.g., promoting work discipline and national prosperity through symbolic representations, etc.) from the *general form of capitalist commodity economy* and from the more specific problem of the commodification of labor power. The ultimate effect of the private welfare organizations that operated under the penumbra of the preventive police was to ensure that those populations, deemed unproductive and superfluous to capitalist production, did not interrupt the process of commodifying labor power—to wit, the exploitation of living labor. It would be too simple, therefore, to state that these organizations exerted their force upon the life and bodies of populations

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21. This section is taken from my book *The Proletarian Gamble: Korean Workers in Interwar Japan* (Duke University Press, 2009). As Benjamin wrote:

The “law” of the police really marks the point at which the state, whether from impotence or because of the immanent connections within any legal system, can no longer guarantee through the legal system the empirical ends that it desires at any price. . . . Unlike law, which acknowledges in the “decision” determined by place and time a metaphysical category that gives it a claim to critical evaluation, a consideration of the police institution encounters nothing essential at all. Its power is formless, like its nowhere tangible, all-pervasive, ghostly presence in . . . democracies where their existence . . . bears witness to the greatest conceivable degeneration of violence” (Walter Benjamin, “Critique of Violence,” in *Reflections* [New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978], 286–287).

*merely* as a technique of subjectification and social control, à la Foucault's notion of biopolitical power (i.e., as a technique to "make live and let die"). What if these same techniques are involved in the sale and purchase of labor power, in drafting so-called contracts and in exploiting labor time? Here, we have to analyze how networks of power become subsumed by, or come to exist through, the form of the commodity and in networks of commodification, especially in relation to living labor power.

## On the Analysis of the Present

What is minimally at stake in Tosaka's analysis of the police is the problem of the historical present, the *ima*. In this sense, Tosaka's overall project resonates with the work of Marxist economist and theoretician Uno Kōzō. I mention Uno because his insistence on producing an "analysis of the present situation," or *genjō bunseki*, was, and I think continues to be, very close in spirit to Tosaka's analysis and critique of *nichijōseikatsu*. As is well known, Uno's problem of *genjō bunseki* was the culmination of his overall three-step methodology, beginning with an analysis of the pure principles of the capitalist commodity economy and then moving into an analysis of how these principles historically became distorted, in particular in the stage of imperialism and especially after 1917, when economic policy in Japan became increasingly indistinguishable from social policies based on providing "relief" to the masses while simultaneously road-blocking attempts by the masses to spread political critiques of capitalism in Japan. Uno's insistence on clarifying both methodological steps was his personal response to the methodological deadlocks and shared analytical limitations among researchers involved in the famous debate on capitalism in Japan, the central problem of which was how to define whether Japan had undergone a "bourgeois revolution" with the Meiji Restoration or not. By combining Marx's *Capital* with Lenin's *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, Uno was able to escape the basic—and basically unconscious—analytical presupposition of both the Rōnō-ha and the Kōza-ha, namely their unquestioning of the form of the nation-state as the *a priori* analytical lens of analysis of the present situation. Instead, Uno proposed to focus on a more universal problem of the process of the commodification of labor power.

Uno's *genjō bunseki* and Tosaka's analysis of *nichijōseikatsu* share



several important problems. The first point is that the methodologies of both Uno and Tosaka were extremely aware of how a rigorous analysis of and against the present of capitalist hegemony in Japan demanded new approaches that went beyond the deadlocks in the debate on capitalism, the *nihon shihonshugi ronsō*. Both strove to find new ways to think about their present without assuming the form of the nation-state as the ground of being and specifically found ways to analyze the problem of so-called feudal remnants in Japan as a fundamental, even constitutive, aspect of capitalist and imperialist development in Japan. Uno no doubt would add to this discussion important points on the extensive power of finance capital to maintain surplus populations—domestically and in the colonies—outside the most concentrated centers of capitalist accumulation, in areas bathed in apparent feudal “residues,” in a time zone from the past that is exploitable in the present for the guardians of capital.

Second, both emphasized how a critical analysis of the present requires a precise methodological periodization of capitalism in Japan. For Tosaka, the Taishō period is particularly important because it was during this time that liberal thought truly became disseminated in Japan with the rise of party politics of the late teens and early 1920s. For Uno, *genjō bunseki* also begins in the Taishō period, but in an even more precise way: in the year 1917, for that was the year when the Bolshevik Revolution presented a living and global alternative to the capitalist commodity economy. In Japan, this coincided with its first real experience of a specifically capitalist form of economic crisis that produced rampant industrial unemployment and rural poverty as a chronic social basis for capitalist expansion and reproduction. Ideological and repressive state apparatuses—and the indistinctions between the two—proliferated in Japan precisely at this time to prevent and to neutralize the possibility of a radically politicized mass of surplus populations pointing out and fighting against glaring class contradictions endemic to capitalist exploitation. To do justice to Tosaka’s and Uno’s interventions on ways to analyze the present then, we have to at least get to a clear understanding of how and why the capitalist commodity economy exists necessarily through cycles, how these cycles themselves change under the dominance of finance capital, and how in the stage of imperialism especially, phases of recession take on a chronic character.

At stake here is a more rigorous approach to analyze the present-ness of fascism in relation to the proliferation of ideological and repressive

state apparatuses, especially during phases of economic recession in the stage of imperialism. In other words, Tosaka's analysis of everyday life can be combined directly with the analysis of the accumulation movement of capital, and the most basic social process on which accumulation takes place, the commodification of labor power. What we find, but what requires further empirical and historical research, is that the proliferation of ideological and repressive state apparatuses takes place in such a diffuse and improvised way—in the face of recession especially—that often the distinction itself between ideological and repressive practices becomes shrouded behind metaphysical notions such as nation or society. Tosaka's analysis of the police shows that, at least in Japan during and after the Taisho period, distinctions between public and private, state and civil society, were thoroughly ambivalent often because, it has to be said, the distinctions between ideological and repressive practices no longer existed clearly. What begs further research are the precise historical conditions in which the indistinctions between ideology and repression, and state and civil society, are effects of, and reaction-formations to, the cyclical nature of the accumulation movement of capital and the commodification of labor power on which these cycles rest.

# The Multitude and the Holy Family

## *Empire, Fascism, and the War Machine*

*Katsuhiko Endo*

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### Tosaka's Unfinished Business

At the end of “The Fate of Japanism,” Tosaka Jun writes:

The task remains of taking the opposite course that we have traversed thus far to examine how the essence of Japanist ideology called the doctrine of the Imperial Way . . . is utilized by the ideals of contemporary fascist politics and its political system, as well as by the contemporary capitalist system to which fascism corresponds. I will omit this discussion here.<sup>1</sup>

“The Fate of Japanism” discusses the various appearances of Japanism within different social strata of Japanese society and criticizes the way in which these appearances culminated in the doctrine of the Imperial Way, represented in the Kokutai meicho (Declaration of the Clear Evidence of National Polity, December 1935) and the Kokutai no hongii (Cardinal Principles of National Polity, May 1937). At the end of the essay, Tosaka suggests beginning an analysis from “the contemporary capitalist system” and its relation to fascism and then the latter’s relation to Japanism.

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1. See Tosaka Jun, “The Fate of Japanism: From Fascism to Emperorism” in this volume.

This chapter will attempt to trace Tosaka's unwritten "opposite course" both historically, from the formation of the Japanese empire at the end of World War I to the Occupation, and theoretically, in the construction of an analytical space in which Tosaka's critique of fascism can and must be combined to account for political-economic problems as philosophical problems. The ultimate goal of doing so is to lay a foundation for the analysis of the current situation of what Tosaka believed to be the only object of materialist science: the reality of the world (*sekai no genjitsusei*).<sup>2</sup> What makes this comparative study scientific—"scientific" in the true, materialist sense—is what Tosaka called "historical sense" (*rekishi ishiki*)<sup>3</sup> and what Uno Kozo called "historicity,"<sup>4</sup> the historicity of contemporary global capitalism and its crisis. Let me briefly introduce the historicity of this crisis here; I will provide a more detailed account in the following sections. According to Uno, the so-called contemporary capitalist system means the system that emerged after the October Revolution of 1917 with the purpose of overcoming the crisis that finance capital necessarily brings about. The capitalist system can never live up to its expectation because it always leaves room for finance capital to pursue what it wants by violently or preemptively eliminating any kind of criticism. As a result, finance capital turns the system into what Uno called the organized method of militaristic, imperialist policy. Fascism necessarily accompanies it. Nationalism as the *universal* form of fascist ideology inexorably comes with it as well.

So what is the "contemporary capitalist system"? This is one of a few hints that Tosaka left for us:

When monopoly capitalism becomes imperialistic, it attempts to hide the contradictions of imperialism domestically through state power and internationally by building up the perception that it can solve these problems

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2. Tosaka Jun, *Kagakuron* (1936), in *TJz*, 1:137–156.

3. Tosaka Jun, "Muishikiteki kyogi," in *Ideorogī no ronrigaku* (1930), in *TJz*, 2:61–68.

4. Uno Kozo, *Seisakuron* (1954), in *Uno Kōzō chosakushū* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1974), 7:42 (hereafter cited as *UKc*). The following quote seems to tell us the essence of Uno's thought on the method of economics as materialist science: "Marx's economics establishes economics theoretically and completes the principle of economics by revealing the historicity of the economy of capitalist society while, as the critique of political economy, criticizing the existing economics." I am preparing another essay to discuss the method of revealing historicity—the method of materialist science—in relation to Tosaka's thought on materialism and Ōsugi Sakae's "philosophy of labor movement."

by force. Fascism is precisely the political mechanism that, in order to accomplish these measures, takes advantage of the petit bourgeois, or the middle class in the broad sense, which experiences turmoil in their social consciousness through some particular domestic and international political circumstances. It is the relatively advantageous method that appears to be succeeding in realizing its ultimate goal of extending finance capitalism, all the while taking advantage of the middle class who have emotionally lost all of their faith in both the dictatorship of the proletariat and the explicit domination of the bourgeoisie and just as emotionally carry the fantasy that they share the interests of fascism.<sup>5</sup>

If we read this carefully, we can see that fascism is not the same as “monopoly capitalism that becomes imperialistic” nor is it simply “financial capitalism” itself. Rather, it is what “seems to be succeeding in realizing its ultimate goal of extending finance capitalism” by “taking advantage of the petit bourgeois, or the middle class in the broad sense.” It is, in a word, the *extension of finance capital*. In the world of the 1920s–1940s, “the contemporary capitalist system” was none other than the Japanese empire, an empire built precisely during this period. By examining the prewar Japanese empire, we may learn something crucial about the current empire—Empire<sup>6</sup>—for it was one of the prewar empires that gave birth to the current one that we have now.

In relation to this issue, Tosaka’s article “The Analysis of Restorationist Phenomenon” provides an important clue to specifying this problem through the question of familialism, or *kazoku-shugi*. He writes: “While it is not the social system or state organization itself, familialism is an ideology that urges one to remain in, and return to, a family system; as such it is, in fact, an ‘-ism’ that has some say in the organization of society or the state itself.”<sup>7</sup> Toward what kind of “organization of society or the state itself” does familialism advocate? It is, Tosaka said, one that attempts to

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5. Tosaka, “The Fate of Japanism,” in *TJz*, 2:322–323; see the translation in this volume.

6. I will discuss the differences and similarities between my concept of Empire that is crafted on the basis of Uno’s text and Hardt’s and Negri’s similar terminology on some other occasion. In this essay, it only indicates my concept. The same thing can be said about Tosaka’s concept of multitude that will be introduced shortly after this.

7. Tosaka Jun, “Fukko genshō no bunseki—kazoku-shugi no anaraji ni tsuite,” in *TJz*, 2:313.

maintain capitalism under the name of a kind of “control-ism.” . . . Today’s familialism of ours (or its vague consciousness) is an alibi in which capitalism is maintained in the name of a kind of control-ism, a control-ism in the midst of the gradual collapse of the family system in reality, eventually becoming the authority of social-scientific understanding. It is an alibi designed to be smoothly swallowed in a vulgar fashion by virtue of its vague content.<sup>8</sup>

Finally, Tosaka adds, familialism attempts to “blur the essence of today’s developed monopoly capitalist system by endowing it with a fantasy that it is, quite contrarily, anticapitalist: Today’s developed monopoly capitalist system’s essence as a capitalist system is rendered vague; indeed, it conversely even appears to give it an anticapitalist phantasmic image.”<sup>9</sup>

It is already very clear that familialism has a strong relationship to Japanism. In fact, familialism is the essence of Japanism. But Tosaka also stresses the intimacy between Japanism and liberalism. This means, once we get to the point where we can talk about the relation between contemporary capitalism (contemporary for us as much as for Tosaka) and fascism, we will need to look at the relation between familialism, Japanism, and liberalism.

## Finance Capital and the Multitude

Finance capital is always busy destroying and constructing communities. Upon its emergence, it destroys existing community relations and simultaneously constructs a new community, what Uno called a “community of interest” (*Interessengemeinschaft*).<sup>10</sup> The community of interest is an organization of millions of firms and factories (including millions of banks and other financial institutions) hierarchically organized by finance capital (e.g., *zaibatsu* in prewar Japan, *keiretsu* in postwar Japan). The new community of interest is filled with new subjects and new landscapes: elite businessmen in the *zaibatsu*; the new middle class—“salary men and of-

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8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., 312.

10. Uno, *Seisakuron*, in *UKc*, 7:171.

fice ladies”—mostly in the small and medium-sized enterprises; “modern girls”; the urban proletariat and the urban poor in the slums; millions of shopkeepers. The list may go on indefinitely. Tosaka calls such yet-to-be-organized masses “the multitude” (*tashū*).<sup>11</sup> In producing the community of interest for the accumulation of capital, finance capital simultaneously accumulates the multitude all over the earth as it accumulates capital.

What Tosaka calls finance capitalism is, for Uno, “capitalism organized by finance capital”<sup>12</sup>—a form of social organization that employs the “mode of the accumulation of capital peculiar to finance capital.”<sup>13</sup> In this mode, finance capital is able to make excessive profits during a boom by monopolistically blocking the entry of other firms into the industry (what Uno called the “distortion of the law of the equalization of the general rate of profit”). This results in the formation of a relative surplus population during a boom in two ways (the distortion of “a law of population peculiar to the capitalist mode of production”). First, the production of excessive profit enables finance capital to advance the organic composition of capital<sup>14</sup> during the said period, especially toward the end of the period when the rate of profit begins to fall. Second, the maintenance of high prices of the commodity produced by the finance-capital controlled *zaibatsu* limits capital accumulation by the small and medium-sized enterprises, employers of the majority of the working population. The artificially high prices of production imposed on them by the *zaibatsu* restricts their ability to absorb the surplus population during the boom. This so-called distortion of the general law of capitalist accumulation (as well as the distortion of the capitalist law of population) that accompanies crises peculiar to finance capitalism consequently tends to become a chronic recession with shorter periods of prosperity (as expressed in the term “low growth”).

This chronic nature of crisis under finance capital helps explain how finance capital produces “turmoil in social consciousness” by producing

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11. Tosaka, “Muishikiteki kyogi,” in *Ideorogī no ronrigaku* (1930), in *TJz*, 2:80–94. This term is rendered as “multitude” to distinguish it from the more common term “masses” signified by the Japanese word *taishū*.

12. Uno Kōzō, “Shihonshugi no soshikika to minshūshugi,” in *UKc*, 8:286.

13. The following discussion is mainly excerpted from *UKc*, 7:150–155.

14. Organic composition refers to the ratio of living labor to means of production in a given production process; see Karl Marx, “The General Law of Capitalist Accumulation,” in *Capital*, vol. 1, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin, 1976), 762.

the constant fear of losing one's job.<sup>15</sup> The accelerated expansion of the production process of capital, coupled with the renewal of technology (that takes place tendentially toward the end of boom phases) turns out to be an abnormal contraction of production once crisis and recession develop. This damages finance capital, but it is the small and medium-sized enterprises that experience a real blow due to the former's power to determine prices. Of course, while an abnormal drop in prices of the means of production, as well as the paternalism specific to the community of interest, can and may provide some relief, this is not enough to compensate for the greater downward trend. In fact, finance capital would rather make the small and medium-sized enterprises suffer and treat the surplus population badly (in terms of downward wage pressures, increased intensity of work, reduced benefits, etc.). It does so because this helps finance capital discipline its own employees—to shut them up and work harder for less wages. It whispers in their ears: "*Are you sure you want to be like those surplus populations?*" Alongside the social surplus piling up in the urban slum, finance capital incessantly produces those who are "not feeling at home."

## Empire, Fascism, and the War Machine

If this process of accumulation is indeed Tosaka's "financial capitalism," and if its consequence is the expansion of the multitude, then how does this lead to the emergence of a contemporary capitalist system? It is because of the multitude, which is related to the emergence of Empire in the following two ways. First, the multitude is the owner and seller of labor power as a commodity. Hence, because finance capital produces both the buyer and the seller of labor power, the threat to their lives, due to the difficulty of selling their labor power, is also a threat to the reproduction process of this particular commodity as the fundamental ground for capitalism. Secondly, because of the increasing insecurity of life, the multitude expresses itself in various movements to produce a new community that can provide some security for these lives. As we will see below, these movements span different types, from Marxism (scientific socialism) to right-wing, militarist socialism. Moreover, they often oppose each other,

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15. *Ibid.*, 179–180.



but what is common to all is the effort to contain the power of finance capital and the existing state in a way to secure and improve the lives of the multitude.

The October Revolution of 1917 ignited the fuse. The Great Depression further proliferated and intensified socialist movements all over the world. This provoked reactionary countermovements, and these countermovements began to attempt to engineer the so-called global economy.<sup>16</sup> (We will see below who these engineers are.) Through this reactive engineering process, each state seeks to manage the social total capital democratically.<sup>17</sup> We are going to see below what democracy means in this specific context.

We can theoretically approach the manner by which the social total capital is managed democratically by considering the problem of the “zero-center” in Lacan’s symbolic order. Asada Akira provides a most elegant description of this concept:

The contradiction necessarily demands the exclusion of the *ex parte* exclusion of the center and the *ex parte* compliance to the center that becomes the transcendental Subject because of the exclusion of it. . . . While this transcendental Subject is a terrifying being because he takes on all violence, he is also a reverent being since he brings about stability and equilibrium by accepting this violence. In this moment . . . everyone abandons themselves to, and identifies themselves with, and only with, the zero-center. Any direct mutual relation that does not go through the zero-center is strictly forbidden.<sup>18</sup>

The global economy consists, therefore, of subjects and the transcendental Subject, which are structured (or networked) according to the Symbolic Order. I call the global economy structured as the Symbolic Order Empire, at the center of which exists the problem of familialism—the decoded form of the transcendental Subject.

In order to realize the capitalist law of population—that is to say, in order to realize the accumulation of capital that does not have to accompany too many dead or starving people—Empire needs to discipline fi-

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16. Uno Kōzō, “Genryō-shigen to shokuminchi (1945),” in *Gendai shihonshugi no genkei* (Tokyo: Kobushi shobō, 1997), 66.

17. Uno Kōzō, “The Organizing of Capitalism and Democracy,” in *UKc*, 8:277–278.

18. Asada Akira, *Kōzō to chikara: Kigoron o kōete* (Tokyo: Keisō shobō, 1983), 58–59.

nance capital and the military. In order to do so, according to Uno, Empire needs the “autonomously organized criticism of workers.”<sup>19</sup> Under this regime “[t]he management of capital by the state is given a foundation to technically solve the problem to a certain extent insofar as it is monitored and contained by a powerful organization of workers,”<sup>20</sup> which is definitely not to say all workers are intellectuals. Indeed, this is not a Maoist or even a Marxist category. This unification of capital and labor is achieved through the unexpected “technology” called liberalism.

## Liberalism as Technology of Empire

Let us recall how Tosaka Jun considered Kawai Eijirō a representative of the problem of liberalism as a technology for the production of Empire.<sup>21</sup> Here Kawai praises the mutual constraint between the Japanese state and the individual (as a member of the middle class):

If his compliance to the state originates from the state’s expression of good will, what kind of action does he take when the state contradicts the good will that it should express? Good will is still on its way to progress. Also, since the state is formed according to a specific situation in a particular time and place, it has to change when situations change. However, if the good will expressed in the state stagnates, and if the state accommodating itself to changing situations adheres to old customs, then it has to be criticized by the authentic good will that the state should express. Therefore, those who have a genuine consciousness of the moral significance of the state affirm the state with a rock-solid confidence on the one hand, but they have to deny and oppose it as well, on the other.<sup>22</sup>

Kawai’s passage, it can be said, demonstrates the way liberalism is nothing but a symbolic order that mediates the production of both social and individual values that can then at least attempt to mitigate the more rapacious aspects of finance capitalism. Both the Japanese state and mid-

19. Uno Kōzō, “Shihonshugi no soshikika to minshūshugi,” in *UKc*, 8:285.

20. *Ibid.*, 290.

21. Tosaka, “Liberalist Philosophy and Materialism,” in *TJz*, 2:394–400.

22. Kawai Eijirō, *Shakai seisakuron* (1930), in *Kawai Eijirō zenshū* (Tokyo: Shakai shisōsha, 1970), 3:283.

dle class agree to subject themselves to Empire. Of course, the Japanese state is Empire. Hence, the state must play two roles in exactly the same way money plays two roles in the money-form, which is nothing but the symbolic order. The Japanese state finally realized that it had to become, so to speak, “a man in double,” and specifically in the year of 1919. 1919 should be considered the year of the inauguration of the Japanese empire. On March 1, the Independence Movement of Korea erupted in Seoul, followed soon after by a similar movement in Tiananmen Square on May 4. Both events panicked the liberal engineers of Empire, Yoshino Sakuzo and Oyama Ikuo. They and others started to call for a “more democratic system at home with support for a gradual move toward self-determination for colonial subjects, Koreans in particular.”<sup>23</sup> In practice, this became full control of the colonies by the police in order to eliminate the anti-imperial movements and severely limit political and economic freedom (a system that was later brought back home to Japan in the form of the Peace Preservation Law and Universal Male Suffrage Law of 1925). The Peace Preservation Law criminalized criticism of the emperor and the “system of private property” (capitalism). Criticism of capitalism itself was thus deflected insofar as not only private property rights but the emperor-system, too, were the foundations of the symbolic order of capitalism. The real voice that could be heard behind these laws thus announced: You can enter the arena called parliament and play the game but only if you agree to eliminate anticapitalist movements.

The engineers did not, however, produce the liberal-democratic political system (parliamentarianism, representative democracy) that would have allowed the multitude to play the game freely. By using and exploiting the multitude, the liberal engineers wanted to stop finance capital, but to do so, they had to turn the multitude into a “middle class”—one that believed that Empire could fulfill their desire to secure their lives by the uninterrupted selling of their products (rice and labor power) as commodities. Once they came to believe in this, this middle class should, in theory, defend Empire from both the predations of finance capital, especially the *zaibatsu*, and from the multitude’s movements by voting for, or becoming, agents of the middle class (i.e., the intelligentsia). It was thus the job of

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23. Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present*, 2nd ed. (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 178.

the intelligentsia to enable the engineers to do their jobs, that is, managing the smooth and uninterrupted production of Empire.

Theoretically, the engineers did not have to turn the entire multitude into such a middle class, only a small fraction of them. The rest could be left to exist as a reserve army close enough to the real middle class so that middle-class beliefs and aspirations to future entry into the middle class are created and reproduced here as well. In order to produce this middle class (which, from now on, includes the reserve army), the engineers must produce a system that can realize the famous law of value. What this means is that the engineers must produce a society in which the middle class can always sell its labor power as a commodity at a price that enables it to acquire the means of subsistence to maintain life.<sup>24</sup>

The best that the engineers can do for this is to realize Empire as a purely capitalist society in which capital can be accumulated without entirely threatening the life of the multitude and in which capital can simultaneously allow the multitude to aspire to the middle class. This is why in volume 1 of *Capital* money cannot remain in the money-form (symbolic form) but must transform itself into capital and subsume the labor-production process under the circulation process, that is to say, in the valorization-movement of value. In order to do so, Empire first needs to produce money to occupy the place of the transcendental subject; second, it must then be able to control it. In order to do so, the engineers in prewar Japan had to abolish the gold standard and establish the controlled currency system.<sup>25</sup> Of course, the Japanese empire tried to produce this system in the form of the Yen Bloc, but it was hardly effective.

Through their power to control money-capital, the engineers tried to produce an economic society that could transform the multitude into a middle class. In prewar Japan, this was demonstrated in the way the engineers needed to save middle-class farmers—the majority in the agrarian villages—and the small and medium-sized enterprises, which represented more than 90 percent of the entire number of firms employing more than 90 percent of the working population. Hence, “freedom from the coercion of capitalism” meant the small and medium-sized enterprises’ freedom

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24. For the details of this operation of the law of value in determining the wage rate, see Marx, “The Sale and Purchase of Labor Power,” in *Capital*, vol. 1, 276.

25. Uno, “Genryō shigen to shokuminchi,” 65.

from finance capital's ability to restrict access to capital and control prices. The attempt started as early as 1932 in the form of the land-to-the-tiller program, which was essentially a program for producing middle-class farmers. It culminated in the Food Control Law of 1942, a law that empowered Empire to purchase rice from middle-class farmers at prices that were higher than the prices paid to farmers by landlords. In theory, these measures transformed the ailing semi-independent farmers into a rural middle class as the Japanese Nation. Once tenant farmers came to own land, they no longer had to pay extremely high ground-rent to landlords; this undermined the power of the landlords as "investors" who were pushing Empire toward a war machine with the *zaibatsu*.<sup>26</sup>

Of course, this was by no means an attempt to turn the entirety of the reserve army of middle-class farmers into independent farmers. It allowed some to join the rural middle class as middle-class farmers on the one hand and transformed the rest into an industrial reserve army—that is, a relative surplus population—on the other. Now, the engineers (the Japanese State) were compelled to foster and develop small and medium-sized enterprises because they were the primary absorbers of the relative surplus population. Moreover, they needed to engineer the technology to realize the law of the equalization of the average rate of profit. In order to do so, they needed to stop finance capital from harassing small and medium-sized enterprises. They did this by reducing the barriers to entry, making money-capital and technology available for the latter through various technology transfers, including the world-famous "industrial policy" (*sangyō seisaku*) and "administrative guidance" (*gyōsei shido*). These celebrated technologies of the postwar "Japanese miracle" were invented at precisely this time.<sup>27</sup> They also tried to establish "factory councils" through which they thought they could establish "harmony between labor and capital" in ways to realize the law of value in the form of the exchange between labor power as a commodity and the so-called living wage—the wage that is enough to feed not only a worker, but also his or her family.<sup>28</sup> There was no law—nor anyone who could really stop finance capital—so, of course, this was destined to be a failure. At the same time,

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26. Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, 212.

27. See Chalmers Johnson, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle: The Growth of Industrial Policy, 1925–1975* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982).

28. Sheldon Garon, *The State and Labor in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 209–210; see also Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, 211–212.

it sprouted again soon after the war with the so-called Spring Offensive (*shuntō*),<sup>29</sup> which grew into one of the proudest inventions of the Japanese engineers to eliminate the movement of the multitude.

## Liberalism as Familialism

While they are busy producing buyers of labor power, the engineers must also produce sellers of labor power. They must produce workers who have a middle-class mentality. In other words, they must produce humans who believe that their lives can achieve security and stability by selling their labor power as a commodity. Therefore, in order to become middle class, one must have a kind of labor power that can be combined with constantly advanced technology. Who produces such labor power? There are certain things—namely the state ideological apparatuses—that the engineers must maintain. Among several notable apparatuses, Tosaka drew special attention to the family as an ideological apparatus.<sup>30</sup> It is through the family that one comes to produce one's own labor power as a commodity—or so the engineers thought and planned—but how?

In Japan and elsewhere since the 1920s, when the engineers began to construct the Order, this was achieved by integrating female members of the multitude. More specifically, it was ideal for the engineers if the female multitude became, in the name of the “middle-class (Japanese) woman,” managers of the (re)production process of labor power in the emerging nuclear family, especially in expanding urban spaces. This inevitably changed the meanings of the family system and of the Meiji period ideology of “good wife, wise mother” (*ryōsai kenbō*).<sup>31</sup> The family was no longer just a cheap buffer zone for the surplus population (e.g., the large rural family system for the agrarian surplus population). Now it played an active role as a factory for producing and reproducing the commodity called labor power. Accordingly, “good wife, wise mother” no

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29. The early spring struggles between Japanese enterprise unions and management over the size of the semiannual bonuses paid to workers. These bonuses largely replace the more intractable problem of struggles over base pay, benefits, etc.

30. Tosaka, “Fukkō genshō no bunseki—kazokushugi no anaraji ni tsuite,” in *TJz*, 2:311–312.

31. See Sheldon Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds: The State in Everyday Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 115–145.

longer simply meant the submissive Japanese woman quietly sustaining the Order but an active leader and manager of the factory called the family. The engineers needed to transform the female multitude into the new “good wives, wise mothers” as micro-engineers of the micro-politics taking place in the micro-cosmos called the family.

As a “good wife, wise mother,” how was a woman expected to achieve the goal of producing humans who can care for their own lives? Kawai, one of the few Japanese prewar male advocates for women’s empowerment as well as a champion of liberalism, would certainly tell her to become a liberal philosopher *as moral philosopher* and then teach her sons and daughters to be the same. Here is Tosaka’s summary of what the engineers believed the Japanese mother and her family members should believe in and in the name of liberalism:

Professor Kawai’s liberalism, that is idealism, refers to a doctrine that strives for the social development of individual personalities. It goes without saying that a person cannot develop his own personality on his own in a given society nor would this be *desirable*. Striving for the development of everyone’s personality by acting or expressing sympathy for “public concerns” and “our unfortunate brethren” necessarily leads to the social development of one’s growth in personality.”<sup>32</sup>

In short, the middle-class liberal woman, as manager of the factory for (re)producing sellers of labor power, teaches the Symbolic Order as liberalism. She teaches her son that he must think and act according to the Order called liberalism. However, in this family edition of liberalism, there is nobody who occupies the zero-center. There is no king, no father, no God. Instead, the female middle class as Japanese Woman teaches the son that he must work hard without being pushed around by anyone in order to surpass the father’s authority and win her love. It is as if she says: “Son, you’d better study hard, go to a top university, and get a job at a company that is better than the one your daddy works for now.” Henceforth, it is no longer the transcendental Subject outside oneself that “lets out the words of forbiddance.” It is one’s own self, internalized as one’s own subjectivity, that tells one what he or she must do and must not do.

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32. Tosaka, “Liberalist Philosophy and Materialism,” in *TJz*, 2: 398–399. See also the translation in this volume.

That is to say, if this education (manifested in Japan as the prewar Moral Suasion Movement and postwar New Life Movement, both led by housewives) “goes well,” the mother may not even need to say anything. To receive his mother’s or father’s recognition, the son pushes himself to become a good student, a good “salary man”—or in the case of a daughter, a middle-class woman, an “authentic Japanese woman,” a housewife—and produce the Order. The middle-class mother (as well as the reserve army) wraps her children in a lukewarm veil of maternity, raising them within it.

This family edition is still liberalism. It is still the Symbolic Order. But the one who occupies the zero-center is no longer somebody else. It is oneself who occupies this place and drives oneself to run and run and run until one can run no further. One is no longer comfortable in just enjoying restricted freedom, always fearing words of prohibition from the father. Rather, one actively and voluntarily chases oneself; this is what the mother wants one to do. No doubt, this is all about the commodification of labor power, but we need to extend this concept in a way that can take into account the workings and processes of Empire. It is no longer enough for one to produce labor power as a part of the production process of capital. One must be able to forge one’s own labor power that would make one an entrepreneur in the sense of Joseph Schumpeter<sup>33</sup> and his loyal Japanese disciple Tohata Seiichi: A person must become an entrepreneur who can run the production process of capital (including labor power as a commodity) as efficiently as possible. In turn he or she is compelled by no one but himself or herself to become a political entrepreneur smoothly managing a community. That is to say, in order to fit the political and economic system of Empire, one must first become a moral philosopher:

And so the reason the liberalism of the professor is idealism is precisely because he carries the moral ideal of the free development of man’s personality. (Green analyzes this quite thoroughly in his *Prolegomena*. This liberalism is an *ethical* doctrine. From this perspective, this long-awaited political, economic, liberalist philosophy is no different from the moralist liberalism of the literati and cultural philosophers that we spoke of earlier.

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33. Joseph Schumpeter (1883–1950) was a conservative Austrian ideologue who argued that the entrepreneur required a smoothly running capitalist system with uninterrupted access to all elements of capitalist production in order to be successful. Of course free, timely, and adequate access to labor power is key; see also Tohata Seiichi (1889–1983).



In fact ethic-ism is one of the tricks shared generally by today's bourgeois liberals. According to them, social mechanisms such as politics and economics can be reduced to the ideals and obligations of ethics and morals. And from there stems "social philosophy" and "political philosophy" and "economic philosophy."<sup>34</sup>

In this way, this family edition is the essence of liberalism. This is also none other than the problem of familialism in Asada Akira's re-articulation of Deleuze's and Gauntari's conceptualization in *Anti-Oedipus*:

. . . the modern private man [*home prive*] who is thrown out of the community and the regulative code becomes a fixed subject [*sujet*]<sup>35</sup>—a subject internalizing the super-ego in Freud's terminology—by being tied to the family, and hence, by being Oedipalized. In a word, each man becomes a "small colony" (*Anti-Oedipus* 316) and, already at this stage, the multiplicity of desire is regulated. What is found here is a scheme in which the indefinite debt to the king is internalized in the subject, becoming a debt to oneself. In order to repay the debt incurred to oneself, the subject must keep running incessantly. While the "master" no longer exists, there is no one who is not a "slave." As a matter of course, the resentment directed toward the king follows the worst course, in which it is sent back to oneself. As Nietzsche once rebuked, what follows the age of resentment is the age of guilty conscience.<sup>35</sup>

It is not a coincidence that Asada describes the structure of the subjectivity through the interest-bearing capital (fictitious capital) that is ultimately expressed in the form of M-M'. A debtor must adjust the structure in a way to meet the agreement that he made with a creditor (accountability). In this way, familialism compels one to become both Mexico and the IMF simultaneously and, like Mexico, to work like a horse just to repay a debt to one's self (now in the form of the IMF) that is absolutely un-repayable. Once money-capital comes to grasp the production process and transform it into a capitalist commodity-economic society, expressing it in the formula of M-C . . . P . . . C'-M',<sup>36</sup> nothing (whether money, means of produc-

34. See Tosaka Jun, "Liberalist Philosophy and Materialism" in this volume.

35. Asada, *Kōzō to chikara*, 171.

36. Spelled out, this represents a quantity of money (M) buying the commodities (C) of labor power and the means of production that are then put into production (P); the end result

tion, labor power) can remain itself. Rather, things (as commodities) must incessantly metamorphose into other things that are qualitatively the same as before in terms of use-value but bigger quantitatively in terms of value. Of course, capital can produce everything except labor power (and the earth), which is why the production and reproduction of labor power as a commodity cannot take place within the production process. It must take place outside the public domain and in what is called the family.

### Familialism as Japanism/Feudality

Familialism is nothing other than what Tosaka discussed in terms of liberalism. Familialism, as an Oedipalizing, autodisciplining, and individuating process, is the essence of liberalism. Insofar as the political and social structures of Empire are themselves based on political and economic liberalism, Empire itself is ultimately based on familialism. What is left for us to complete Tosaka's unfinished business is to reveal the historical necessity by which familialism, and hence liberalism in general, turns into Japanism, a kind of nationalist thought that justifies a religious-militaristic hierarchy as Empire becomes War Machine. The key to the success of this investigation, however, is whether or not we can prove that familialism is in fact a kind of feudalism (as much as liberalism) that gives birth to Cardinal Principles of the National Polity as the essence of Japanism.

Familialism as feudalism? Let us turn to Uno on this problem. First of all, Uno wrote about how familialism as feudalism is not the emperor system as an institution, but rather feudal thought, affect, and custom—or feudalistic culture.<sup>37</sup> It is a culture voluntarily held by peasants who own some land and who were close to becoming middle-class farmers. In other words a reserve army of middle-class farmers drenched in the feudalistic culture of familialism and not originally produced by the engineers but instead by finance capital.<sup>38</sup> We should recall how finance capital, once it

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of the production process is a qualitatively different commodity (C') that is then sold for a quantitatively larger amount of money (M') This completes one circuit of the production, realization, and accumulation of surplus value.

37. Uno Kōzō, "Wagakuni nōson no hōkensei" (May 1946), in *UKc*, 8:57.

38. The following discussion is a summary of Uno Kōzō, "Shihonshugi no seiritsu to nōson-bunkai no katei" (November 1935), in *UKc*, 8:22–42.

emerged in the late nineteenth century, had become the foundation for the formation and development of capitalism all over the world. This meant that capitalism could be launched with highly advanced technologies that require relatively fewer numbers of workers with respect to the scale of production. Accordingly, unlike the prototypical case of England, where capitalist development proceeded initially on the basis of industrial capital and a deep hunger for laboring bodies, the capitalist development based on finance capital that took place in Japan did not have to dissolve peasantry's family management of agricultural production, at least not in the short term.

On a conscious level, the peasantry paid an extremely high ground-rent according to familialism as feudalism (e.g., filial piety). On an unconscious level, however, the peasantry was already transforming into familialism as (neo-)liberalism in the sense that the middle-class farmer, as a reserve army, was forced into "extreme frugality in the household economy," into an extreme intensification of family labor, all in order to save money, accumulate assets (especially landed property), and become an authentically independent "middle-class farmer."<sup>39</sup> Like their urban counterparts compelled to become entrepreneurs of the factory of one's own labor power to win a mother's love, the reserve army of the rural middle class was driven by unconscious desires that whispered in their ears, inviting them to possess the earth (landed property and women).

In the above cases, we can clearly see the dark Oedipal desire to kill the father and sleep with the mother deeply embedded at the bottom of the heart of the middle class in both the city and countryside. As Asada wrote:

To begin with, the demands on the family are too excessive. The father is expected to possess the dignity of a king. But how in the world can a father's word carry any weight after control and rule replace the symbolic norm? It is no surprise that the mother, who is expected to have the abundance of the earth, cannot comply with such demands. As such, the voice praying for the living earth, the voice calling for the hero, embodying the essence of the blood of the *Volk*, transgresses the family and fills the world of night. Let us call this state at night, formed at the point where these voices come together, a *gemeinschaft* community of fantasy, the na-

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39. Uno, "Wagakuni nōson no hōkensei," in *UKc*, 8:58.

tion. Let us call the state during daylight, a model for a *gesellschaft*-like axiom, the state. What kind of structure does this binary between the nation and the state have? How far does this framework analyze the problem of fascism as a touchstone for a theory of the state?<sup>40</sup>

Prior to this, Asada was already providing an answer to these questions in the context of his discussion of Georges Bataille's critique of fascism:

Fascism, while succeeding in dissolving the *nomos* by activating chaos, instead ended up establishing an extremely rigid religious-militaristic hierarchy according to the principle of non-everydayness. It is the "most closed form of organization," and the man who stands on top comes to look like the zero-center—that is to say, God. Acephalous chaos comes in and transforms into the opposite.<sup>41</sup>

Beginning in the late 1920s, the young military officers influenced by fascist ideologues like Kita Ikki and Ishiwara Kanji certainly brought chaos to a society filled with a sense of stagnation. They assassinated corrupt politicians and *zaibatsu* leaders one after another. High-ranking military officers supported them by passively letting them do this. Then in September 18, 1931: the voice praying for the living earth called Manchuria; the voice calling for a hero, the Kwantung Army, which embodied the essence of the blood of the *Volk*, "the Japanese"; these began to fill the dark nights in the Far East. The military emerged as the tutelary for the middle class. Those of the middle class were predisposed to this given their penchant for spiritual-religious liberalism and, because in the midst of the Showa Crisis (1930–1932) of liberal capitalism, they no longer had faith in the *zaibatsu* or corrupt bourgeois politicians while their fear of Marxism had been enflamed through various counterrevolutionary technologies (e.g., media, the police, etc).

As Asada recognized, Tosaka's genius lies in the vision he had (before anyone else) that this turn to militaristic Japanism was the necessary outcome of liberal philosophy. After disclosing familialism as the essence of

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40. Asada, *Kōzō to chikara*, 185–186.

41. *Ibid.*, 87.

liberalism through Kawai's moral philosophy (a representative of liberal philosophy), Tosaka said: "Take the following as an example: All citizens are soldiers [*kyokoku kaifu*], and thus 'soldiers,' such as generals and colonels, represent 'citizens.' But can this really be a serious logic?"<sup>42</sup> If we stop there, we may be tempted to think that this is nothing more than Maruyama Masao's definition of fascism "from above." But on the contrary, Tosaka is saying that this is the necessary outcome of Maruyama's prized liberalism. Tosaka's theory shows that it is not even the military that occupies the transcendental position of the Order. It is "the Japanese," here only *represented* by the military's versions of Japanism, but nonetheless it remains this "Japanese" that is the source of the norm. We should know well by now what comes after this since we know the structure of familialism as the essence of liberalism. Insofar as the military is fulfilling what they promised to do with the middle class (the security of life), the latter must be loyal to the military.

Things were never same after the Manchurian Incident.<sup>43</sup> From now on, the zero-center of Japan's new Symbolic Order would be "the Japanese," not the Law. Now the engineers must also use the Japanist rhetoric in order to win the heart and soul of the multitude and transform it into the middle class (reserve army) because, after the Manchurian Incident, more and more of the multitude wanted to become subjects of the *newly visible* transcendental Subject called "the Japanese." After consuming all those new commodities and cultures, they decided that it would be cool to become Japanese. Of course, many became crazy about the military. However, fortunately for the engineers, the fascist ideologues were too unorganized and too inept to create a coherent, decisive system of thought by themselves. (As we will see below, in this they still needed help from liberals such as Minobe Tatsukichi.) Ultimately, there was still some room for the engineers to introduce liberal versions of Japanism (e.g., Hasegawa Nyōzeikan) in order to win back the heart and soul of the middle class—or so they thought.

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42. Tosaka, "Liberalist Philosophy and Materialism," in *TJZ*, 2:399.

43. The Manchurian Incident (Manshū jiken) of September 18, 1931, occurred when the Kwantung Army, posing as anti-Japanese "bandits," destroyed parts of their own railway in order to engineer a crisis that resulted in the expansion of military control of Manchuria, soon to become the puppet state of Manchukuo in 1932. Leftists in Japan refer to World War II in Asia as "The Fifteen-Year War" (1931–1945) to include this act of aggression.

Nevertheless, there was an inescapable reason why they could not really contain the military (and finance capital). The engineers had to make the middle class feel that the engineers were capable of securing their lives to win their trust. To accomplish this, they had to pull the Japanese economy out of crisis, so they had to stop the predations of the *zaibatsu*. However, there was no way for them to take the side of the multitude's own movements. The engineers had to become the Terminator. In other words, the engineers had no choice, quite ironically, except to rely on the military. As a result, the engineers had to agree to expand the military budget and territory. Of course, many engineers opposed military expansion, even if it did not mean at all that they were critical of imperialism, Empire, or even fascism. Nevertheless, determined to eliminate the movement and proceed on their own capitalist terms, this remaining liberal faction had no way to stop the crisis, unemployment, and agrarian poverty. Only two options were left. Some of them simply stuck to meaningless criticisms, such as Kawai's insistence on the protection of parliamentarianism against the military's takeover even though it was parliamentarianism that eliminated the Movement in the first place. Kawai's insistence therefore could not stop the *zaibatsu*, the crisis, or, ultimately, militarism itself. The other option was to simply become a part of the War Machine. We should not forget that quite a few engineers began with the first option then resorted to the second—and this second option is precisely the problem of *tenkō*,<sup>44</sup> chosen by so many erstwhile liberals and leftists.

This does not mean the military was self-indulgently pursuing expansion. They could do so only insofar as they could successfully make the supporters, especially the rural middle class and middle-class farmers, believe that the military was protecting their lives. Hence, voluntarily or not, the military officers were critical of finance capital as well as bourgeois politicians. In this respect, the military officers were, by definition, genuinely *neo*-liberal. This tells us that social production and desiring production always come together to pursue (neo-)liberalism. There were several signs of such an attempt with the establishment of new *zaibatsu* such as

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44. *Tenkō*, or political apostasy, was a widespread phenomenon among former liberals and leftists who, at times under torture and at other times rather freely, renounced their previous leftists beliefs and threw in their lot with the state in the 1930s.

Nissan in Manchuria against the old establishment (e.g., Mitsui and Mitsubishi).<sup>45</sup>

Nevertheless, the military officers were eager, like the engineers, to eliminate the Movement. This meant that the military officers as well as the engineers had to rely on the *zaibatsu* to actually manage the economy of the War Machine. This left room for finance capital to find ways to pursue its own interests while appearing to harmonize its actions with the noble virtue unique to the Japanese (e.g., the “uniquely” Japanese style of management). Like the military, finance capital had to become neoliberal in this sense. Accordingly, the engineers, military, and finance capital had to find a multitude for finance capital to expropriate but without causing the Japanese’s distrust of all of them.

Who was this expropriated multitude? It was whoever remained as a multitude, but it was especially the racially discriminated multitude. While the engineers and military tried to stop the *zaibatsu* from squeezing out the workers and farmers who became the Japanese by stepping into the Order, they let the latter expropriate, for example, the Koreans and Chinese in Korea and Manchuria, places designated as new industrial centers of Empire and the War Machine.<sup>46</sup> That is to say, another major technology of Empire—racism—must be fully utilized by the (State) War Machine to cover up finance capital being itself. Indeed, the dissemination of racism is one of the major tasks of the production of “Japanese Culture.” Hence, it was not a coincidence at all that, in the same year (1937) that Cardinal Principles of the National Polity—that Japanism of Japanisms—was published, Japanese soldiers raped and murdered Chinese women of all ages in Nanjing for over three weeks, doing so, literally, In the Name of Emperor.

After all the discussions from Empire to racism, we can finally return to the initial point—finance capital’s expropriation of the entire earth, which incessantly shapes the multitude in the form of the relative surplus population, as well as in the form of the Movement and its opposite, the

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45. For a discussion of the relations between the Kwantung Army, the new *zaibatsu*, and the old *zaibatsu*, see Mark Driscoll, *Absolute Erotic, Absolute Grotesque: The Living, Dead, and Undead in Japan’s Imperialism, 1895–1945* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), especially Chapters 7 and 8.

46. For an extended treatment of these racial multitudes, see Driscoll, *Absolute Erotic*, pt. 1, and Ken C. Kawashima, *The Proletarian Gamble: Korean Workers in Interwar Japan* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009).

reactionary movements to eliminate the former. Finance capital thus produces countless movements by countless multitudes throughout the empire and all over the earth. These multitudes rise up and are temporarily eliminated, only to rise up again. What does this mean? It means that Tosaka never dies. He keeps fighting—with different bodies but with the same eyes.





## Notes on the Contributors

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