

Japan in Paperback :*

Stereotypes for Japan

In Present-day Anglo-American Popular Literature

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Social Significance of Anonymous Consensus

It was when I gave a memorial lecture in 1965 (Sasaki 1965) that I first pointed out a consistent expression of social consensus in modern popular novels in Japan in the same way, for example, as *Piers Plowman* once represented a common creed shared by a great number of anonymous people in Mediaeval England, who probably asked an oral literature for *Vox Dei* which might give a rationalization to their own *Vox Populi*. There, I followed up the history of Japanese popular literature from the beginning of the 1920's to the outbreak of the Pacific War, in which an aggressive patriotism had increasingly hypertrophied in concert with the militaristic expansionism of the Japanese government. The mob ideology shown in these novels suggested that it tends towards a jingoistic exclusionism whenever a nation is being driven to a crisis.

In other words, we are reasonably allowed to suppose that there are also the same kind of Middle Ages in mass-market paperbacks, TV plays or movies of present-day Anglo-American world. For example, although the war in Vietnam was thwarted partly by a resistance of American citizens themselves, we can still find a legendary theme where a stubborn hero volunteers to undertake single-handedly the difficult task of delivering some illegally ill-treated American POW's from captivity in the innermost depths of Vietnam, no matter what medium it

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may be sent out through. In this way the mass-approved values are always more or less reactionary in comparison with an intellectual vanguard in the same period. They are, however, often very powerful in the undercurrent of public opinion that leads to an important decision in national policy as I have seen in the ideological growth of Japanese literature towards a war fever.

Accordingly, what present-day Anglo-American paperback novels tell about us Japanese may reveal a mass-approved outlook on Japan that indirectly interacts with American or British policy towards us especially with regard to the trade imbalance or military spendings. In this paper, I will try to extract some features which these fictions depict as something peculiar to Japan and give them further consideration in order to get a general view of the matter.

From *Mikado* to *Shogun*

Prior to a tentative analysis of the novels, we have to see how the Western view of Japan has changed particularly for these past 50 years or so in response to the tumultuous development of world history. Before World War II, even in the USA where there were a great number of Japanese immigrants enough to aggravate the employment problem in 1930's, Japan was a remote, unrelated country like the world of *The Thousand and One Nights*. Average Americans were so indifferent even to the controversial Sino-Japanese War (1937-45), taking it as nothing but a kind of civil war among yellow Orientals, that FDR and his followers had a hard time arguing the Congress into the approval of a military aid program for the Kuomintang government. The Japanese were an inferior, overreaching race that never got tired of imitating Western Civilization and building up its military strength in exchange for the exportation of silk and sundries of poor quality.

The only attraction that allured Westerners in general was a queer mixture of the sexual culture depicted in ukiyoe and the still remaining licensed prostitution which suggested a "utopia of hedonism" that could not be realized in a restraint of Christian morality. Geisha, which ranked with Fujiyama to symbolize Japan, was erroneously taken to be an equivalent to courtesan or whore, though its function differed a little from others. In addition, the subservience of Japanese

women which some of Western residents in Japan had reported having witnessed amplified the image of Japanese femininity to that of an idealized sexual servant. It was also a yearning for some different values embedded under the surface of a discrimination against them just like that of Romantic poets towards the pleasure of Oriental harem.

If there were a military-industrial aspect and a moral one in the image of Japan where the latter made an understructure for the former, Western valuation of Japan had a tilt to a perverted version of the latter with a contemptuous side-glance to the former before World War II. These curious eyes veered towards a full alert with the development of Sino-Japanese War. That is, the contempt for her military-industrial aspects turned into a hostility with a corresponding modification of the moral aspect into a sadism probably because of the spread of news about the Nankin Massacre. All the Japanese, particularly males, were patterned into a treacherous sadist, which seemed to be a cause for the mobilized aggression.

The surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, in concert with FDR's enthusiastic rally on Japanese treachery in order to join the war, functioned successfully as a fixing agent to the prejudices. Through the drastic change of situations, the valuation of Japanese military-industrial capacities turned from a mere hostility to an obsession, which brought not only naturalized Japanese immigrants but also Nisei, who were born citizens of America, to concentration camps. It was obviously a policy triggered by an obsession with "yellow peril", because even the atrocity in Auschwitz did not develop into a confinement of American citizens of German descent. No one ever dreamt of an imprisonment of General Eisenhower, the then Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe. Here, we see a difference in attitude towards a heresy in the same Occidental culture and a member of completely heretic culture.

Since a war is usually triggered off as an aftermath of some futile negotiations in which two camps are more or less prejudiced against each other, cultural exchange in an ordinary sense has to be disrupted for the time being. Focusing attention on the enemy's military-industrial capabilities and reporting them incessantly through the media, however, would often bring more detailed information about the opponent than in peaceful days. In fact the Pacific War awakened

American masses not only to the high efficiency of Japanese ships or airplanes, but also to the audacious maneuvers of these requisites which they could not simply turn into ridicule as a blind imitation of the West. In the efforts to convert the threats into practical problems to be solved Americans rapidly switched over their traditional naval tactics to those oriented to task forces with due improvement of equipments like torpedo and pompom. James Clavell, the famed author of *Shogun* (1975), was then a POW in a prison camp, which gave him an insight into the inner life of the Japanese people. In this way a war can be regarded as a compulsory communication between two different cultures. Even if World War II simply magnified the popular image of Japan as that of a monstrous aggressor, it must have urged the West to a considerably wider view of Japan than ever.

Occupation after the war scattered a great number of American citizens in GI uniform everywhere in Japan, increasing the population who came into contact with things in Japan, including women. Young intellectuals like Keene (Donald 1922-) or Seidensticker (Edward C. 1921-), who had learned the Japanese language for military purposes, must have been stationed in Japan at the time as officers of the occupation forces, being watchful for Japanese history and culture at first hand to prepare themselves for the coming role of a bridge between East and West. Although the wall between two cultures did not easily give way to one side or another, the sudden increase of these living intermediaries as well as a tremendous acceleration of air transport over the Pacific has gradually planted some of the things Japanese in an odd corner of people's life feeling in English speaking countries. In parallel with these changes the International Military Tribunal for the Far East was doing its conflicting best to unravel the entangled threads of modern Japanese history, reporting to Westerners of the facts to ruminate in memory of the cruel war. Such an endeavor to gain a better understanding of Japan finally crystallized into John Toland's *The Rising Sun: The Decline and Fall of the Japanese Empire* (1970).

The image of Japan and its constituents, however, remained unchanged only with a partial magnification or curtailment except for a scanty portion of English-speaking population who had made a study of Japan or experienced her culture and race through a meaningful length of stay or an intermarriage. In a word the

cruel, aggressive image of the Japanese male we had once seen as exemplified in the kamikaze or banzai attack was fading with a lingering tone of vanishing legend, while the harmless, petty rascal like Goro in *Madama Butterfly* (1904) or Koko in *Mikado* (1885) was coming to life again with a new keynote of mercenary craftiness which might be a reflection of black marketeers who had swarmed around the commodities of occupation forces in Japan just like in Germany and other occupied countries. In contrast with the deflation of savage manliness, the traditional image of geisha rose from the ash of fire bombardment with a corresponding reinforcement of its sexual aspects.

Trade Conflict and Aggressiveness

Recently, popular novels with their titles in Japanese like *Shibumi* (Trevanian 1979), *Ninja* (Lustvadar, E. V. 1980), *Giri* (Olden, M. 1982), *Sensei* (Charney, D. 1983), and *Daisho* (Olden, M. 1983) were published one after another to follow the success of Clavell's *Shogun*. In addition to these novels that tried to depict feudalistic Japan and her people through the blue eyes along the same line as *Shogun* (e. g. Nicole, C. *The Sun Rises*, 1984) or those that involve present-day Japan or Japanese in their story (e. g. Diehl, W. *Chameleon*, 1982) are on the increase.

Needless to say, these Japanesques are the products of post-war cultural exchanges mostly through movies, because it was after 1960 that the word ninja spread far and wide among Japanese people. It must be noted, however, that even though *Shogun* set the pattern for them with its pioneering style and materials, popular novels with their materials taken more or less from things Japanese have jumped to an astonishing number since 1980. It showed the beginning of a new era for American and British people to grope unconsciously for Japan's true colors, asking, "What is Japan? It was undoubtedly a kind of socio-cultural reaction closely corresponding to a fierce attack on Japanese exports by COMPACT (Committee to Preserve American Color Television) organized by labor and management of the US domestic electronics industry in 1976 and also to the appeal for quantitative controls of Japanese automobiles by the similar combined operation of capital and labor of the American automotive industry in

1979.

In other words what Japan began to give the USA and other EC countries was actually a big scare again after 35 or 40 years after the Pearl Harbor. The threat was more shocking to the USA that had maintained Pax Americana with its multinational enterprises throughout the world than to the UK that had already suffered from a chronic depression called *eikokubyo* (British illness) among Japanese economists. In the second Jones' Report (US-Japan Trade Report 1980) which is now considered to have been very friendly to Japan, the Japanese economic power was regarded as "so shocking to Americans as was sputnik" that the USA would not be able to prevent itself from the decline and fall because of its own economic stagnation and inefficiency just like when it "did not block Soviet efforts," no matter how far self-imposed controls or an agreement for maintenance of orderly market would be extended. That is, the kind of Japan boom we have seen here veils an effect of groping for the kind of Japan which has been rapidly magnified through the lens of trade conflict.

The tide of events during these 30 years has brought a change in Occidentals' depiction of Japanese souls, which once focused only on a peculiar mechanism of emotional behavior where an upsurge of hysterical impulse drives us into an atrocity or suicide while a breeze makes us feel an infinity of cosmos in a silent apprehension. For example Toranaga in *Shogun* shows an outstanding intelligence in his political maneuver to such an extent as to restore the military-industrial aspect which has been set aside for a while in an inquiry into Japanese culture, while there is an obvious attempt to enhance an ethical valuation of Japan to an affirmative level, giving a detailed analysis not only to the superb portraits of the shogun or Mariko but also to the outwardly ferocious behavior of samurai. In this way, as Louis Allen tells us (Allen 1981), Japan seems to be promoted to a model for a portrait from that for a satirical cartoon. When televised, however, the story degenerated into a conventional propaganda against the sadistic culture through which an intrigue always develops to a military-industrial action, without any dint of leading characters' exquisite philosophy. The interpretation, or rather a modification, must be a result of the unexpected rise the Japanese Empire has shown in trade and industry.

In order to see Japan stereotyped by Anglo-American masses, however, it is

better to try for its image in more ordinary works than *Shogun*. That is, it is desirable for us to use paperback novels imprinted with less originality for the purpose of abstracting some stereotypes shared, for example, among average Americans so much as to prevail in a national consensus. We will pick out, therefore, Olden's *Giri* (1984) and *Daisho* (1985) which fall under the classification of unsophisticated action novel. Fortunately enough, they have respectively an American hero skilled in one of the Japanese martial arts, karate in the former and kendo in the latter, who fights against an American or a Japanese seasoned with the same martial accomplishment, where there is an unconscious differentiation of things Japanese acceptable through the identification from those intuitively unacceptable ones. In spite of the usual simplification for a stereotyped moralizing in the end in accordance with the fundamental principle of popular literature, they show various aspects of Japanese culture embodied either in positive images or negative ones that are quite intelligible to our inquiring eyes.

Blue-eyed Samurai

Manny Decker, the hero of *Giri*, is a detective of the New York Municipal Police with a short military career as a marine with the duty of sentinel for the American Embassy in Vietnam, and is now a member of a crime squad organized for an investigation of the Management Systems Consultations, a firm for information and security services, where two of his ex-colleagues also seem to do evil enough to be searched for. Just at that time, there happened a serial murder in some cities of the USA, in which women were killed by a blow too sharp and effective to be dealt by a bare fist, and raped immediately after the death. Robbie Ambrose, the assaulter, was Manny's mate in Vietnam whose skills in karate was so superb that even Manny, who never failed to train himself in the martial art, could not score a point to him. The murder, however, has escaped detection so far.

Manny had loved a Japanese girl named Michi in Vietnam, who was killed with the rest of her family at home under a heavy fire of rockets. Her father, George Chihara, a businessman, who held the reins of distribution of materials as well as of information in conspiracy with CIA, checked heroin the Mafia tried

to smuggle from Vietnam, for which Trevor Sparrowhawk, now an executive of MSC, Dorian Raymond, a policeman who now helps him with his dirty job, and Robbie took revenge by attacking Chihara's house, driving his family to suicide, plundering them of heroin, money, and other valuables, and finally destroying the building with rocket bombs in the guise of those from Vietcong in a turmoil of Saigon immediately before the fall, while George himself was given to the National Front to be tortured to death. Manny, who did not know the truth of the matter up to that time while absorbed in his job and karate in New York, is surprised at the unexpected visit of Michi whom he believed to have been killed. She is now an international jeweller under the name of Michele Asama.

Before long, Paul Molise, who had once spurred Sparrowhawk and others on to attack Chihara in Vietnam, was killed in the road, and, after a short interval, Dorian was killed in his apartment. Because of conflicting interests Sparrowhawk could not get even a rough idea of the assaulter. Decker the investigator could not make out who the killer was either, though he found out later that it must have been Michi because of a folded paper crane left behind. Sparrowhawk, too, become aware by his own reasoning and circumstantial judgment that a servant who had escaped from Chihara's house on the night of the attack had been actually a daughter, who now sought out revenge upon Molise and others for their foul play. He, then, sent Robbie to kill Michi at a hotel in Paris, for which Decker revenged her by killing the opponent after a hard-fought game of the Suibin Tournament, returning *ninjo* for Michi's self-sacrifice to follow the code of *giri*.

Frank DiPalma, the hero of *Daisho*, was a popular TV crime reporter who had once been a criminal investigator on duty for a narcotics squad at the New York Municipal Police Department, experienced enough to collaborate for narcotics control with the FBI and other services as well as to be a consultant abroad. A little more than 10 years previously, he had fallen in love with a girl by the name of Katherine to be blessed with a boy, though her father, the big boss of an underground organization called Triad, had not allowed them to marry so resolutely that he had to escape to the USA with bare life. After that, Katherine was married to Hansard, an ambitious young banker who tried to use her father to the best advantage, adopting her son under the name of Todd

Hansard.

An invisible tie of blood between Frank and his son was kendo. DiPalma was a famed kendoist skilled not only in kendo but also in Filipino stick-fighting art with a thorough knowledge of the history of Japanese martial arts as well as a superb connoisseur of swords, on which he often gave a lecture at some colleges, always carrying an oak cane with silver ornament, a gift from Katherine. His son, Todd, had also learned kendo in Hong Kong to show an amazing skill, often fell into a trance with a kind of presentiment, unconsciously uttering something in Japanese which he had not learned at all. Actually, he was already under a power of the vengeful ghost of Gongoro Benkai who had killed himself with Lord Takemori Saburo at Ikuba castle in Yedo at the end of the 16th century after a mortal combat with a superior force of Hideyoshi.

Ikuba castle was on a hill between the Metropolitan Speedway and Shinjuku Park in Tokyo, inhabited by Kon Kenpachi, a queer mixture of Akira Kurosawa and Yukio Mishima, who was a movie director of worldly fame with two Oscars as well as a conspirator driving assassination throughout the world by a cat's-paw of ninja of revived Blood League, and now planning to perform hara-kiri in public in order to propagate the Imperial Way. Behind him, there was Zenzo Nosaka, a businessman who had once been at the bar of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East as a Japanese MP during the war, then gained over some Americans in charge of the vengeful court to his side on the wave of rising anticommunist policy, and organized a worldly network of banks, through which he spread a dragnet of industrial espionage for his overlordship of every possible activity from electronics to auto industry. In a word he was a personality integrated of Yoshio Kodama, a wirepuller of the Japanese Right Wing, Kenji Osano, an upstart through transport industry for the Occupation Forces, and Konosuke Matsushita, president of the National Electric.

Kenpachi, who had once been Nosaka's catamite and disciple of kendo, had often a bout with him in the drill hall Benkai had used in days gone by. What Todd was now possessed with proved itself to be the ghost of Benkai, which made the one and only qualification for a second at the scheduled hara-kiri of Kenpachi, the present-day lord of Ikuba castle. Kenpachi, therefore, tried to come into personal contact with the boy in Hong Kong under the pretext of a film trip

for *Ukiyoe*, a movie produced by a joint work of the USA and Japan, while DiPalma saw his son there on a visit for an investigation a boss of labor world had asked him to take up because of a constant menace of assassination by the Blood League enticed by Nosaka who had had a grudge against the client during the days of the military tribunal in Tokyo. The producer of the movie under shooting, Jan Golden, now degraded to the status of a female slave for Kenpachi under the influence of drug and sex because she was a daughter of the judicial officer, who had once been driving Nosaka into a corner in Tokyo, and now going to be assigned to play the role of Saga in the final hara-kiri show, a maid who had betrayed Benkai and been killed at this disembowling.

Then, kaleidoscopic assassinations and murders happened one after another, which forced DiPalma and Todd to be parted from each other again, and brought the latter, a Eurasian boy, to genbuku, the rite for a Japanese samurai to mark his attainment of manhood by getting the front part of his head shaved by Nosaka as his headgear father, in order to second Kenpachi's hara-kiri by beheading the suicide with all eyes, including those of the media, fixed upon themselves in a big ceremony for the completion of *Ukiyoe*. At the last moment before the great performance, Nosaka suddenly went mad under the evil spell of Muramasa, an arm-smith whose sword is famous for its magical power, killing many people including Kenpachi whose descent was not noble enough to deserve the honor of seppuku. Finally, he was struck to death by a blow of DiPalma's righteous cane.

A common component of these two novels is that a Japanese martial art gives each hero something uniquely Japanese which contributes an important part in their inner life. If we trace the same coordinate axis, however, we will find a negative impulse in Robbie or Kenpachi beyond its origin, which reflects the philosophy of vengeance of both virtuous Michi and wicked Nosaka in two extremes. Although a distance between the USA and Japan seems to have shortened at least in the constituent values of these works, the affinity is obviously a product of increasing reference books about Japan with dictionaries as their important nuclei. For example, Olden does not seem to have either a reliable knowledge about the geography of Japan as an impossible location of Ikuba castle suggests, or a folkloristic understanding of Japanese culture as

revealed by the misapplication of *Iki-ryo*, which originally means the detached soul of a living person, which Benkai is not, who wants to lay somebody under a curse. On condition that we appreciate the author's best to inquire into things Japanese no matter how many misunderstandings there are, we are going to examine, in this case, American views on Japan through some misapprehensions that occurred beyond his thorough but lexical investigations of the issues concerned.

Misunderstandings and Their Meanings

The principal villain of *Giri*, Robbie, kills a woman to rape afterward, which he believes to be a sacrifice to a war god in order to call upon the Hachiman Daibosatsu for help. Although Hachiman is certainly a war god, or exactly a group of war gods, whom Japanese have been accustomed to calling with the title of bosatsu since a cult of the manifestation of the prime noumenon in the 7th century, it cannot be unconditionally equal to *Bodhisat(t)va* which became a honorific title for saint in honor of the secular name of Buddha (Olden 1984: 7, 43, 270, 302). We can see that the error is a result of the misinterpretation of lexical contents, which shows itself, infallibly or fallibly, in Robbie's prayer, *Namu Amida Hachiman Daibosatsu*, immediately before a Karate match in Atlantic City. It is quite reasonable to suppose that *Amida* (Amitabha), which probably has the highest probability of following *Namu* (Glory to) in a regular sequence, replaced *Yumiya* (bow and arrow) in the prayer, "Namu Yumiya Hachiman Daibosatsu," in a careless reconstruction of the phrase, of which the author had already learned its constituents through a few glimpses at a dictionary.

The most confounding mistake may be the substitution of a feeble fair sex as well as the necrophilia for *chimatsuri*. If we try to find interpretations for the word in *New English-Japanese Dictionary* (Masuda 1974), a vade mukum for every Japanologist, however, it shows only "offering a sacrifice to the war god" or "a blood offering," being short of anthropological or historical backgrounds where a sacrifice must be defined as an animal at the outset and an enemy spy at the very most afterward. This lack will easily throw open the word to an arbitrary modification as is often the case with popular literature, especially under the memory of the Nankin Massacre or of the Imperial way, for which

an immoral violence was often justified as righteous.

As for misuse of Japanese word, the most common and incurable one is the misapplication of *seppuku* to the honorary suicide of a woman of samurai class, who actually used to cut her throat or stab her heart with a dagger unlike her male equivalent who had to rip his belly open. There was a time when Madame Butterfly openly committed the disembowling on a stage of European opera house to an embarrassment of Japanese visitors.

Apart from an orthodox presentation of *kaishaku* in *Daisho* which originally means the merciful beheading of a person who will otherwise have to suffer a prolonged pain after the honored disembowling, the word is mistakenly applied to Robbie's bizarre violence in *Giri*. Again, although a wife or daughter of samurai was privileged to be respected as a member of a warrior's family, she never would say "I am Samurai (Olden 1984: 260).", which was a proud self-assertion allowed only to a male member, reflected faintly in a present-day joking expression meaning an audacious person.

On the other hand, we sometimes find some isolated fragments splitted from an unsplittable Japanese word, like *gi* from *Karate-gi*, a suit for karate practice, where *-gi* means exactly something to wear, but no Japanese would use the suffix alone. I was driven, therefore, to look for the morph among technical terms of Japanese martial arts, but it has been for nothing at all. One cannot use even a meaningful segment of a word, however, without a certain knowledge about the language though amateurish to some extent even if there remains a lot of cultural aberrations like a yellow satin *gi*, which may be by some chance fashionable in the USA in spite of a rigorous control over the uniformity of white cotton in Japan.

An interesting example of chronological confusion is the following statement by Nosaka.

We, the league, were fearless. We were made brave by knowing that there was nothing more glorious than to die for Japan. We believed in *geba*, the cult of divine violence, which promised a dying warrior immortality as a star in the constellation of Orion. (Olden 1985: 46)

In the long history of Japanese right wing movement there is not even a sign of *geba* as a terminology of that camp. The only possibility left is that the

author picked it up from the New Japanese-English Dictionary, being unaware of the fact that the dictionary also tells us it was a contraction of *gebaruto* derived from German *Gewalt* which first occurred in the campus strife quite recently in 1970's. To coin a word from German was a collegiate routine up to the storming era because of the prominence of the language in Japanese academia, which was quite alien to a right wing ideology to say nothing of the historical inconsistency. An oversight, however, brought *geba* into a most inappropriate slot.

What seems worse than a mistake is an intentional exaggeration in which, for example, a multitude of ninja is being trained for industrial espionage or assassination, including a bisexual agent called *oyama*, a kabuki actor who impersonates women, who is wrongly called *kunoichi*, female ninja, in spite of being a man to a real stupefaction of Japanese people. Although this is a product of an inconsistent patchwork composed of fragmentary knowledge about Japan, such a mixture often agrees with a presupposition by the mass population in the USA. We hear that a Japanese student unexpectedly gets a blow from an American youth who believes every Japanese male is well disciplined in karate to cope with a sudden challenge of fistfight. Things are usually simplifield in this way.

The difference between Shinto and Buddhism may seem undistinguishable to those who belong to the West including Olden himself, while a non-Christian Japanese cannot differentiate a pastor from a father. In the Buddhist vigil for the late *oyama ninja*, Sakon, he is considered to be sublimated into a *kami*, god, on the alter decorated with a pattern of a stork and a turtle, which we Japanese usually use for a celebration, like wedding, because of their longevity, also with an impossible interpretation that *mitsutomoe*, the crest of three comma-shaped figures in a circle, means the unity of Buddha, Buddhism, and Bonze, which actually is an abstract figure of three coiled snakes, though most Japanese usually do not remember the original meaning. There are also some mistakes in representing Japanese words by their sounds. *Mochu*, in mourning, in *Giri* is erroneously turned into *mo-shu*, a chief mourner, in *Daisho*.

This is not surprising if we see William Diehl's *Chameleon* (Diehl 1982) where *Tohukuji*, a famous Buddhist temple, is introduced as the most sacred Shinto

shrine, while *Kinkakuji*, the fabulous gilt temple described in one of Mishima's novels (*Kinkakuji* 1956), is supposed to be in Maruyama Park in Higashiyama district of Kyoto though it is situated in Kita district. Besides, *Kinkakuji* has a great *torii*, a Shinto shrine archway, with pious people worshipping Shinto gods in spite of being sacred to the Lotus Sutra scroll, the *Saddharma Pundrika Sutra*, (Diehl 1982: 1010-113). It is, therefore, not too much to say that we cannot ask of anyone an accurate understanding of a religion which is beyond his or her experience.

Such errors, however, are a product of increasing manipulation of things Japanese in American fictions just like a number of traffic accidents on the increase with a total volume of wheeled traffic. Probably, similar delusions have incessantly occurred in Japan that has long been under the torrential downpour of Western civilization in every stratification of culture from the level of fashion industry to the height of academic world. Although misinterpretations are regarded as an evidence of increasing cultural exchange, the point to see is what kind of values are being formed or reproduced there.

Double-edged *Giri*

Although Michi in *Giri* loves Manny wholeheartedly, she has given herself to Dorian for the purpose of revenge. This is so confusing an act for Manny who depends on the principle of love that he reproaches Michi for the infidelity only to find an answer that her betrayal itself is a highly-approved morality in order to achieve the revenge as a postulate of *giri*, a sacred duty. Vaguely on the edge of understanding, Manny muttered, "*Giri* versus *ninjo*. Duty versus feeling." *Giri* lost its Confucian meaning of *i* or *yi* (justice), especially among Japanese townfolk after the mid-Edo period, denoting behaviors or words that are forced by social discipline against one's own will as shown in "How suffocating is *giri* in this weary world (Bakin, T. *Chinsetsu Yumiharizuki*, 1807)" or in "Because I was cornered into *giri*, for which I had to say so (Saikaku, I. *Kohshoku Ichidai-otoko*, 1682)." The usage, however, seems to have barely measured up to the standard required for communication. The same can be said about *ninjo*, however short it is to translate the word with terms like "feeling."

No matter what the words mean, Michi was placed under the obligation of delivering her father from captivity in vain or of executing vengeance on the enemy for killing her family, with a support of Jinrai-butai, a suicide unit where her father once belonged. Jude Golden, father of the movie producer in *Daisho*, had once been sent to Tokyo to try Japanese war criminals, for which Nosaka, an ex-kempei and a leading member of the Blood Oath League, sought his life with Nijo, a female agent, posted to look after Jude's sexual life. In both cases, the female sex was simply turned into an instrument, which a right-wing ideology has at its beck and calls as a weapon on the premise of the girl's approbation. Jinrai-butai gave Manny a support for his revenge on Robbie in *Giri*, while a Japanese right-wing organization abuses the mainstay of the business world, driving a terror campaign on a worldwide scale in *Daisho*, though the story ends with the ruin of its boss.

On the other hand, Murakami Electronics, a Japanese cooperation in *Giri*, makes an astonishing development in so-called shosha (trading company) type business that sells whatever merchandise it finds a market for, buying a real estate after another in the USA, planning to build a new colossal hotel in Maui, and purchasing a hotel with casino in Atlantic City. In *Daisho*, there is *Sanken*, a conglomerate composed of more than twenty prominent enterprises and banks, which always calls on the Japanese government to function as a corporate state, though a French businessman named Labouchere who had a nuclear power station in Kyoto knocked down to himself by bribing the officials into compliance at the expense of 3,000 US dollars was killed in a bathtub of his own mansion by three ninja in black dispatched from the organization. It is unexpected surprise for us Japanese to find that the so-called nuclear allergy is supposed to be a product of right-wing ideology in contradiction to our reality. Anyhow, the feminine sex of Michi or Nijo is institutionally controlled by the same power which integrates the right-wing terrorist organization into a cartel. That is to say, a gigantic network of the giri makes an invisible understructure, on which the great religion Japanism is established with its business circles included there. The whole organization increasingly extends its power by hook or by crook like a large crowd of lemmings that makes a rush for the fatal sea. The image suggests that the industrialized Japan of today is nothing but a hypertrophied kamikaze.

Daisho tells us that Japan has made great account of an intelligence network since the days of Hideyoshi, the first chief advisor to the Emperor from samurai stock (1537-98), to gather the information about the world 30 years thence in her policy. There is no concept equivalent to the West's industrial espionage in the moral code of Japan, let alone articles for its prohibition in the law. Military espionage activities survived World War II to furnish information on the issues required for the economic recovery of Japan. The government has found itself under the imperative necessity of Nosaka for its information-gathering as well as its distribution of the games to various industries with an important effect upon his power in the underground. What Kon Kenpachi takes over is to beautify the ideology of those underground forces, putting Yukio Mishima's philosophy into practice, where one can lead an everlasting life by killing himself for a noble cause.

Fortunately, we Japanese seem to have a resistant to those black energies. For example, DiPalma tries to cultivate his own potentialities both in spirit and skills through various trials, apprenticed to Tendrai, a great swordsmith, in order to fight against the weird power of Muramasa, a notorious sword obsessed with an evil spirit, and also against the vengeful ghost of Benkai. Introduced to this master, he felt as follows.

DiPalma now stood before this man who was a link between Nippon of the past and the Japan of today, tomorrow, the future. Tendrai was the heart of Japan, a reminder of *giri*, eternal duty, of self-discipline, of all that was worth preserving from the old Japan. DiPalma felt lighthearted, aware that he stood in the presence of someone very special. (Olden 1985: 276)

Thus, Tendrai is the incarnation of *giri*, a precious inheritance from the good old Japan as well as a torch that lights her future with. We must remember, however, that the same virtue drove Michi to vengeance, and that with a support of survivors out of the Jinrai-butai, which is closely tied with Kenpachi's Imperial Way at the root. In a word the energy that urges Japan onward is one and the same only with double edges of right and wrong. There, the principle to distinguish right from wrong is logically inexplicit.

Logic With or Without a Hitch

The two works by Olden, *Giri* and *Daisho*, can probably be regarded as a patchwork composed of fragmentary Japanesques with an abundant spices of sex and violence. What cannot be laughed at, however, is a view in which Japan has not undergone a change in her values even after the great war. Considering that it is now quite rare to identify West Germany with Nazis in Anglo-America popular novels, it is rather astonishing to find ourselves besieged by an old familiar hostility even though there is also an insurmountable cultural barrier with the trade conflicts as its outcrop. Apart from a nervousness common to Japanese who always concern themselves about a facade for foreigners and their disputes on Japan in a popular vein, we will have to inquire into what on earth actually supports those prejudices or misunderstandings in order to solve the problem as that of a difficulty in communication between two different cultures.

More than anything else, we must note the fact that such a view of Japan is not peculiar to these two popular novels, reflecting not only an impressionistic valuation common to the Anglo-American mass but also the reason why they put it on Japan. As is generally known, Japan's aggressive export today is regarded as a post-war development of kamikaze or banzai-attack. Even an American student who took a course of Japanology given partially by a professor invited from Japan at a state university wrote the following passage in her paper written obviously in favor of Japan (Komatsu 1986 : 45).

The most important result of the Kamikaze strategy was not apparent until after Japan's defeat when self-sacrifice of the suicide squads enabled the Japanese to bear the dishonor of surrender and thus made possible the post-war miracle of rebirth and reconstruction.

That is, what enabled Japan to drive her miraculous revival is the combative spirit of kamikaze. It is beyond doubt that there are some Japanese traits maintained from prewar days to the present like the loyalty to a group one belongs to, which is now shown by the power of her economic or industrial vigor. Such a regressive evaluation which often puts Japan today on the same orbit with prewar Imperial Way, however, must be quite mortifying for the

Japanese who are trying hard to live up to the idea of renunciation of war in the postwar new constitution, who believe in the functions of Japanese parliamentary democracy though with a certain disappointment at its corruption, or who, on the contrary, cannot find even a fragment of stoical patriotism in the behaviors of young Japanese today.

Our dissatisfaction, however, is not vociferous enough to revise the so-called prejudices held by foreigners: their prejudices are not altogether unfair. We must give a thought to the fact that Kishi, a one-time war criminal, was nominated to the post of prime minister in 1957, which probably could not be allowed in postwar Germany. Yukio Mishima, a novelist who had once been rumored to be a candidate for Nobel prize, attacked the Eastern Headquarter of Ground Self Defence Force with his own bodyguards, Tate-no-kai, and ripped his belly open in order to rouse the nation to the Imperial Way in 1970, an undeniable source of *Daisho*. Shoichi Yokoi was found in 1972, Hiroo Onoda in 1974, both in jungle where they had lurked as a Japanese soldier or officer for more than twenty years with their first appearance in public at the front shrine of Yasukuni, a shinto shrine for deceased warriors. George Fox's *Amok* (1978) obviously took its material from the recovery of these two missing exservicemen. We must note that the retention of Yasukuni itself is an incorrigible instance of aggressive propaganda to the eyes of foreigners who observe Japan through their experience in World War II.

Gregory Clark pointed out the difference between Japan and West Germany in that West Germans, on their own initiative, hunted up their compatriots who had been suspected of the atrocities during the war, and punished them for the guilt (Clark, 1977: 106-7). Besides, they payed a large indemnity to the injured countries including those in the Communist bloc, converting those notorious concentration camps into the memorial halls for the anti-war movement. They took the penalty of political partition of their fatherland. More than anything else they have no Yasukuni at all.

There are many Japanese who positively justify the existence of Yasukuni in order to condole on war victims without any modification by an ideology. An adherence to the past like whipping the dead never has been a virtue in Japan, where the same tolerance often makes her people to idealize the past war though

in a few limited aspects like a nostalgia for the war dead. Yasukuni survived the postwar denouncement of the Imperial theology for militarism because of Japan's polytheistic tradition which even the GHQ had to approve of under principle of religious liberty in the modern law, forbidding, instead, only the financial and moralistic support by the government. Going with this spontaneous stream of national traits, ex-soldiers often plan to make a sentimental journey through the scenes of their battle, gather the ashes of their deceased comrades, and build cenotaphs for them in various places in Asia, not for other Asians killed in their own armed aggression.

The concept of war crime immediately disappears in this kind of ingroup consideration, which never takes place in the rigorous consistency of the Judeo-Christian logic of West Germany, where Ronald Reagan was unexpectedly reproached for paying reverence at the tomb of the unknown German soldiers killed in World War II.

There can be a view that it is too much of a hitch for Chinese youths to blame Prime Minister Nakasone's visit to Yasukuni. One must counter the leniency, however, asking, "Was it ever possible for the Chinese to carry through the Long March or the stubborn resistance to Japan without any adherence to their national independence?" If the Chinese with a Confucian generosity stick fast this much to the meaningful past, how much more should the Westerners with the monotheistic rigor in logical consistency and exclusionism do so? It was the same adherence that drove Jews to the reconstruction of Israel over thousands of years, as well as that now urges Palestinians to challenge the Israeli to a desperate fight for the recovery of lost territory. The adherence, which sometimes becomes an undesirable hitch for the adversary, is an indispensable ligament to join a philosophy and its practice.

If the Japanese are supposed to have the same adherence to their traditional values, the prime minister's formal visit to Yasukuni, where Tojo is also enshrined, does not fail to reveal a shameless inheritance of the aggressive philosophy Japan once advocated before and during the great war. No one can imagine that Willy Brandt in full dress pays homage to Hitler's tomb. Actually, there is a faction with stubborn adherence to the Imperial Way, whose boss, Yoshio Kodama, was in collusion with Kakuei Tanaka through a great sum of

“peanuts” in the Lockheed bribery. The reaction to these facts forks into two observations; one is a distrust of Japan’s pacifism or a fear of a possible invasion by her, and another is an irritation at her dogged refusal to join in military alliance on the ground of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution.

What seems important as an active constituent of social dynamics is the latter, where a fruitful expectation is placed on a potential fear or distrust. This is a view harmonized with the doctrinarian outlook of Washington: Japan chalked up the present prosperity by slacking at her duty of defence. Christopher is particularly emphatic about a delusion in the view as well as a paradoxical reality where the Japanology enriched in various academic fields never will do much for a policy decision of American government (Christopher, P. C. 1984: 15-33). The same can be said about the prewar Japan whose considerable accumulation of information about the Anglo-American world was finally not of great use for a peaceful settlement of growing crisis.

As shown in Olden’s works, therefore, even though there is now a seemingly excessive increase of information about Japanese society and language, it does not fail to amplify the bad old view of Japan in order to rationalize some political failures of Washington or emphasize a wishful demand for the strategy of Pentagon. We Japanese, however, must remember that the same Anglo-American world fears to be revenged by something like the souls of ghostly warriors practicing their martial arts in Vallhala to prepare for Raganarok, not only having the premonition in the economic offensive but also presupposing the same aggressiveness even in our sexual impulse. If the USA or the UK now find a utility value in Japan, it must be premised on one and the same hitch.

The philosophy of polytheism that has done much toward the survival of Yasukuni helped Japan to adapt rapidly to the international situation not only in the Meiji Restoration but also after World War II. In Japan, an old saying equivalent to “The world is as kind as it is cruel.” is, if translated literally, “While there is a god who forsakes you, there must be another god who redresses you.” The dexterity with which the Japanese easily find another god who redresses them instead of a god who has already forsaken them must be an enigmatic drift of faith in the eyes of monotheistic people in a Judeo-Christian or Islamic country. What we Japanese have to ask ourselves is “Is there no

possibility for us to find another god in the ideology of Imperial Way?" or "Can we ever create a brand new ethical adherence that goes far beyond the aggressiveness of samurai, which Anglo-American people still believe to have survived today?"

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