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BENTHAM'S INFLUENCE ON JAPAN

HIROMI ISHIGAKI

(1)

Bentham's reputation in Japan, compared to that of Smith and J. S. Mill., has been far exceedingly disappointing even after most of the post-war years. Despite the continued neglect of Benthamism, however, there have been a few university professors who have developed pioneering ideas about many of the aspects of the welfare state, as we know it today. Much of their inquiries and research have been based on Bentham's thought.

Dr. Kawai is one of the most well-known and prolific prewar writers defending "liberal socialism". In large measure this is based upon a philosophy of humanitarian individualism derived from Benthamism, philosophical Radicals, and Fabianism in nineteenth century England.

In this paper an attempt will be made to assess Dr. Kawai's indefatigable effort to transplant, nurture, and encourage "the tree of utility" in the Japanese cultural context, economic and political scenes. His efforts, as you will see, eventually failed.

(2)

Dr. Kawai Eijiro (1891-1944) was for many years professor of economics and social thought at Tokyo University. All through his school days he spent most of his study time reading English books on history, politics, and economic thinking. Shortly after graduation from Tokyo University, he took a job at the Department of Agriculture and Industry (then called the "Noshomusho"), encouraged by an idea of the protection law of labouring poor. Having been disappointed, he subsequently quit the office, and was given a position of assistant at the university. He thereafter devoted himself to teaching the history of economics, political ideas, and equally to studying social thoughts in England. During his stay in England and other European countries from 1922 to 1924, he became enamored of an English version of democratic socialism through Thomas Hill Green (1863-1882), an English radical idealist of Oxford, where Kawai himself stayed a while. While Kawai was in Oxford, the Labour Party gained many converts from conservatives and liberals alike, and became almost a nationwide populist party. This resulted in the formation of the Labor Cabinet of Great Britain in 1924, which was formed for the first time in the history of English politics by

James Ramsay MacDonald. Under the circumstances it can be easily inferred that Kawai confirmed his belief in for the feasibility of socialist reform-even in Japan. When he came back to Japan, he found in her social, intellectual surroundings something radically opposed to what he had in mind as a firm believer in socialist democracy. During and after World War 1, the intellectual mood of Japanese society became noticeably more tolerant than that of pre-war times. Moreover, the conspicuous failure of the Japanese economy to adjust to the wave of postwar recessions induced intellectuals of all schools to entertain every conceivable explanation of the shortcomings of capitalism. A government founded on universal manhood came about in 1925. Belated as it was, it was at least a sign of building an important step forward to modern democracy. Nationalism, however, still dominated all variety of thought within ruling circles. They were deeply imbued with the ideas of expansion through military strength and, if possible, advancing into the world market by mercantilistic national devices.⁽¹⁾

On the other hand, however, Kawai saw the radicals inspired by European socialism or the revolutionary success by Bolshevism in Russia struggling political leadership one against another. Even the communist party, admittedly then being only nonlegitimate, started calling for political action on a wider scale as the underground. Among these different shades of left wing movements, some were sponsored chiefly by moderate elements, such as Yoshino Sakuzo (1865-1949) who organized the Socialist Masses Party (Shakai Taishu To), but the most of them were evidently under the influence of Marxism-Leninism. Both the general tone of the journals and magazines issued mainly monthly and the stress on a correct analysis of the historical situation in Marxist-Leninist terms indicate that the basic drift was communist-inspired. Reading circles were burgeoning in colleges and universities everywhere, labour unions blossomed forth in growing industrial firms, and there were frequent strikes not only in business firms but also in higher educational institutions. Unlike most other prewar Japanese socialists, either of the extreme or moderate variety, Kawai did not compromise himself or recant. It was his position to openly question the truth of Marxism as well as the notion of megalomaniac aggrandizement of the state. This was what seemed to make him drive to the double-sided attack on the two. What then were his alternatives to break with the contemporary trend of accepted thoughts? In 1939 he wrote this statement which was submitted to the court when he was put to trial for an alleged violation of the Press Code:

“My concept of socialism was influenced by that of the British Labor Party, but no more than influenced, for I did not take over that concept of socialism as it was. My socialism is unique, and thus it is necessary for one first to discard any mental associations with socialism as it has

existed in the past.”⁽²⁾

In what way is his concept of socialism unique? He continued:

“The society which is able to develop the personality of every member of society is the ideal society.”⁽³⁾

With this social ideal as a norm he thinks he can perceive the various defects of contemporary capitalism. It is the task of social science to tell us what causes these defects and how we can correct them. Guided by both this social ideal and social science, we can conceive of the kind of society that should succeed contemporary capitalism. His brand of socialism, however, did not rest on the philosophy of dialectical materialism like Marxism. Therefore he never argued that capitalism, even in analyzing it scientifically, will necessarily disintegrate and socialism will necessarily arise. Idealists do not see society as progressing from necessity but rather as progressing in line with the wills of human beings guided by ideals. Thus, if socialism is an evil we must defend ourselves from it to the death; but if it is good, we must make its realization our goal. Here is the difference between a deterministic socialism and teleological one.⁽⁴⁾

Nevertheless, for him to reach such a conclusive position was not without difficulties, nor without any glaring mistakes. This is most clearly shown by his treatment of Bentham's doctrines, and especially by his attitude in determining their relations to J. S. Mill's ideas.

(3)

Now let us turn to his treatment of Bentham. What he sees in Benthamite thinking can be summarized as follows:

- 1) Bentham opened the way to believing in the possibilities of applying the principles and methods of natural science to the study of man & society.⁽⁵⁾
- 2) Bentham adopted Smith's liberalism, especially in political economy, but the primitive, original form which his doctrine the principle of utility is invested in is the principle of the artificial identification of interests. In this sense the Smithian thesis of identity of interests differs greatly from Bentham's idea. “In an attempt to destroy Smith's idea of natural law, Bentham employed the methods of natural science, by which he railed furiously against Smith calling him ‘a hodge-podge full of confusion and absurdity’”.⁽⁶⁾
- 3) Bentham attacked the principles of social contract, a doctrine advocated by Hume as social philosophy and represented by Blackstone as constitutional philosophy.⁽⁷⁾
- 4) All governmental intervention, insofar as being democratic, is justi-

fied by the principle of the artificial identification of interests; a government should "provide subsistence, produce abundance, favor equality, and maintain security".⁽⁸⁾

- 5) Kawai argues that the best book on utilitarianism is found not so much in Bentham's writings as in J. S. Mill's, who in his opinion greatly remodeled its original ideas. Touching upon utility principles, Kawai heavily draws on Mill's ideal that the end of man is the highest and most harmonious development of his powers to a complete and consistent whole.⁽⁹⁾

About the first three presentations there has been much long standing discussion. We now see scores of books and articles mainly dealing with the methodology Bentham proclaimed. The arguments are anything but new if only we just look in some of these works concentrating on the principles of utility as opposed to the Smithian "natural liberty", Bentham's attack on Hume's "social contract", and his philosophy of Economics. It seems to me that the last two propositions are among the most significant, more important than others, especially in the light of today's concern with Benthamite social philosophy and with his welfare implication of economics. First, we shall treat, the argument which Dr. Kawai emphasized in the last point. It has been, and still is, pointed out by some philosophers and historians that J. S. Mill gave a list of "the spring of action" in his essay on Bentham, which he never mentioned. It is the teachings which for Mill are the ends of life. Mill wrote in 1838 that Bentham never recognized a man as being able to develop himself beyond the human nature categorically conceptualized by him. To be silly, to be trivial, to lead a life which conforms to no aesthetic standards, all mean that we reject the appeals which can be made on the basis of honour, beauty, order, power, energy, and so on. In fact, the whole object of "liberty" is to argue that we must safeguard these goods, the ultimate goods of individual life, and that we must safeguard them by leaving people the room to experiment and inquire into them. This is obviously one of the conclusions which Dr. Kawai finally reached after a long exciting journey over British intellectual history in the 19th century. Today, however, we can piece together a different picture about whether or not it is important to draw so sharp a line between Benthamism and its modification by Mill.⁽¹⁰⁾

I am of the opinion, with Elie Halévy and D. J. Manning, that it is not in the least anything like a religious or aristocratic, aesthetic or chivalrous morality which Bentham, and his devoted follower James Mill, were promulgating. To the contrary, with the aristocratic tradition J. S. Mill cherished, Bentham's teachings are directed to a plebeian, or rather to "a bourgeoisie".⁽¹¹⁾ It is the moral code of a new era which Bentham teaches; it

is a morality devised for working artisans and shrewd tradesmen motivated by their own economic interests.

Moreover, like most western scholars, Kawai sees in the works of John S. Mill an effort to go beyond utilitarianism rather than to rigidly maintain Benthamite teachings, and to defend it against the charges of contemporary critics.⁽¹²⁾

What is paradoxical, but very important to an understanding of the Japanese intellectuals in prewar Japan, is that they were extremely interested in such moral precepts as "freedom", "individualism", "emancipation", "the dignity of the individual", and especially "perfection of the self".⁽¹³⁾ The essay of "English Socialism" by Kawai, the most meticulous documentation about the history of English socialist ideas ever written in Japan, shows that his interest in social theory does not stem from a purely disinterested inclination to explain human experiences. Rather, it sprang from an urgent desire to change the society, and, more importantly the character of its members.

"The definition Bentham placed upon man was that he is a pain-fearing- and pleasure-loving creature, who automatically prefers to escape discomfort and enjoy a sense of well-being. But, however selfish man may be supposed, there are evidently some other important principles in his nature. These are the striving for perfection of the self, to be pursued without concern for and with the ultimate aim of freeing the self from the trivialities of one's life and of a society of pain- and -pleasure calculation".⁽¹⁴⁾

From this point of view he emphasized Mill's "A crisis in mental History", which he thought was the most fascinating part of all these auto biographic writings.

Kawai's interpretation is that a doubt rose in Mill's mind as to whether the greatest happiness of the greatest number is a truth or not. It is far from being something good, something desirable in and for itself, but rather something made desirable if only based upon other principles, that is to say, the perfection of the self. The evidence is that Mill was definitely converted into an idealist after he experienced critical moments. He then began to put more emphasis on the development of "inner culture".⁽¹⁵⁾

Mill spent, henceforth, much of his time reading Wordsworth, Goethe, Colridge, Carlyle—the works from which German idealist approach stemmed. Rejecting the view of human nature as a calculus machine, he was tempted to maintain a more idealistic view of the goodness of man than Bentham did. Kawai takes great delight in making quotations from Mill's words, the most important of which is as follows:

"Among the works of man, which human life is rightly employed in perfecting and beautifying, the first in importance is surely man himself. . . .

Human nature is not a machine to be built after a model, and set to do exactly the work prescribed for it, but a tree, which needs to grow and develop itself on all sides, according to the tendency of the inward forces which make it a living thing."⁽¹⁶⁾

The most intriguing characteristic of utilitarian moral theory, Kawai continues, is the denial of inconceivable, transcendent hypothesis, which stresses the accountable "greatest happiness of the greatest number". But, if we are to distinguish carefully between quantity of happiness and its quality, as Mill eventually does, it apparently falls into a kind of "circle vicieux". For the test of utility should be the final answer to the questions, the first principle judging values. Yet the general recognition of the existence of differential qualities will radically contradict a statement of utility principle. Nevertheless, Kawai does not mind this strange inconsistency in his reasoning. Rather, he is determined to adopt an alternative moral standard—more idealistic than utilitarian, with Mill.⁽¹⁷⁾

Qualifying "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" so straightforwardly advocated by Bentham, Kawai maintains that the words should be modified into "the greatest perfection of each self of the greatest number". It is his growing conviction that everyone in the society, possibly the greatest number, should have the right to the happiness, which is unfortunately obtained by only the privileged few. Since the perfection of self must be considered the ultimate value, it is quite natural that a society will be called an ideal one only when the perfection of each individual is regarded as a goal for society to achieve. "The end of man, or that which is prescribed by the eternal or immutable dictates of reason, and not suggested by vague and transient desires, is the highest and most harmonious development of his powers to a complete and consistent whole."⁽¹⁸⁾

What Kawai saw in Mill's writings can be, then, summed up as the following remarks. Mill amended a great deal to his own utilitarian theory in every stage of its discussion until finally he himself converted to an idealist. But, of course, to say this is not necessarily to say that he wholly discarded the utility position for the other alternative. In its essence Mill's position was eclectic, combining two approaches into one broad system. It was Green, Kawai argues, who brought Mill's idealistic approach up to a considerable perfection through eliminating his logical inconsistency and sentimental ambiguity. To Green, to be good in its utmost sense for man means to reach "a perfection of character", to attain "the realization of capacities", to have "man's consciousness of himself as an end to himself", or to know "the realization divine principle in man".⁽¹⁹⁾

Today, it is well known among English historians that S. Mill underwent considerable change after his great mental "awakening" in 1826. One

result of this change was the correction of his Utilitarianism. He now thought that the way to attain happiness is not to pursue it directly, but "to treat the end external to it as the purpose of life". He also saw that one great defect of the school of Bentham was its neglect of history. Further, his views of Political Economy were undergoing a corresponding change. James Bonar wrote even as early as 1893 that his own utilitarianism, as distinguished from that of Bentham and James Mill, recognised "a difference in quality between pleasures. The pleasures arising in connection with the higher or distinctively humane faculties are more desirable than the merely animal pleasures."⁽²⁰⁾

However, does this mean that Mill's social philosophy made a gyroscopic change overnight? I admit of course that there was definitely a sign of "modification" in some ways, but after all the modifications, if any, are of minor importance. Because, as you will see soon so few writers have done more than Bonar's interpretation on Mill, therefore the genuine interest and oddity of Mill's views have been generally overlooked. Needless to say, Kawai's view on Mill went too far. Thus, what we shall concentrate on is the explanation that can be derived from sources other than the essay "Utilitarianism" of the doctorines which this essay is supposed to defend.

(1) Kawai was right in pointing out Mill's changing attitude on many contemporary social problems as Bonar and many other did. It is, however, too great an exaggeration to say that he converted himself into any idealist whatever. In fact, Mill was not infrequently considered to be non-utilitarian, or what Bonar called "New Utilitarian". But, as even Bonar told us, "in his own opinion he remained a bollower of Bentham".⁽²¹⁾

(2) There has been long standing argument that Mill would have dearly liked to believe in Socialism in some form or other, whatever his ultimate conclusion might have been. For instance, we are told by Bonar that "Mill's recognition of fixed economical laws and his recognition at the same time of man's power to turn them, as he turns any other laws, to his own uses are among the most distinctive features of his treatises; and the two features are found together in the book on Production as well as in the book on Distribution."⁽²²⁾ But, today we know from Lord Robbins much more of Mill's psychological peculiarities, as well as his history and background.⁽²³⁾

In the early thirties, whether or not Mill believed in its beneficial and efficacious operation of social machinery, Mill was decidedly under the influence of the socialist school of thought.

As was frequently told after his later visit to France he had read such ideas in Coleridge and the Germans, but it was French statements of socialism in Guizot, Michelet, Comte and St. Simonians, that carried fairly home to his mind.⁽²⁴⁾

But it is also obvious that Mill was disillusioned with Comte, about whose later work he subsequently said that it stood as "a monumental warning to thinkers on society and politics, of what happens when once men lose sight in their speculations of the value of Liberty and Individuality".

(3) Mill never mentioned that the type of socialism he was discussing was ultimately workable or desirable; he only said that it was an open question and that we had not yet the information which would enable us to judge. Mill's utopia was a rather vague vision which, in the convenient ambiguity of terminology that prevailed at that time, completely lacked detailed designs and devices.⁽²⁵⁾

(4) Mill has been called an arch-individualist by some good socialists by others. Whatever he was, popular belief was that he was the great mid-Victorian intellectual who dominated his generation of progressives by the sheer power of disinterested thought. But, in fact, this image of Mill is all wrong, as Lord Robbins asserted. Contrary to the popular picture of Mill's world, Mill was a man of intense and sometimes overpowering feelings; he retained a certain awkwardness in his personality; it is because of his unnatural nature of his upbringing, the emotional starvation of his childhood and early manhood; his constant tendency to exaggerate his difference with his predecessors; and "apparently the most purely intellectual, in fact he was one of the most emotional of writers".⁽²⁶⁾

(5) Analyzing mainly *The System of Logic*, Alan Ryan's study of Mill also suggests and explores a total view of Mill's intricate philosophical system, which served as the basis of his other writings. Mill was eager to demonstrate the social purposes of logical systems, beginning with his effort to demonstrate that the then popular intuitionism was merely an "instrument devised for consecrating all deep-seated prejudices". From there Mill proceeded to dismantle the accepted laws of causality, erecting in the process a coherent philosophical system that Ryan termed "inductiveness", which he related to the whole empirical tradition-Utilitarianism.⁽²⁷⁾

(6) The key to the place of John S. Mill in the history of Political Economy is indeed to be found in his utilitarian approach up until the time when he met Harriet Taylor, who afterwards became his wife and exerted a great influence on his writings thereafter. Mill would have understood and applauded what Lord Robbins meant when he said that "in spite of all the disclaimers of his middle period, Mill remained a great Utilitarian."⁽²⁸⁾

From today's point of view, thus, it would not be quite right to say that Mill was half way toward Utilitarianism and half way to Socialism. Even more wrong would it be, if you were to say that he finally bridged the chasm between Utilitarianism and Idealism, this idealism being what Bonar called the idealistic economic thought that prevailed in France and

Germany. But, what Kawai told us as a concluding remark was that this bridge between the two theories was really the greatest contribution to the history of economic thought.⁽²⁹⁾

(4)

The most characteristic of all ideas proposed by Dr. Kawai should be what he himself called "Phase 3 Liberalism" by which he attempted to harmonize liberalism, socialism, and nationalism. This line of his argument is today most clearly exemplified in the documentary statement submitted to the court during his trial. "Phase 1 Liberalism" as he argues is the Proclusean laissez-fair ideology which was substantially defended by S. Smith and J. B. Bentham, advocated by D. Ricardo and T. Malthus, and henceforth dominated not only economists, politicians, and government officials, but equally men in the street all through 19th century. With the writings by J. S. Mill, however, the atmosphere of classical liberalism has gradually begun to change. The essential optimism of this first stage liberalism was definitely challenged, and finally replaced by the reformist trend initiated through Mill's democratic idea of socialism, which in its main stream included T. Green, E. Caird, and others.⁽³⁰⁾ Thus, "Phase 2 Liberalism" is the product of a reaction both to the so much theological, or mystical implication, and its strong support of cosmic optimism and the response to the new demands of the late 19th century. With this reformist position further developed, we find logically and historically a new synthesis, which Dr. Kawai called "Phase 3 Liberalism", on which the old-fashioned economic laissez-fair should be renounced. While freedom of economic activity would be renounced, however, other forms of freedom would remain intact; freedom of speech, belief, religion, or other community-oriented activities, and so forth.⁽³¹⁾

Now, if you look at Dr. Kawai's diary documented while studying in London, you can not avoid the impression that he was greatly influenced by L. T. Hobhouse, a Victorian liberal philosopher who was then teaching at London University.⁽³²⁾ In view of his words of respect for Hobhouse, he obviously picked up the principles of liberalism from him. On the other hand, he attempted to apply T. Green's idealist approach to the economic field, thus in its order making up the first and second stage of liberalism in Kawai's social philosophy. In an attempt to build up the third stage, however, he was forced to a hard test. It was actually not as easy as the case of the first two. Judging from the evidence available to us today, he apparently strayed off into somewhere he had scrupulously avoided getting into under the hard pressure of then prevailing thought control. This was

shown when he was asked to clarify the "national polity", the "imperial institution", the "national basis" as found in the divine origine of the country and the dynasty, and the "national character" as embodied in those moral virtues which were considered indispensable to social unity and order.⁽³⁴⁾ Explaining his own concept of the modern state, he took up the view of idealistic state contended by Kant, whereby he tried for a reconciliation harmonizing the need of Japan's imperial institution with that idea. After all we are under the impression that there is apparently too much scholarliness in his idea of finding "a coherent whole" about man's political life, a universal principle explaining one and all through time and space.

He was too preoccupied with such grand ideas. For one thing, there is definite attempt at systematic and detached consideration in his works. Within the cultural context of the West, he felt unsettled about the fundamental basis of society; in spite of his belief in progress he was afraid of the future. He did not feel confident where we are going; what is more, he was not quite confident that he knew where he wanted us to go. For these reasons, he often took the most dissenting, modern, and germanic philosophers much more seriously than they deserved to be—witness, for, instance, his devotion to T. Green.⁽³⁵⁾ Secondly, Dr. Kawai, although setting out with great clarity the systematic conception he had formed, seemed entirely anesthetic to the important difference between the socio-political structure of Japan and the West. Moreover, he made little attempt to ask what type of socialism was really in his mind as if it was not a very critical matter.

As has often been told, historians of today generally agree that it must have been almost impossible for him to keep gathering strength for a repeated attack on both at a time—on "the pressure of state power" and "all ills of capitalistic system".⁽³⁶⁾ This is so, even though his crusade was only confined to teachings, speeches, and writings, and never went beyond that. In addition, there was admittedly another tendency for him, whether he was conscious of it or not, to apply his favorite theories to the Japanese context. In the case of Green's preachings, one could not in the least see any danger of his idealistic approach developing into any fanaticism or despotism whatsoever. Unlike Japan, in England there is that uninterrupted tradition of liberalism which has been there throughout her history, especially since the time of A. Smith. There can be no doubt that whatever Green tried for "A value of a Whole" as against "The value of individual", this basis has never lost its momentum. Green's probing mind, however, gave the reader a possible alternative to dealing with contemporary problems, and in so doing served as a shock-value to the people in general, especially on some occasions, when he reprimanded the old liberalists as well as the

old-utilitarians who carried things too far.⁽³⁷⁾ Also in the case of Hegel's position, we now see no possibility of his theory suggesting any "regimentation geared by state authority". For, so far as his ideal state is concerned, the idea was in its substance based upon the principle of regional autonomy and such enlightened beurocracy as consisting of "universal classes". The resulting product is, of course, a harmony existing between the interest of individual happiness and national goals. In Japan's case, however, there seemed no possibility at all in prewar ages that any state force could be oriented to meet the need of each person "for developing his own ability" and train his personal character" as Dr. Kawai might have expected.

Dr. Kawai's effort was finally ended up with a queer kind of compromise—a dichotomy indicating satisfaction of the need for individual self-perfection identified with the ideal goal of the state. In an attempt to combine the two, he was trying to make his own idea of individual development compatible with the idea of the state as a political group. In the West, ethics has been an eternal rival of politics as the former is always concerned with individual, the latter with society as a whole. Here, we must admit that his whole idea about social philosophy is too idealistic, and too liberal, to influence actual policy making. Or perhaps one should say that his political doctrine has been carried to far away from real politics, and the result of has become the defense of individual ethics alone.

We have still another open question to answer. Why is it that Dr. Kawai finally confined himself to the study of German metaphysics rather than to that of English social thought?

German metaphysics made a new departure from Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason" in 1781, and German ethics with the "Metaphysic of Ethics," in 1786, and the "Critique of Practical Reason" in 1788. But political philosophy was not so well served by the Koenigsburg philosopher. In these books Kant teaches that "Civil Society" exists to secure outward freedom, not the happiness of its members. The rational basis of the state, he contends in his "Philosophy of Law", is an original contract by which all give up their natural liberty to secure civil liberty and are bound to give absolute submission to the ruler they have chosen. This notion of the state was expanded by Fichte, Hegel, and still more by Krause, which in turn greatly influenced many English philosophers as divergent as T. Green and H. Spencer. Thus we see that doctrines as extreme as those pillored by Kant and Hegel have had extensive influence upon Dr. Kawai. He wrote in his research memorandum a week before he died of heart attack in 1944, "Through intensive reading for years in the past, I have a feeling that I have arrived at an understanding with Kant more than originally expected. It should be one of the most memorable achievements I have ever done."⁽³⁸⁾

Heavily influenced by these writers, Kawai was forced, in elucidation of his statement, to declare his own position about the specific functioning of the state in Japan, while he had elaborated on it during his trial years. He started out by making a comment on the western view of the nation and the state. Concluding his discussion on the problem of the state, he admittedly talked about the similarities between his theory and the one of western scholars. Yet, there are differences in logic between the two, although he does not recognize this clearly enough. According to his argument, a modern liberalist state, apart from the old ideas of state, tends to think of the functions of the state as sufficiently characterized by "a necessary evil" or "the nightwatchman", which is not highly valued. Contrary to this idea of the state being "anarchism plus constable", he continues that the state is a partial community within a society as a whole, functioning in order to provide the people with various services (defense, security, public utilities in broad sense). There is, however, something more to it. Although the state is thus functioning as a means to an end itself—the nation, or the "ethical community", this would not deny that the state is to be highly valued, the highest of all values—the notion equivalent to Hegelian ideal of the state. But, he said in distinction from it, "From Hegel's point of view the state can not free itself from the totalitarian negation of gradual social reform, individual development, and genuine human creativity."⁽³⁹⁾ Stated at the court in 1940, this is a remarkable critique of the prevailing political sentiment among the Japanese; but it should not be interpreted as advocating either liberalism or individualism in any western sense. For what Kawai proposes in its stead is a state of being as a means to the end of "Japanese National Polity", which is in itself the highest system of value.

All in all, he considers both individualism and totalitarianism in the western sense to anachronistic. When we look at the trial record, we find words indicating that he was a firm believer in the sacrosanct character of Tennoism. What characterizes the nature of "National Polity", Kawai argued, is that "it is neither the whole opposing the individual nor the individual opposing the whole, but rather that with the Imperial Household as the center, the individual and the state inseparable combined into a nation".⁽⁴⁰⁾ Also, with respect to the position of the sovereign of a state, a big difference stands out between the West and Japan. According to Kawai's view, a king in the west is chiefly confined to a makeshift device for governing the country. In Japan the Imperial family is beyond that far enough to become a symbol of unity or harmony—a unifying existence historically formulated, emotionally accepted in conformity with popular wish. Besides, "for the achievement of the higher unity, the Imperial Sovereignty has been asking for the development of individual."

Today we feel rather disappointed to see "a fervent advocate of individualistic freedom" of prewar Japan eventually become of "a love of failure".

From investigating Kawai's writings today, it can be obviously construed that his longing for T. H. Green began when he was staying at John's Hopkins College in 1918. This dream was brought true eventually when he visited London in 1923, which gave him a chance to study the Oxford idealist tradition with much more vigor than ever before. But in spite of the popular belief by many biographers of Kawai's scholarly life, there is not evidence enough to show that during his stay in the United States he became interested in any philosophy, nor any idealist philosopher. The fact is that he registered as an additional student at John's Hopkins College for a seminar conducted by Dr. George Barnett called "labor problem".⁽⁴¹⁾ Kawai seemed to take more interest in the latter subject rather than idealist philosophy, and this is quite natural only if we take into account his position as a government official dispatched overseas at that time. Anyway, it should be clearly understood that Kawai was far from being an idealist-minded youth before he went to England in 1923 and to other European countries thereafter. Strange to say, however, nothing in his writings reveal an influence of either American pragmatism or Institutionalist economic ideas. Thus we can not avoid the conclusion that as far as his central body of speculative ideas was concerned, it was influenced more by German idealists, less by English, and the least by American social philosophers.

(5)

I should like to conclude by emphasizing his very different mode and a very different habit of mind. Kawai spent roughly more than ten years in his most energetic thirties of age in reading Bentham's writings.⁽⁴¹⁾ Yet, most apparently he saw nothing but the extreme exponents of a negative view of state function, even when reading the "Manual of Political Economy".⁽⁴²⁾ If, however, we are prepared to read the whole book, still more to consider Bentham's work as a whole, the impression is decidedly different. Take one example among many, it might be still now expected that Bentham, with his strong disposition to the laissez-faire doctrine, would have regarded the functions of the state as sufficiently characterized by Lassalle's simile of the night watchman. But, when we turn to his chapter on the operations of government with a view to Political Economy, we find that this is not so. He favors the state action which is said to be beneficial—from its economic role of providing social harmony and material well-being. There are 4 proper aims of government policy. "To provide subsistence; to produce abundance; to favour equality; and to maintain security."⁽⁴³⁾ Kawai's chief concern was only with one overt professed facet of the "system of

economic freedom", that old laissez-faire tradition in the history of English social philosophy. Today, however, it is generally accepted that the utilitarian outlook constitutes another decisive aspect of English liberalism—Bentham's well-known agenda injunction to the state function.

Nevertheless, it is today generally agreed that Dr. Kawai was a great university teacher in 1930's Japan. Quite a few of his students have now become prominent figure not only in academic circles, but equally in the business world and even political arenas. One of them wrote in commemoration for the publication of his works, "(When he was interviewed by the press at the time he was driven out of the professor's chair at Tokyo University), Professor Kawai looked rather pleasant, deeply relieved after the prolonged trial at the court. It is just the day when a ship loaded with liberalism by Captain Kawai has drifted away—carried off by the contemporary political storm, but he has never ceased, alone from its drifted ship, crying for his ideal, giving messages to the people, fighting against currently predominant thought control."⁽⁴⁴⁾ Others wrote in their recollections to Dr. Kawai: "One must find out an absolute standard of value in apriori beyond one's own experiences which is to be acquired through experiences. This is the principle that could be universally applied to any time and place. One should live up to this apriori. It is indeed this that enabled him to make a bold and uncompromizing resistance against a tide of both militarism and Marxism."⁽⁴⁵⁾; "After tracking down the history of economic ideas in the West, we all become aware of the existence of a universal principle which is unchangeable beyond time and space...The history of English thought for the past hundred and fifty years will, I firmly believe, give an important lesson that man's idea is a force to change society."⁽⁴⁶⁾

Because of his idealist style, his prolific writings and his lectures did much to create an interest in liberalist intellectuals and students. He has also the respect of prominent businessmen, as evidenced by the invitations he received to address their organizations. And, his ability to recognize and stimulate the possibilities of younger men gained him an influential following.

Strangely enough, he taught nothing about economics, and very little about the economic philosophy related to theoretical frameworks given by the classical political economy. Like Richard T. Ely, a well-known Christian socialist in America,⁽⁴⁷⁾ he denounced the "Old School" Political Economy as deductive and mathematical rather than inductive and historical. He stressed the need to abandon extreme laissez faire and to humanize economics. To him, it was far more important to think what to be done, how to live our life, and what should be regarded as the highest value in life. Most

of his students learned valuable lessons of life from his words, such as "We are martyrs. We must be always prepared to die for our ideal," "There is nothing to be feared by those who expect nothing." With these preachings the gesture of "martyr" gave him adequate resources of appealing to the intellectuals, in age as well as youth, of prewar Japan.⁽⁴⁸⁾

Perhaps because of this, he took little or no interest in analytical economics. His student Dr. Kumagai of Ohsaka University, who is also director of Economic Research Institute of Economic Planning Agency, Tokyo,⁽⁴⁹⁾ wrote in recollecting his college days, "Dr. Kawai was always telling us that nothing is more important than to think and live up to one's own principle. In comparison with this problem, the science of economics should be considered to be a secondary subject in meaning. Heavily influenced by his words, all the seminar students were, I feel deeply ashamed to confess, in the habit of talking with his phraseology and speaking publicly of economics being an insignificant, silly subject." But this is not to say that he knew nothing of "the New Economics" gradually gaining its momentum even in English academic world. As mentioned by many today, he strongly encouraged his young followers to turn to those specific economic subjects which have now become the main stream of economics in Japan.⁽⁵⁰⁾ In this respect he must be considered to be a pioneering foundation-layer for the emergence of today's most useful science of economics in Japan.

It will perhaps illustrate an irony of history to note that there is a definite similarity the attitude toward English Liberalism of Kawai and Kawakami, a pair of rival social critics in their day.⁽⁵¹⁾ Around the years of 1920-1935, both continued to publish a steady stream of pamphlets, newspaper and magazine articles, and books calling for reforms in the social order, one from the viewpoint of democratic socialism, the other of Marxist socialism. Yet, as intellectuals produced in pre-war Japan, they resemble each other in their individual temperament—an inflexible devotion to an ideal, an unquestioning faith in his own theory, a strong predilection for creating certain general laws of absolute and universal validity underlying the science of economics, and so forth. Further, what is surprising is that they both showed similar reaction when it came to the critical interpretation of English liberal tradition. This sameness is shown most clearly in their treatment of classical writers, especially Bentham and J. S. Mill, Kawakami argued that the higher unity of humanistic ideal will be achieved by Carlyle and Ruskin, who made a frontal attack upon the classical economic individualism. If you compare his conclusion with Kawai's view, you would be surprised to find a striking similarity in their rejection of classicist social philosophy, yet their lasting emotional attachment to classical writers.

When transplanting a tree in a country culturally so different, it is not

sufficient to take isolated branches, rather the whole tree must be taken, with all of its parts in the same relative position as they occupied before. Just as any single set of ideas from the West, even liberalism or socialism, implies a whole supportive network of beliefs, social organizations, and economic, cultural institutions, etc, one cannot accept the one without, at least over the period, the rest.⁽⁵²⁾ Consciously or not, Dr. Kawai tried to play the role of a transplanter of Benthamite Utilitarian outlook to the intellectual development in pre-war Japan, but he was never beyond scratching the surface of "the tree of utility".⁽⁵³⁾ Perhaps because he soon found that his training in the relatively naive Scottish common sense philosophy offered inadequate preparation for understanding the subtleties of the idealist philosophies of Kant and Hegel. More importantly, however, social conditions of Japan, were vastly different from those of the British, in 1930's. The most successful effort to gain left-wing representation in the Japanese Diet was made by the Socialist Masses Party (Shakai Taishu To), organized in 1932 to untie the forces of socialism at the break of war in China. However, the upsurge of nationalism confronted the party with a difficult choice: whether to support or oppose the war effort. The Party Congress decided to identify with the whole Japanese people rather than with the proletariat as a separate class which made it a rival to Communist Party.

It seems that he eventually turned away from the social philosophy related to both American pragmatic and English utilitarian approaches. Thus, in the last analysis, Dr. Kawai failed to do his job as a reformer, just as most of prewar intellectuals, whether liberal or socialist, did. In the face of the government-enforced restrictions and Thought Controls, it is more appropriate to say that he was restrained from doing anything but turning to "a disillusioned escapism".⁽⁵⁴⁾ But, "failure" is the self critical word many used in recounting their prewar experiences, whose careers spanned both prewar and postwar years. In the long prespective, therefore, we are not in a position to make any hasty oversimplification as follows: "they failed to grasp the simple fact that ideas like freedom and emancipation—which many of them enthusiastically espoused—are basically political and social categories", "they took no socially effective action to prevent the more baleful forms of nationalism to emerge, and subsequently became its victims", etc. Rather, their frustrating failure has to be looked upon as the important step toward a slow but steady, failure-as-well-as success-strewn process for making Japan a more mature democratic country. In this sense, what Dr. Kawai has used in developed a welfare-oriented governance compatible with individual freedom and opportunity will not be revealed by his failure. Rather the stimulation given by his failure to find corrective action will renew progress toward a closer approximation to the ideal.

NOTE

- (1) "Sources of Japanese Tradition", Vol. 2, compiled by R. Tsunoda, W. T. d. Bary, and D. Keene (Columbia Univ. Press, New York, 1964), p. 289.
- (2) E. Kawai, "My Socialism" (Watakushino Shakai-shugi), Collected Works of E. Kawai, Vol. 13, p. 266.
- (3) E. Kawai, Collected Works, 23 volumes (Shakai Shiso Sha Press, Tokyo, Vol. 21, p. 159. 1967-69).
- (4) E. Kawai, Collected Works, Vol. 13, p. 271.
- (5) Collected Works, Vol. 5, p. 66.
- (6) Collected Works, Vol. 5, p. 67.
- (7) Collected Works, Vol. 5, pp. 70-72.
- (8) "Jeremy Bentham's Economic Writings", ed. by W. Stark, Vol. 1 (George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1952, London), pp. 92-93.
- (9) John S. Mill, "On Liberty", (The Great Books Foundation, Chicago, 1960) p. 75.
- (10) John S. Mill, "Dissertations and Discussions", Vol. 1, p. 359, (New University Library, London).
John S. Mill, "Utilitarianism" (New University Library, London) p. 75, and Alan ryan, "John Stuart Mill", (Pantheon Books, 1970, New York), p. 254.
- (11) Elie Halevy, "The Growth of Philosophic Radicalism" (Faber & Faber Limited, London), and see pp. 480-482. And D. J. Manning, "The Mind of Bentham", (Longman, London, 1968), pp. 95-96.
- (12) For examples, see Collected Works, Vol. 91-97, and Vol. 13, p. 145.
- (13) Tatsuo Arima, "The Failure of Freedom—A Portrait of Modern Japanese Intellectuals", (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1969), pp. 153-172.
- (14) Collected Works, Vol. 5, p. 92.
- (15) Collected Works, Vol. 5, p. 93.
- (16) John S. Mill, "On Liberty", pp. 70-71. Mill was greatly influenced by Wilhelm von Humbolt while reading his book entitled "The Sphere and Duties of Government" (1792). Also, see Kawai's "Essays", Collected Works, Vol. 20, p. 58. See the quotations by Mill, *ibid.*, p. 68, 93.
- (17) Collected Works, Vol. 5, p. 94.
- (18) John S. Mill, "On Liberty", p. 68.
- (19) Collected Works, Vol. 5, p. 96 and p. 113.
- (20) James Bonar, "Philosophy and Political Economy", (Gerge Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1893), p. 247.
- (21) James Bonar, *ibid.* p. 386. But, I. W. Mueller's view is that Mill's study of French political movements and French radical thought had most to do with determining the nature of his final attitude toward government, individual liberty, and socialism expressed in such work as "On Liberty". In "Autobiography", Mueller maintains, "Mill could have been referring to his early attraction to the ideas of the Saint-Simonians and Comte, his reaction against them, and his final attitude of qualified advocacy of democracy and qualified acceptance of socialism as it was influenced by his study of de Tocqueville and the socialist program of the 1848 revolution. See I. W. Mueller, "John Stuart Mill and French Thought" (Books for Libralies Press, New York, 1968), p. 6. and

Ch. 7.

- (22) James Bonar, *ibid.* p. 252.
- (23) On this point, see Lionel Robbins, "The Theory of Economic Policy in English Classical Political Economy", (Macmillan, London, 1953), pp. 142-143.
- (24) James Bonar, *ibid.* p. 239.
- (25) Collected Works of John S. Mill, Vol. 5, "Essays on Economics and Society", University of Toronto Press, 1967).
- (26) Lord Robbins, *ibid.* p. 144 and p. 168. See, "Chapters on Socialism", pp. 705-753.
- (27) See Alan Yyan, *ibid.* pp. 211-231.
- (28) Lord Robbins, *ibid.* p. 145.
- (29) Collected Works, Vol. 5, p. 96.
- (30) E. Caird (1835-1908), and see the editor's monthly letter, No. 14, Collected Works, Vol. 13.
- (31) Collected Works, Vol. 22, p. 48, also see Vol. 5, p. 172.
- (32) Collected Works, Vol. 21, pp. 75-78.
- (33) See Collected Works, Vol. 22 and 23. The diary extraction covers almost Kawai's whole life, beginning 1918, when he started a university life as assistant professor. Before the trip to London, in 1922, he had read much about Bentham mostly through the books by Benthamite writers. (Leslie Stephen, Sigwick, and Dicey)
- (34) See "Essays", "Collected Works", Vol. 20, p. 102, and Vol. 21, p. 90, 91. See also, "Sources of Japanese Tradition", *ibid.* p. 325. The editor compassionately commented that what may seem a very moderate kind of socialistic liberalism (especially when one notices Kawai's support of the "national polity") nevertheless took courage and conviction in the context of wartime Japan.
- (35) E. Kawai, "The Study on Thomas Hill Green's Idea", (1930). Collected Works, Vol. 1-2.
- (36) See, monthly letter, No. 13, p. 8.
- (37) J. Bonar, *ibid.* p. 403 and 373.
- (38) Collected Works, Vol. 20, p. 309.
- (39) Collected Works, Vol. 21, pp. 72-73.
- (40) Collected Works, Vol. 21, p. 288.
- (41) See Collected Works, Vol. 22.
- (42) J. Bentham, "Manual of Political Economy, 1793-95". See "Jeremy Bentham's Economic Writings", *ibid.* Vol. 1, pp. 223-273, especially 19 and 20, and cf. Prof. W. Stark's introduction, pp. 53-55.
- (43) These four or five objectives, or categories of politico-economic goals, has been widely used by a number of writers in recent years. See "Method of leading features of an Institute of Political Economy (including Finance) considered not only as a science but as an art 1801-04". "Bentham's Economic Writings", *ibid.* Vol. 3, pp. 301-380.
- (44) Tokuro Irie, Monthly letter, Vol. 8, January 1969, p. 1.
- (45) Shunsuke Tsurumi, Monthly Letter, Vol. 9, May 1968, p. 2.
- (46) Shige Namba, Monthly Letter, Vol. 19, March 1969, p. 5.
- (47) J. Dorfman, "The Economic Mind in American Civilization 1865-1918,, Vol. 3, (Augustus M. Kelly, New York, 1969), pp. 161-164.

- (48) Kawai Wordage, ed. Fumio Yamada, *Monthly Letter*, 14, Oct. 1968, p. 2.
- (49) Hisao Kumagai, *Monthly Letter*, Vol. 5, Mar. 1968, pp. 2-3.
- (50) See "The History of Economic Ideas in Modern Japan" (*Kindai-Nihon-Keizaishi*), Vol. 1. (Yuhikaku Press, 1969) pp. 394-396. Also, Yoshiro Tamanoi, "Japan's Economics" (*Chuko-Shinsho*, 1971), pp. 184-185.
- (51) On this point, see H. Ishigaki, "Kawakami's View on Bentham", *Hokudai Economic Papers*, Vol. 1, 1968-69.
- (52) See D. Winch, "Classical Political Economy and Colonies", (G. Bell & Sons Ltd, London, 1965), p. 145, p. 165.
- (53) G. J. Stigler, "Essays in the History of Economics" (The University of Chicago Press), (Chicago 1964), p. 74.
- (54) For example, W. Bakke, "Revolutionary Democracy, Challenge and Testing in Japan" (Archon Books, Conneticut, 1968), p. 214. and T. Arima, *ibid.* p. 6. H. Shively, "A Confucian View", ("Changing Japanese Attitude toward Modernization", ed. M. B. Jansen, Princeton Univ. Press, New Jersey, 1965), p. 241.