American studies as an interdisciplinary approach to American society and culture has developed only since the end of World War II in Japan, but the study of various aspects of American civilization started right after Commodore Perry's expedition to Japan. Contrary to the popular notion that the Japanese leaders during the Meiji period were attracted mostly by the mundane side of Western civilization, there were those like Yukichi Fukuzawa who became interested first in the republican government of the United States, and there were also people like Kanzō Uchimura who became devout Christians primarily through the influence of American Christianity. The first academic chair for American history and diplomacy was established at the University of Tokyo as early as 1924, and here again Yasaka Takagi, occupant of the chair for twenty-six years, was deeply concerned with the spiritual sources of American democracy, and he has been emphasizing Puritanism in a somewhat broad sense and the Frontier spirit as analyzed by Frederick Jackson Turner as the determining factors for the formation of the distinctively American character. The search for the

2) Yasaka Takagi, Takagi Yasaka Chosakushū (Collected Works of Yasaka Takagi) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1970-1971) contain in five volumes various works of Takagi in which the importance of Puritanism and the Frontier Spirit is emphasized repeatedly.

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uniquely American has been done constantly by Japanese scholars, and lately there have been a number of attempts for making comparisons and tracing relations between Japanese culture and American culture. To take just one example, we have now a three-volume comparative study of Japanese and American cultures which consists of essays on a variety of subjects ranging from the view of nature held by literary writers to the impact of American films on the Japanese mind.3)

Clearly there seems to be a growing awareness among Japanese specialists in American studies that it is time to explore more deeply the profitability of comparative study of Japanese and American cultures. This trend is in tune with C. Vann Woodward’s call for comparative approach to American history, although essays of the volume under his editorship deal primarily with the comparability of the American experience with European history.4) Here I should like to examine to what extent it can be meaningful to compare Japanese intellectuals with American intellectuals, focusing on the twentieth century.

At first glance, the attempt seems far-fetched. There are innumerable works on American intellectuals, while the peculiar characteristics of Japanese intellectuals have been discussed in detail by both Japanese and American scholars and writers. But the descendants of Shōtoku Taishi cannot be compared easily with the heirs of Jonathan Edwards and Benjamin Franklin. Of course one may make some sociological generalizations about intellectuals that will apply more or less equally to the intellectuals of various countries, but a historical approach to this subject is a challenge.

Moreover, there is always a knotty problem of defining intellectuals. The intellectual can be defined either broadly as an educated man, or narrowly as a critic of the Establishment. There

are colorless definitions of the term as well as derogatory or even cynical ones. According to one study of the socio-political influence of American intellectuals, the gathering place for American intellectuals is the intellectual journal or review, and the "best sociological definition of an intellectual is that he is a person whom other intellectuals define as being an intellectual."\(^5\) The study shows that a representative American intellectual is the one who reads and discusses such journals as the *New York Review of Books*, *New Yorker*, *New Republic*, *Commentary* and *New York Times Book Review*.\(^6\) This way of defining contemporary American intellectuals can be applied to Japanese intellectuals. In the world of Japanese journalism there are certain magazines—usually monthly—that are called "sōgō-zasshi" or general opinion magazines, and a Japanese intellectual may be defined as the one who reads and discusses some of the opinion magazines such as the *Sekai*, *Chūōkōron*, *Tembō*, *Jiyū*, *Bungeishunjū*, etc.

We may stretch the parallelism even further. In 1972 Robert Brustein pointed out that the intellectual journal in America had "grown increasingly narrow and restrictive, attracting along with their larger readerships a certain depressing predictability."\(^7\) The ideological slants of some intellectual journals in Japan are almost equally predictable; the *Sekai* has consistently represented the position of the progressive intellectuals, the *Jiyū* has been the organ of the anti-communist liberals, the *Bungeishunjū* has tried to appeal to a wide range of the general reading public, shying away from narrow intellectualism, and so forth.

But before discussing the contemporary situation, we have to go back to the original problem, that is, the problem of defining the intellectual. John Lukacs says that "a century ago the noun

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‘intellectual’ did not exist,”8) and Paul F. Bourke traces an early use of the noun “intellectual” in William James’s address of 1907, “The Social Value of the College Bred,” to an altered usage of the term by Harold Stearns in 1921 when he counted as intellectuals publicists, editors of nontrade magazines, pamphleteers, writers on general topics.9) As to Japanese intellectuals, Ivan P. Hall refers to the “Hundred Years’ War which Japanese intellectuals have been waging against the government ever since the Meiji Restoration in 1868” and explains that modern Japanese intellectuals “are in many respects the spiritual heirs of the Tokugawa samurai.”10) Robert N. Bellah goes all the way back to the seventh century to find Shōtoku Taishi as “an archetype of the Japanese intellectual” since, according to Bellah, he was both the first “official intellectual” and the first “critical intellectual,”11) although the Meiji Restoration serves in Bellah’s analysis as the usual dividing line between the pre-modern and modern periods in Japanese history.

Perhaps it will be convenient for our purpose to define intellectuals broadly as educated intellectual leaders of society so that they may include all the people discussed by these authors. Then we can resist the temptation to regard the alienated from society as the quintessence of the intellectual. As Jill Conway says, “the American intellectual is not a single type,”12) and neither is the Japanese intellectual.

With these words as preliminary remarks, I should like to take

up a few topics about the intellectuals to see how a comparative approach can be rewarding.

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Intellectuals believe in the power of ideas, and they are susceptible to the influence of ideas. Modern Japanese intellectuals were swayed by the successive waves of different "isms" from the West, among which Darwinism and Social Darwinism deserve our special attention.

According to Richard Hofstadter, the United States "during the last three decades of the nineteenth and at the beginning of the twentieth century was the Darwinian country," and Herbert Spencer was "far more popular in the United States than he was in his native country." 13) Darwinism was first introduced to the Japanese people in 1877 by Edward S. Morse, former assistant to Louis Aggasiz, when he delivered a series of lectures at the University of Tokyo. These lectures were published in 1883, and Darwin's On the Origins of Species was translated into Japanese in 1896. A number of popular books on Darwinism were written by Japanese authors, among which Asajiro Oka's Shinkaron-kōwa (Lectures on Darwinism) was most influential. Michitaro Tanaka, one of the leading philosophers in contemporary Japan, describes in his intellectual autobiography how deep the impact of this book was upon his generation. 14) Just like in the United States Social Darwinism was introduced almost at the same time as the coming of Darwinism. Ernest F. Fenollosa, who came to Japan from America in 1878 to teach philosophy at the University of Tokyo, was the first foreign scholar who lectured on Social Darwinism. The story of Hiroyuki Kato's conversion from natural rights philosophy to Social Darwinism is a well-known episode in intellectual history of modern


The intellectual histories of Japan and America, therefore, have a point of contact in the introduction of Darwinism and Social Darwinism to Japan, but there is something more to the influence of Darwinism. Although William Graham Sumner and Lester Ward may belong to history for most of the American people and Horatio Alger really upheld the virtue of respectability of the pre-Civil War America, to a perceptive observer from Japan the United States is still a country of Social Darwinism. Jun Etō, who wrote about his stay in America during the 1950's, insists that the spirit of Herbert Spencer is very much alive in American society. According to him, America is still a country of the survival of the fittest, and underneath the way of thinking of the Americans, whether they talk about the war in Vietnam or environmental pollution, we can detect the philosophy of Herbert Spencer. But Etō also contends that Japan is equally a country of Social Darwinism. Herbert Spencer is the spiritual father of the bullet trains and computers in today's Japan, Etō asserts.

American historians may not agree with Etō. Irving Wyllie corrected the tendency to overestimate the influence of Spencer upon American businessmen even during the latter half of the nineteenth century. On the other hand, to many Japanese historians Herbert Spencer is a forgotten man, and they will find it difficult to see any connection between the British social philosopher and the bullet trains on the Tokaido Line. And yet the fact remains that both the Americans and the Japanese have been highly in-

dustrious nations and that they have believed in progress. The celebrated Protestant ethic may explain the diligence and competitive spirit of the American people—although after the penetrating work of Herbert Guttmann on the impact of constant flow of people of pre-industrial society into industrial America upon the work habit of the American people we have to reconsider the influence of Protestantism\(^\text{18}\)—, but obviously it does not explain the industry and devotion to work of the Japanese people. Etō's insight is worth examining further, it seems to me.

On the influence of Marxism upon intellectuals the situation in Japan has been quite different from the one in America if only because of the Emperor System in modern Japan. The history of socialism in Japan prior to World War II was largely the history of suppression by the government, and we have martyrs to the cause of socialism. But whereas in the United States to ask why socialism does not exist may be a legitimate question—after all the Socialist Party failed in upsetting the two-party system and socialism as a doctrine somehow sounded alien to the American people—, Japan since the end of World War II has seen the Socialist Party as the strongest opposition party, not powerful enough to topple the conservative party but strong enough to function as a veto power against any attempt to revise the Constitution.

But here again we can find some interesting interactions and contrasts between the intellectual histories of the two nations. People like Sen Katayama and Isoo Abé had studied in the United States and had been influenced by the Social Gospel movement before they came back to Japan and became socialist leaders. During the Shōwa period so-called "Leftist Literature" of America which included the works of Upton Sinclair and Mike Gold was introduced to the Japanese readers. Also there were some young Japanese with rebellious spirit who chose to study in the United States, al-

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though the prestige of European universities was generally higher at that time. America, therefore, was a haven for many Japanese radicals before World War II. Since the end of the war the thinking of the American Left has attracted the attention of the Japanese progressives. Paul Sweezy's works and the *Monthly Review* found avid readers in Japan, and the New Left historians are stimulating the thinking of younger students of American history today.

In this connection it should be pointed out that the image of America held by the Japanese intellectuals is an important subject in the comparative study of Japanese and American intellectuals. One does not have to accept Eric Hoffer's keen but somewhat dogmatic insight that the "protagonists of our present age are not America and Russia, or America and China, or Russia and China, but America and the intellectuals,"\(^\text{19}\) in order to admit that the intellectuals, especially the critical ones, are very frequently hostile to America. Gerald E. Stearn's selection of foreign critiques of America, *Broken Image*, begins with Corneille De Pauw's philosophical comments on the Americans on the eve of the American Revolution,\(^\text{20}\) but it is important to note that since the 1950's foreign intellectuals, both European and Japanese, have been making use of critical writings of American intellectuals themselves in attacking various aspects of American civilization. According to Marcus Cunliffe, "European images of America, always closer than is commonly admitted, have now almost coincided with American self-images,"\(^\text{21}\) and the situation in Japan is pretty much the same. Intellectuals tend to read what other intellectuals write, so "anti-Americanism in America" during the 1960's was imported very quickly to Japan. If some Japanese intellectuals described America


around 1970 as the country of racism, violence and imperialism which was at the stage of incipient fragmentation, it was partly because some American intellectuals looked at their own country in that way.

But, to go back to the impact of socialism, we have at least one intriguing problem with regard to the intellectual histories of the two countries. It is what might be called the process of domestication of socialism each country. If Daniel Bell is right when he says that "the American Socialist Party, though often called reformist or rightwing, was actually too much a Marxist Party" and that "when the socialist movement could have entered more directly into American life... it was prevented from doing so by its ideological dogmatism," then we have to ask further why the ideological rigidity of Marxist thought did not become a barrier in the case of Japanese socialism. When we try to recall the 1930's in the United States, we think primarily of those literary intellectuals who supported the Communist Party and various popular-front organizations. When we try to recall the 1930's in Japan, in connection with Marxism, the first thing that comes to our mind is the historic debate on the development of Japanese capitalism among Marxist scholars. Essentially the point of the debate was whether Japanese capitalism had developed enough so that it required only one revolution to reach the stage of socialism or whether it should go through a bourgeois revolution first before it could become ready for a socialist revolution. The basic framework of argument was rather crude and the theoretical and strategic dogmatism was unmistakable, but the debate gave a profound impact on the development of Marxist scholarship in Japan.

It is generally admitted among Japanese scholars that Khurshchev's attack on Stalin in his speech of 1956 was a great shock to the Japanese intellectuals and after that the monolith of Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism disintegrated and criticism of Marxism became

quite vigorous. Thus the collapse of the authority of Stalin was a turning-point in Japanese intellectual history in that it caused the defection of the deeply committed and increased the influence of non-Marxist intellectuals. In a way it also prepared the way for the emergence of the New Left in Japan which was possible only after the decline of the authority of the Japan Communist Party. But the incident may be a little puzzling to the American intellectuals because the authority of Stalinism had been challenged in America during the 1930's already. The existence of anti-Stalinist Marxists in America—Sidney Hook, Dwight Macdonald, etc.—was one crucial factor that made Marxian socialism in the United States so different from its Japanese version. (One might add here the intellectual respectability of the concept of totalitarianism as developed by such scholars as Carl J. Friedrich and Hannah Arendt.)

The intellectual climate in postwar Japan can be measured by following the trend in opinion magazines. Kazuki Kasuya, former editor of the *Chūōkōron*, made a shrewd observation that in Japan the role of literary intellectuals was decisive and even the writings of academic scholars would be influential among intellectuals in proportion to their proximity to literature.23) Whether a similar tendency can also be found in America may be debatable, although one can readily draw a genealogy of literary intellectuals in America at least from the days of Van Wyck Brooks, Randolph Bourne and Lewis Mumford to critics such as Edmund Wilson, Alfred Kazin and Irving Howe of recent years. As there was Yukio Mishima in Japan, so we have Norman Mailer in America. Mishima's role as an opinion leader was a unique one, and the enormous impact of the writings of Masao Maruyama on the younger generation of postwar Japan should be explained partly by the literary character of some of his essays.

According to Kasuya, the dominant themes of discussion featured in the opinion magazines during the postwar period can be summarized as follows: 1) reaction to the defeat, 2) historical consciousness—re-examination of the meaning of the historical development of modern Japan, 3) from poetr Csv and philosophy to prose and science, 4) the Constitution and the national polity, 5) world peace and the place of Japan in the world, 6) Marxian socialism and the logic of the popular front, 7) the movement against the Japan-U. S. Security Treaty, 8) economic growth in the 1960’s and optimistic futurology, 9) the war in Vietnam and campus turmoil, and 10) Japan as an economic superpower.

It would be dangerous to try too hard to find parallel situations between Japan and America, but we are tempted here to make some comparisons. If we are allowed to say that the postwar American intellectuals have been concerned with such problems as the Cold War, the uniqueness of the American experience re-examined, theories of mass society and mass culture, the blacks in America, the ethnic Americans, the “end of ideology,” the rebellion of the youth, futurology, ecology, the New Left against American liberalism, the arts of the irrational or the absurd, and the so-called new isolationism, then perhaps we can say that the intellectuals of the two countries have been thinking about three things basically, namely, the uniqueness of their own country, the place and role of their country in the world and the character of contemporary civilization and its future. Inspite of the recent talks on the communications gap between the two countries, as far as the intellectuals are concerned, they seem to have a common ground for coming to grips with the urgent problems of “postindustrial society.”

Finally, the problem of the intellectual and the powers must be examined. Edward Shils asserts that an “effective collaboration between intellectuals and the authorities which govern society is a requirement for order and continuity in public life and for the

integration of the wider reaches of the laity into society,” and yet he admits also that the tension between intellectuals and the laity “can never be eliminated, either by a complete consensus between the laity and the intellectuals or by the complete ascendancy of the intellectuals over the laity.”

One way of solving this tension was the brain trust under President Franklin D. Roosevelt, and it is difficult to find its equivalent in Japan during the 1930’s. Perhaps the Shōwa-kenkyukai (Showa Research Group) can be counted as an attempt for forming a kind of brain trust under Fumimaro Konōe who was almost the only political leader the liberals in Japan could trust at that time. This group was organized in 1933, and during its short life intellectuals of different political persuasions got involved with its activities. For example, Kiyoshi Miki, in many ways one of the most important intellectuals during this period, produced his “theory of cooperation” which was to supersede both individualism and totalitarianism. This group was significant also because some of the “progressive bureaucrats” of the early Shōwa period participated in it.

It is sometimes said that it is easier in the United States for an intellectual to serve power temporarily and then come back to the intellectual community. But in recent years there have been signs that the Japanese intellectual community has been producing, to borrow Richard Hofstadter’s words, “types of minds capable of mediating between the world of power and world of criticism.”

A growing number of scholars and nonacademic intellectuals are participating in various advisory committees appointed by the government and are working with policy planning officials, although a majority of the Japanese intellectuals still fight shy of involving themselves with jobs to serve power. By contrast, intellectuals as

critics of the Establishment have been quite conspicuous in America in recent years. Clearly, the tension between the world of power and the world of criticism is still there, and the intellectuals of Japan and America are both faced with the formidable task to articulate the role of the intellectual in the future world.