The English Positivists and Japan

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(I) Introduction

It is well known that the English Positivists had a special interest in international relationships. Like their master Auguste Comte (1798–1857), they were interested in how to lead humanity to the ultimate goal of progress. It was in consideration of this that they brought out in 1866 *International Policy: Essays on the Foreign Relations of England,* which A.J.P. Taylor described as 'the first composite volume in which a number of writers laid down an ideal foreign policy.' Their interest in international relationships was also shown in their opposition to imperialism, which has also attracted much attention. As Bernard Porter has put it, their 'relativistic anthropocentrism' made the Positivists sceptical of the 'civilising mission' of the West, though certainly they did not abandon their belief that the ultimate goal of progress would first be reached by Western countries.

However, the particular subject of their relationship with Japan has been almost completely neglected. At first sight, it might appear that there should have been no significant relationship between the Positivists and Japan. It is certainly true that it was in Latin America that Positivism had had the greatest effect upon politics and society, and as far as the English Positivists were concerned, their deepest interest obviously lay in India, where some of them conducted ‘missionary’ activities. It is also true that the direct influence of Positivism upon political reform was far greater in Turkey than in Japan, because one of the leaders of the Young Turks was a Positivist, and that while the English Positivists had as little connection with China as with Japan, they felt much deeper affection for China than for Japan. We also have to admit that the English Positivists, with the probable exception of John Kells Ingram, appear to have been little known in Japan at that time—or even today.

But a little investigation would show that this first impression needs some qualification. As far as Positivist ‘missionary’ activities in Japan are concerned, at least one English Positivist, John Carey Hall (1844–1921),
M. MITSUNAGA

actually lived in Japan for nearly fifty years. The English Positivists probably had no direct association with political or social change in Japan, but one of the most well-known of them, Frederic Harrison (1831–1923), lawyer and man of letters, knew some of the leading Japanese intellectuals and politicians. It is certainly true that their journal, the *Positivist Review*, had a very limited circulation, but it was regularly sent to Japan.8

However, what makes this enquiry most interesting is the fact that Japan, unlike the other—according to the term used by the Positivists—‘backward’ nations, had, by the turn of the century, progressed to become one of the world’s most ‘advanced’ nations. Thus, to the Positivists, Japan had become a testing ground for their idea of progress. How they tried to explain the development of modern Japan will be examined in the following section. This will be followed by section III, which will investigate how the Positivist interpretation of Japanese progress was accepted by some Japanese intellectuals, though it must be stated here that this essay, which has a rather modest object, does not intend to investigate the influence of Positivism in general on modern Japan; a subject which would require overall revaluation of Japanese writers from Nishi Amane (1829–1897) to Shimizu Ikutarō (1907–1988). Section IV will be devoted to an examination of the ideas of John Carey Hall, who tried to reconcile his belief in Positivism with the actual development of Japan as he saw it from within Japan itself.

(II) The Positivists’ Explanation of the Modernisation of Japan

The English Positivists began to pay attention to the development of modern Japan as early as the 1860s. There were two aspects to their interest in the country, both of which relate to their idea of progress.

First, they hoped that the relationship between Japan and the West would contribute to ‘moralise’ international relationships. The Positivists believed that all races “are organs of one common organism, Humanity,” and that the “directions and government of the world are emphatically man’s business.” However, to achieve the moral unity of Humanity, it was necessary, first, to achieve the ‘reorganisation of modern Europe’ by means of a ‘moral union.’1

One of the greatest obstacles to this moral union of Europe, and therefore, of Humanity, was the imperialism of the Western nations. It was in consideration of this that Frederic Harrison wrote articles on the
THE ENGLISH POSITIVISTS AND JAPAN

bombardment of Kagoshima by the British navy, and criticised the commercial interests which he said were responsible for Britain’s imperial policies. However, the Positivists not only attacked Western imperialism; they also suggested Japan should strengthen her own military forces. In 1873, they issued an address to a diplomatic mission from Japan, stating that “to be well-armed and well-disciplined is, we regret to say, the first requisite for an Eastern power in presence of the Western world as at present constituted.” Furthermore, Japan was expected to become the nucleus of a union of Eastern nations. The Positivists hoped to see “a common action of the leading Eastern powers for purposes of mutual protection” against Western imperialism, and insisted that “in such common action the principal part is, as the result of its history and actual organisation, reserved for Japan.”

On the other hand, the Positivists were also interested in the domestic development of Japan. Sir Charles Cookson, a diplomat, wrote an article on Japan in 1866, in which he tried to explain the features of Japanese civilisation as distinguished from Chinese. Of religion, Cookson maintained that ‘Fetishism’ in Japan, which was then identified with Shintoism, had not developed as much as in China, which had reached the stage of ‘the worship [...] of Heaven,’ and that the Fetishism in Japan had been influenced by Buddhism. Cookson also insisted that the government of modern Japan had developed differently from that of China in two aspects. First, it was less centralised than the Chinese government. Second, unlike in China, there had been a separation of the temporal and spiritual powers since the end of the twelfth century. Cookson claimed that it was possible to see in Japan “the almost complete separation which exists between the executive power lodged in the hands of the Tycoon, and the theoretical supremacy still residing in the person of Mikado.” This separation was important, because by this expedient “the national character of the Japanese has been preserved [...] from the degrading influence of a purely theological despotism, like that of Thibet.” Cookson stressed this point, because the separation of temporal and spiritual powers was one of the basic doctrines of Positivism. Comte had been impressed with the division of labour between Church and State in the Middle Ages, and insisted that, when progress had reached its final stage, temporal power should be held by industrialists and spiritual power by Positivist philosophers—or Positivist priests. Thus, to the English Positivists, the separation of the two powers in Japan was a hopeful sign
of progress.

However, as Japan began to develop into one of the world’s Great Powers, the Positivists’ estimation of Japan gradually became more subtle and more complex, as can be seen from their views following the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars. This was also the period when the Anglo-Japanese alliance was concluded (1902) and revised (1905, 1911).

The first thing they were amazed at was the rapidity with which Japan had achieved its progress. In explaining this rapid development, the Positivists did not adopt the view that the germsof Japan’s progress had matured in the Tokugawa period; it is to be noted that most of them did not even refer to the period at all. Instead they argued that the progress of modern Japan was achieved at one stride. This seemed to be a new phenomenon, because according to the ‘law of the three stages,’ the progress of human society follows a gradual and painful course through three stages: the Theological stage (Fetishism, Polytheism, and Monotheism), the Metaphysical stage, and the Positive stage. However, this apparently did not hold true for Japan; the Positivists began to maintain that Japan had leaped over the phase of Monotheism.

For example, Edward Spencer Beesly (1831–1915), Professor of History at University College, London, wrote in 1895 that it was a misconception to suppose that the ‘backward nations’ had to follow the same course as the West. The ‘vanguard of Humanity’ effected its own progress ‘empirically and therefore by slow and toilsome stages,’ but ‘when science had at last taken possession of every department of human knowledge, it was not necessary that this toilsome journey should be repeated in all its details by the backward populations.’ Beesly, who was a stern opponent of Christianity, concluded: ‘Her [Japan’s] contact with Europe has enabled her to omit the stage of Monotheism, and to accomplish more or less systematically in a generation a progress which Europe had to work out spontaneously through a long procession of ages.’ Japan had made very swift progress within a short period, not in spite of, but because of, her very ‘backwardness.’

However, if Beesly insisted that Japan had caught up with the Western nations, he did not say that Japan had surpassed them in the progress towards the stage of Positivism. As we shall see later, he had great reservations about Japanese imperialism, and, carefully refrained from arguing that Japan had omitted the Metaphysical stage. Moreover, Beesly did not praise Japanese backwardness itself, except in so far as it had
helped her to spring over the phase of Monotheism.

After the Russo-Japanese War, however, some of the Positivists' arguments went further. They began to see something more in the backwardness of Japan: as John Henry Bridges (1832-1906), a medical inspector, put it, "while accepting new things, the Japanese have held fast to what was good in the old. The religion of the family, the institutions of ancestor-worship, are as firmly rooted as ever." In fact, what the Positivists began to assert was that a certain similarity could be found between the very backwardness of Japan and some of their own principles. This view was expressed most clearly by Frederic Harrison.

When the Russo-Japanese War began, Harrison was impressed with the military victories of Japan, and his admiration soon changed into the belief that "there is much that she may teach us in matters political, social, and religious." In matters political and social, what amazed Harrison was the 'efficiency' of Japanese national organisation. He praised the 'wonderful concentration, unanimity, and secrecy of the entire administration of Japan, both civil and military,' adding:

To have prepared for a gigantic war for years so as to delude Russian observation, to time negotiations so as to fit in with military preparation, to work a Parliamentary system so as neither hasten nor to retard the Government action, to carry out a vast scheme of sea and land strategy without the faintest breath of its movements reaching outside watchers—all this seems inconceivable to Westerners accustomed to democratic turbulence and the selfish eagerness of individual curiosity and avarice. The forty millions of Japan seem to have acted with the precision of a single machine.

Here the contrast is made between the efficient administration of Japan and the 'democratic turbulence and the selfish eagerness of individual curiosity and avarice' of the Western countries. In fact, all the Positivists were opposed to democracy as a political principle. Comte had insisted that democracy was, after all, a product of the 'Metaphysical stage,' and that parliamentary government was an anomaly peculiar to England. According to Harrison, Comte repudiated democracy, because he considered "a Government inspired by public opinion to be far more efficient as well as
M. MITSUNAGA

far more provident than one constantly controlled by votes." Thus Harrison himself became one of the veteran critics of parliamentary democracy in Britain, advocating 'a more scientific engine of government.' He wanted to see "some day [...] the Parliamentary régime itself developed into a concentrated government." In practice, he was less sanguine, but he continued to insist that the Cabinet in Britain should be much freer of parliamentary control.

This 'democratic turbulence,' Harrison thought, could not be found in Japan, and he maintained that this was precisely because Japan had preserved 'what was good in the old.' "The key to this consummate discipline and concentration [of the Japanese]," he said, "lies obviously in the superstitious reverence of the Japanese for the authority of their Sovereign—which mystic despotism forms the essential part of their religion. The first lesson from Japan is the fact that a certain type of monarchical concentration is quite compatible with intense patriotism and individual energy, that democracy is not an indispensable condition of intelligent citizenship." Further, there was also 'a striking religious lesson.' The primitive religion of Japan itself had a paradoxically advanced character. The Positivists were not necessarily agreed as to what was the most essential religion in Japan. Most of them followed Cookson in thinking that the religion of Japan originally developed from 'primitive and indigenous Fetishism,' which consisted of simple nature worship and ancestor worship, and that it was identifiable with Shintoism. Harrison's estimate of Shintoism, however, was quite low, because he believed that Shintoism had 'deteriorated' into 'a shadowy kind of Nature-worship, without ethical force or spiritual meaning.' He maintained that the only national cult or faith which had retained any living influence on people's lives and conduct was 'Ancestor-worship, i.e. simple reverence for the memory of their family, their tribal, and national forefathers.'

Ancestor-worship, which had originally been derived from primitive Fetishism, was regarded by the Positivists as paradoxically progressive, because it appeared to resemble the Religion of Humanity, the secular religion invented by Auguste Comte, which substitutes for God the aggregate of humanity in the past, present, and future. Harrison insisted that ancestor-worship in Japan did not have any supernatural or transcendental character, because the Japanese "does not imagine his ancestors to be conscious as ghosts or spirits, or removed to a better
THE ENGLISH POSITIVISTS AND JAPAN

world.” Japanese ancestor-worship, he argued, was of a secular color, because it was “the simple desire to show respect to their memory.” Harrison concluded:

It cannot escape us that this religion of the Japanese is a rudimentary religion of Humanity. This Ancestor-worship is a crude kind of worship of Humanity: narrow, unscientific, gross it may be. But the cult of Humanity is based on a system of reverence for the entire past of the human race. The posthumous honour to which the Japanese aspires is simply the subjective immortality of Positivism.

This religious lesson implied three points. First, it was thought to be proof that Christianity could be dispensed with. Harrison argued that with this ‘rudimentary religion of Humanity,’ the Japanese showed “a patriotism and a heroism [...] which has never been enlightened by a ray of either superhuman Providence or hope of Celestial glory.” Secondly, the secular character of the worship was regarded as evidence that, with adequate help from the West, Japan could become a Positivist nation. As John Kells Ingram (1823–1907), historical economist and Positivist, put it: “When Positivism is presented to them [the Japanese], its acceptance will not be seriously impeded by supernatural or ontological predispositions; they will find in it something in unison with their habitual turn of mind.” Thirdly, ancestor-worship was associated with the political and military efficiency of the Japanese. When explaining the ‘mystic despotism’ of the Emperor, Harrison suggested that the Emperor and religion could not be separated, and that the ‘fervid patriotism’ and the ‘sublime spirit of self-devotion’ was the product of ancestor-worship. As he himself put it: “They march on to die for their country, for their sovereign, for their race. All they hope for is to be buried with honour; to be held worthy to die and not to be forgotten as they moulder in the grave.” It was this ‘mystic despotism’ of the Emperor, based on ancestor-worship, that had achieved the progress of modern Japan.

However, it should be noted that, beyond the admiration of things Japanese, Positivism faced serious difficulties. In fact, what was at stake were the two Positivist principles mentioned earlier—the moralisation of international relations and the separation of the two powers—both of which, the Positivists believed in the 1860s and 1870s, would be facilitated by
the development of modern Japan.

As for the subordination of politics to morals in international affairs, the Positivists were obviously aware of the difficulty. First of all, they did not unreservedly approve of Japanese foreign policy. They were anxious about the possibility that England might be dragged into war by the Anglo-Japanese alliance. They also feared that Japan might become a disturber of international order and morality. Even Harrison admitted that the Russians were alarmed by 'the overweening ambition of the Empire of Mikado.'

However, the essential problem was that, despite these reservations, they could not abandon the belief they had held in 1873: that the military development of Japan was a necessary evil, and that Japan could and should become the nucleus for the unity of Asia against Western imperialism.

Beesly was a typical representative of such views. He was one of the most persistent opponents of imperialism in the Victorian and Edwardian period, and was naturally well aware of the possible danger posed by 'the bellicose islanders.' Though he was critical of Christianity, he was careful enough not to praise the patriotism of the Japanese too far, saying that to substitute the love of country for the love of God might not be found, on the whole, to be a change for the better. He even knew, probably through John Carey Hall, that the Sino-Japanese War had established the ascendancy of the 'Military or Satsuma party' in Japan. Nevertheless, he never abandoned his belief in the policy of 'Asia for the Asiatics.' He wrote in 1902: "the Japanese are known to have very long-sighted and wholesome projects for supplying China with the organisation which could enable her to shake off all European interference, whether political, commercial, or religious, and work out her own civilisation in her own way." Beesly had to rely on the 'goodwill' of Japan, not because he had full confidence in Japan, but because he had still less confidence in the Christian and imperialist countries of the West. This was the difficulty which Positivism did not predict, because it had supposed that the moralisation of international relationships would begin after the victory of Positivism in the West. Comte had said that the 'unity of Humanity' would come after the 'unity of Western Europe' on Positivist principles. He had also predicted that the rapid progress of the 'less advanced' nations would not be achieved without the 'wise and generous intervention of the
THE ENGLISH POSITIVISTS AND JAPAN

West.\textsuperscript{37} Another Positivist writer, Richard Congreve (1818–1899), wrote in 1866 that until the West was united, it should adopt a policy of ‘wise abstention’ towards the ‘backward’ nations. “Respect for the organisations that exist is the first cardinal principle, the simplest obligation, for those who cannot offer a substitute.” The only active interference they should make was to repress the “freebooting tendencies of European commerce.”\textsuperscript{38} Clearly, this moral unity of the West was not achieved at all in the late 1890s and early 1900s. In other words, the development of modern Japan began before Positivism had been sufficiently diffused among Western nations—or rather, after Positivism had apparently failed to direct the development of Western countries.

Beesly himself seems to have been aware of the difficulty. Japan had acquired, he argued, Western science ‘\textit{per saltum},’ but, “unfortunately, the crowning science [sociology] is still a matter of controversy in the West.” Alluding to the influence of Social Darwinism, he admitted that it was not Positivism that had influenced Japanese intellectuals. “Her educated class have made acquaintance with the doctrine of evolution in the crude form which seems to deny moral responsibility and to justify the most relentless egoism.”\textsuperscript{39} With this difficulty, the Positivists could not but hope that “both China and Japan should be able to develop their own civilisation in their own way without interference from Christians of any sort.”\textsuperscript{40}

If the development of modern Japan could damage the Positivist principle of international morality, it also could endanger the key Positivist principle on domestic government—the separation of temporal and spiritual powers.

As we have seen, Charles Cookson, just before the Meiji Restoration, wrote that the separation of the two powers had already been achieved in Japan. In fact, this was the view of Comte on Japan. He thought that the Japanese rulers had been “emancipated from Theocracy by their military development.”\footnote{Far from hoping for a revival of theocracy, Comte believed that the introduction of Positivism in Japan would help the separation which was still incomplete. Of the Japanese rulers he said: “Although less tainted with metaphysics [than the rulers of China], they have kept more of the habits and feelings of the theocratic state, the change from them having been more recent [...] The synthesis [Positivism] which comes forward to effect the normal division of the two powers, is in direct congruity with the society most disturbed by their fusion.”\textsuperscript{41}}
However, with the apparent revival of the political power of the Emperor after the Meiji Restoration, the Positivists had to abandon their master’s theory. Even Charles Cookson had to note, in 1866, that the imperial institution had “recovered something more than its theoretical supremacy.”42 After the Restoration, the Positivists were in some confusion. For example, Harrison said in 1892 that Japan had had a theocratic system until the Meiji Restoration—which contradicted not only the historical facts but also the view of his master. Harrison also said at the same time that Japanese religions, including Shintoism and its cult of ancestor-worship, had lost all social and moral efficacy, and he described the government of the time as ‘the autocracy of the Mikado.’43 However, after the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War, the Positivists evidently became aware of the religious implications of the Japanese regime. As we have seen, Harrison referred to the ‘mystic despotism’ of the Emperor, “which forms the essential part of their religion.”44; and in explaining contemporary Japanese religion, Bridges said that every hero, every ancestor had his place ‘in the Shinto theocracy.’45 Certainly this was not the situation predicted by Comte, who had died in 1857.

Of course, the English Positivists, like Ingram, expected that Japan would someday become a Positivist country, by which time the separation of the two powers would have been achieved. However, none of the Positivists showed how the separation of the two powers would be achieved in the ‘theocracy’ of modern Japan. Indeed, the difficulties that faced the Positivist principles had deeper implications than the Positivists may have imagined. This will become clearer when we examine the relationship between Frederic Harrison and Japanese intellectuals.

(III) Between Uniqueness and Progress: Frederic Harrison and Key Figures in the Development of Modern Japan

Frederic Harrison was probably the best-known, and possibly the most original writer among the English Positivists. Although he may not have been well-known among educated Japanese in general, he did have some connection with such key figures of Japanese intellectual and political history as Kaneko Kentarō, Hozumi Nobushige, and Takebe Tongo. Kaneko had an interview with Harrison, in which Harrison advised him as to what kind of political system Japan should adopt. Harrison had a much more intimate connection with Hozumi, with whom he shared an
interest in Japanese ancestor-worship. An examination of Harrison’s connection with these two men shows the degree to which they understood the Positivist idea of the temporal and spiritual powers. Harrison also knew the sociologist Takebe Tongo. An appraisal of Takebe’s interpretation of Positivism reveals a significant consequence of the crisis that Positivism faced.

**Kaneko Kentarō: Kokutai, Party Politics, and the House of Peers**

As we have seen in the previous section, in his article on the Russo-Japanese War, Harrison admired the “consummate discipline and concentration” of the Japanese, which was shown, for example, in the way that they had managed their “Parliamentary system so as neither to hasten nor to retard the Government action.”

In writing this, Harrison may have remembered the meeting he had had with Kaneko Kentarō (1853–1942). As is well known, Kaneko was one of the founders of the modern Japanese political system. Having studied law at Harvard, he became, under Itō Hirobumi (1841–1909), one of the three drafters of the Meiji Constitution of 1889. The Ordinance on the House of Peers, which was associated with the Constitution, was also drawn up by him. After the Constitution was promulgated, Itō sent Kaneko to the United States, Germany, France, and England to ask for the opinions of Western intellectuals and politicians on the new Constitution. It was on this occasion, in May 1890, that Kaneko had an interview with Harrison in London.

Harrison has not written anything about the interview, but we know what he said to Kaneko from the record which Kaneko has left, though he himself made little comment on Harrison’s suggestions. Apart from minor suggestions, Harrison’s advice substantially consisted of three points. First, Harrison advised that Japanese politics should be managed by a strong Cabinet with the Crown at its head. He insisted that “to control the government according to the majority in the Lower House [...] is a breach of the so-called political principle that the ultimate origin [Engen] of politics is the Crown.” Therefore, “if you want to organise a strong government, you should have a monarch, and form a Cabinet by his order. In forming the Cabinet, it is necessary to collect able and distinguished persons, so as to enjoy the full confidence of the nation.” Second, Harrison suggested that Japan need not adopt parliamentary government and party politics, as “the majority of a Lower
M. MITSUNAGA

House does not necessarily represent the nation. Third, Harrison said that the Japanese government should rely on the aristocracy to establish the Constitutional regime. For, "it is impossible to overcome the difficulties of the transitional period from the age of Absolutism to Constitutionalism without relying on the aristocracy who owns the land."

Some of the implications of these suggestions were in accordance with Kaneko's own political opinions and some were not.

Obviously Kaneko would have agreed with Harrison in insisting that the 'ultimate origin' of politics was the Crown, for Kaneko, of course, believed that the Sovereignty of Japan was vested in the Emperor. He also may have agreed with Harrison that the Cabinet should be composed of able persons. However, unlike Harrison, Kaneko insisted that it was impossible to disregard party politics in Japan. In fact, Kaneko was opposed to the theory that Cabinet should 'keep aloof' from party politics. This theory, which resembled Harrison's, was maintained by Itō Hirobumi and other politicians. Kaneko told Itō in 1889 that "Constitutional politics means, after all, politics based on majority. If we have to adopt the politics of majority, it is impossible to rule this country unless the government also forms its own party." This was also the lesson he learned from interviews with Western intellectuals and politicians. "As constitutional politics is closely related to political parties, it is the political parties that put the Constitution into practice, however perfect that Constitution itself may be. The quality of the political parties cannot but have an effect upon the practical procedure of constitutional politics."

Harrison's advice on the aristocracy was much more congenial to Kaneko, who himself thought that, precisely because party politics was inevitable, the aristocracy was necessary and should be institutionalised. This consideration had led him to create the House of Peers. He claimed that the essential merit of creating a Second Chamber was that it could restrain "the combination of parliamentary government and the Lower House." In order to achieve this object, it was necessary that the majority of the House of Peers should be composed of the aristocracy, while the minority would consist of intellectuals, men of merit, and men of wealth. Kaneko was at least therefore encouraged by Harrison's views on the role of the aristocracy. Citing him as 'a well-known scholar in the field of political theories,' Kaneko quoted Frederic Harrison in his pamphlet on the Ordinance of the House of Peers: "if the control of the English Parliament should pass from the hands of the aristocracy to those
of the people, the essential features and good customs of our Parliament would disappear."\(^{11}\)

Behind Harrison's suggestions and Kaneko's responses, it is possible to discern the attitude of the two men towards the relationship between philosophical principles and historical change.

Harrison's suggestions to Kaneko roughly represented the principles of what Harrison called 'efficient government': concentration of political forces in the Cabinet, administration by able men, disregard for Parliament, party politics and democracy, and reliance on the wealthy and socially influential classes. He held these principles, not only because he considered that they would be helpful to promote the national welfare, but also because they were in accord with political progress towards the concentrated government dreamed of by Comte.\(^{12}\) Harrison did not insist, however, that these principles could be applied to Britain without any modification, for Britain had had a long history of parliamentary government. The parliamentary system could not be abolished, he argued, because 'such a breach of continuity in the life of a nation is one of the worst calamities.' The only person who would welcome such 'calamities' would be 'a Jacobin by principle'\(^{13}\)—in other words, an enemy of Positivism. Thus, in Britain, he advocated not the abolition, but the gradual reform, of the Constitution: for instance, reform of parliamentary proceedings in the House of Commons, reorganization of the House of Lords,\(^{14}\) and political utilization, to some extent, of the Crown.\(^{15}\)

However, to Kaneko, Harrison put forward his principles frankly, apparently hoping that an efficient government could easily be planted in Japan, where, he believed, there was no need to worry about the hindrance of a Lower House or parliamentary democracy. Japan could thus avoid the anomaly of democracy and parliamentary government, which were essentially of provisional character. This attitude may be found in his warning to Kaneko that "parliamentary government as it now exists in England is not perfect, and is still undergoing changes."\(^{16}\)

Harrison's expectation was only partly justified. He was right in thinking that the Japanese government did not need to worry about the historical influence of parliamentary government or democracy. While it is certainly true that Kaneko believed that party politics was inevitable in Japan, he had every opportunity to remodel the political institutions through which party politics and democracy were to be carried out; in fact, such institutions, including the Lower House and the House of Peers,
were invented by him and his fellow politicians.

What Harrison did not imagine, however, was that Japan had—at least in the eyes of Kaneko—a political principle with a long history of its own, namely, Kokutai, ‘the essence of the national polity.’ This was a notoriously ambiguous notion, but, according to Kaneko, its essential feature was that “the Emperors themselves are the political rulers of the nation.” What Kaneko had in mind was the notion that Japan, like any other country, could not deviate from her past history: “The forms of Constitutions should vary according to the history of each nation.”

Indeed, Kaneko found an equivalent to this historical continuity of Japanese politics in Britain. If there is something like Kokutai in foreign countries, argued Kaneko, it may be found in the notion of ‘the fundamental political principle of England,’ according to which Britain should be ruled by combination of the three elements of the Constitution—the House of Commons, the House of Lords, and the Crown. Though the substance of the principle could not be adopted in Japan, the notion of ‘the fundamental political principle’ itself ‘bears some resemblance to Kokutai.’

Thus, in Kaneko’s argument, political matters could not and must not violate the historical tradition of Kokutai. Japan had always been ruled by the Emperor, and if it was necessary to adopt a party political system, it should be made compatible with Kokutai: “It is imperative that the government should gather supporters and form a party which advocates the cause of Imperial Rule based on the spirit of the Constitution.”

Popular influences which might endanger Kokutai would also be counterbalanced by the House of Peers: “the essential function of the House of Peers is to declare its own attitude clearly once a serious affair of State has arisen, without being influenced by popular prejudice and without flattering the government.”

It was precisely in such a House of Peers that in 1935 Professor Minobe Tatsukichi, an exponent of the liberal interpretation of the Constitution, was to be criticised as an opponent of Kokutai.

Harrison was probably right in expecting that his principles of efficient government would be adopted in Japan without serious obstruction from a historical tradition of parliamentary democracy; what he does not seem to have been aware of was the possibility that his principles might be exploited by the native political principle—Kokutai.
Hozumi Nobushige: Ancestor-Worship and Japanese Law

Frederic Harrison was not only acquainted with a drafter of the Meiji Constitution; he also knew Hozumi Nobushige (1856–1926), one of the drafters of the Civil Code of 1898. His association with Hozumi was much closer than with Kaneko and has relevance not only to the political, but also to the religious aspects of modern Japan, for both Harrison and Hozumi were interested in Japanese ancestor-worship. It was probably under the influence of Hozumi that Harrison began to think that the cult formed the most essential element of religious life in Japan.

Harrison began to write about Japanese ancestor-worship after the Russo-Japanese War. Though he did not specify the source, it is quite possible that he derived his idea from Hozumi’s *Ancestor-Worship and Japanese Law*. This book was written in English and published in 1901—three years before the appearance of Harrison’s articles. Harrison’s articles and Hozumi’s book shared the conclusion that the most important belief in Japan was ancestor-worship. While Harrison insisted that ancestor-worship was ‘a sense of love and respect’ for the dead, Hozumi maintained that it was ‘a result of love and respect’ which people felt towards their ancestors. Harrison claimed that the Japanese ‘show respect to their [ancestors’] memory,’ while Hozumi wrote that the Japanese conducted rites of ancestor-worship ‘entirely from a feeling of love and respect for their memory.’

Apart from such coincidences in their writings, there is further evidence of possible influence, for Harrison actually met Hozumi in London at the turn of the century. Harrison noted in his autobiography that “a Professor of Jurisprudence from Tokio, Mr. N. Hozumi, came to see me at Sutton Place, and presented me with a copy of the Civil Code of Japan, 1898, of which he was one of the three authors.” Though Harrison did not refer to the date of the meeting, it was probably in 1899 or 1900, as Hozumi visited Rome in October 1899 to attend the International Congress of Orientalists. It is also quite possible that in his interview with Harrison, Hozumi may have referred to his view of ancestor-worship, because the paper he read at the Congress was ‘Ancestor-Worship and Japanese Law,’ which was to form the substance of the book published in 1901.

However, what makes the comparison of the two men the more interesting is the fact that, for both of them, the fundamental question was the separation of law and religion—or, to Harrison’s terminology, the separation of the temporal and spiritual powers.
For Hozumi, ancestor-worship in Japan was the unique exception to the general rule that law and religion in modern societies are generally separated. According to Hozumi, it was a general rule that "law and religion have been clearly separated with the advancement of society."32 Ancestor-worship in countries other than Japan was not an exception to this law. In the early stages of civilisation, every community needed the assistance of ancestor-worship to keep society together. However, with the advancement of civilisation, its ability to integrate society declined. First, people came to realise the benefits obtained from forming and maintaining society; and, secondly, the power of the state increased: "gradually the legal systems have been established, the power of central governments has increased [...], and other external forces have been shaped so as to maintain the unity of society."33 Thus, generally speaking, the maintenance of social union became less and less dependent on ancestor-worship and increasingly dependent on other circumstances and facilities, including legal sanctions.

Hozumi maintained, however, that in Japan, the worship of ancestors still exercised a powerful influence over the laws and customs of the people,34 and the reason for this unique phenomenon could be explained historically. In foreign countries, he argued, the progress of individualism, which had contributed to the decline of ancestor-worship, was promoted by increasing contact with other countries, but that this was not the case in Japan. He suggested that "one of the reasons why the custom of ancestor-worship still prevails in Japan is that she has had little contact with foreign countries."35 Thus, Japan was a unique country whose government was still based on the principle of Saisei Itchi, 'the unity of worship and government.'36

This distinction between the general historical rule and the uniqueness of Japan resembled Harrison's viewpoint, for Harrison also maintained that while it was the law of progress that the temporal and spiritual powers should be separated, ancestor-worship in Japan was connected with the 'mystic despotism' of the Emperor. This similarity between the two men's views seems to have been more than a coincidence, because Hozumi, in fact, attended lectures by Harrison in London in the late 1870s.

This relationship between the two is not very well-known, but a recent study on Hozumi cites a memorandum written by him, which shows that in 1879 he attended lectures on jurisprudence by a certain 'Furederitsuiki-harrison,'37 who was obviously Frederic Harrison, for Harrison, as Professor
of Jurisprudence, International and Constitutional Law, was lecturing at the Middle Temple from 1877 to 1889. Harrison himself noted in his autobiography that Hozumi, when the latter visited London many years later, reminded Harrison "how more than twenty years previously he had begun his study of scientific jurisprudence in the Hall of the Middle Temple at my lectures."  

Evidently Hozumi showed much interest in Harrison's lectures, the contents of which can be inferred from Harrison's articles on jurisprudence, published in issues of the Fortnightly Review in 1878 and 1879. Harrison's view of jurisprudence seems to be clear; his fundamental position can be summarised as the need "to keep ethical and legal ideas distinct." This corresponded to the Positivist idea of the separation of the two powers. Law belonged to the temporal power, while judgments concerning ethics were to be left to the spiritual power. Alluding to Positivism, he wrote: "In the language of modern philosophy, law belongs to the sphere of the temporal power." According to Harrison, this distinction of law and ethics was one of the major contributions to jurisprudence of John Austin (1790–1859) and his predecessors.  

However, Harrison admitted that Austin's theory needed some qualification: for example, though it was certainly true that "juristically speaking," law rested on force only, "socially and politically viewed, the force of law depends on its coinciding with the moral judgment of the society"—that is, with the influence of the spiritual power, though Harrison did not use the word. Further, Austin's theory could only be applied to 'highly civilised communities,' for in such communities alone "the spheres of positive law and moral obligation are habitually treated as separate." The need for such qualifications was indicated by the historical jurisprudence of Henry Maine (1822–1888). Even with these qualifications, however, Harrison believed that Austin's theory still had 'a relative value.'  

It is certainly difficult to assess how far these views had direct influence on Hozumi's thought. However, it is at least certain that the ideas expressed in these lectures had much in common with Hozumi's own later ideas on jurisprudence, for Hozumi keenly strove to balance the claims of analytical and historical jurisprudence. Both men also shared a keen interest in the practical effect of jurisprudence in codifying laws. Further, it is interesting that Harrison compared analytical and historical jurisprudence in terms of their relationship with the principle of 'the
separation of the two powers.' Analytical jurisprudence led to the principle that the two powers should be separated, while from historical jurisprudence was derived the fact that the 'spiritual power' had an effect on the observance of law in a wider context, and the fact that the two powers had usually been mixed outside 'civilised communities.' This view was quite similar to the position adopted later by Hozumi, who insisted that the Japanese case was an exception to the general rule of the separation of law and religion. 46

Harrison and Hozumi seem to have agreed that the past history of Japan had imprinted peculiar characteristics on her present regime. However, the two men did not necessarily have the same opinion as to whether these peculiarities should be preserved.

As was indicated in the previous section, the problem with Harrison's views on Japanese ancestor-worship was that he did not show how the separation of the two powers would take place in Japan. Yet, despite this defect, his goal was clear: to convert the Japanese to the Religion of Humanity. Then the separation of the two powers would be achieved. Historical peculiarities, however important, should not hinder progress to the ultimate goal. Harrison's position was clear, for example, from his view on the codification of English Law. It was certainly true, he said, that analytical and historical jurisprudence should be united, because it would help to achieve "an ultimate consolidation of our system into a form that shall be worthy of its past history." This did not mean that the importance of historical jurisprudence should be overemphasized, for unrestrained historical inquiry, he believed, constantly tended towards "the anomalous, the accidental, the initial type of [...] institutions," while what was wanted was 'the final type' of legal system. 47

This search for finality was in contrast to Hozumi's attitude towards legal codification in Japan. Hozumi well realised that the remaining influence of ancestor-worship in Japan was an exception to the general law of progress. Unlike Harrison, however, he believed that it was necessary to preserve the influence of the cult against general progress. Hozumi, as a drafter of the Civil Code, recognised that Japanese law had been influenced by ancestor-worship, but he went a step further by insisting that Japanese law should be codified so as to reinforce the influence of ancestor-worship. In fact, some of the articles of the Civil Code of 1898 were intended to strengthen the cult of ancestor-worship. It was certainly true, he wrote, that the Civil Code "recognised the tendency of social
progress towards individualism, [...] but, at the same time, it makes careful provision for the continuity of the house [I.e]. The house is the seat of Ancestor-Worship, and therefore, the discontinuance of the house implies the discontinuance of worship. It is for that reason that the Civil Code contains many strict rules against the discontinuance of the house." The Civil Code was not simply a reflection of Japanese historical tradition; it was intended to strengthen the tradition which, the drafters believed, would not survive long without it.

Thus, historical jurisprudence, on which Harrison lectured at the Middle Temple, turned out to be an instrument not only of recognising, but also of enforcing, a tradition which was supposed to have existed since ancient times.

**Takebe Tongo: Positivism and the Progress of the East**

Both Kaneko and Hozumi stressed Japanese 'uniqueness' which was more or less connected with the Imperial Family. However, this 'uniqueness' in itself does not necessarily mean that Japan should play a leading role in the world. For, if one wants to justify such a civilising mission for Japan, one would have to show that Japanese society has not only a 'unique,' but also a 'universal' character. This was attempted, however, by Takebe Tongo, a Professor of Sociology at Tōkyō University (1898–1922) who was to become one of the leading advocates of *Daitōa Kyōeiken* [The Great East Asia Coprosperity Sphere]. He was also acquainted with Frederic Harrison.

Takebe's sociological ideas can be found in his main work, *Futsū Shakaigaku* [The General Principles of Sociology] (4 vols., 1904–1918). As Takebe himself admitted, the *Jitsuri Shugi* [Positivism] of Auguste Comte, with some modifications, was the main source of the ideas expressed in this work: society as an organism, the three types of human knowledge, the classification of sciences, and the division of sociology into statics and dynamics.

However, there was one point where Takebe entirely differed from Comte: the order of progress among the races of humanity. In the last section of this paper, it was indicated that Comte and the Positivists never ceased to believe that it was the Western countries that formed the vanguard of progress of humanity. 'Backward' nations would be able to 'leap' to the last stage of human progress with the help of the 'advanced' nations of the West. The order of progress among the nations was rigid, although
its speed could change. Takebe, however, insisted that East and West were within equal distance of the ultimate goal of human progress. The difference between the two was not in the amount, but in the quality of the progress each had achieved. What the West could boast of was "the development of industry based on scientific knowledge." However, the West was behind the East in the development of 'moral teaching' [Tokkyō]. Takebe asserted that in the East moral teaching had been supplied by the secular doctrine of Confucius. This doctrine had been accepted by the Japanese, because they had developed a 'moral mind' [Dōshin], which had been fostered naturally in their family-based society, and had become an equivalent to moral teaching. Furthermore, when the East had accepted religions, argued Takebe, they had always been "in harmony with the real world." This development of moral teaching was in contrast with the character of Western civilisation. According to Takebe, "the innate deficiencies of Western civilisation" were as follows: the adoption of Christianity in place of moral teaching; the reliance on legal sanctions against human crimes; the remaining influence of custom; and the lack of any cultivation of the inner life. The only person who was trying to change the moral condition of the West, according to Takebe, was Auguste Comte, who called for 'the ultimate liberation' of the human mind with regard to 'the fundamental ideal of human morals.' However, the desired result had not yet been achieved.

Takebe's low estimate of the moral and spiritual aspects of Western civilisation seems to have been fostered while he was studying in Germany and France, from 1898 to 1901. It was during this period that he visited England briefly in the summer of 1901. His host in England was Frederic Harrison, who was, Takebe notes, "a warm and kind person." Takebe visited Oxford and Cambridge with letters of introduction from Harrison, and it was Francis Sydney Marvin (1867–1943), educationist and Positivist writer, who accompanied Takebe on a tour of educational institutions in West Ham.

Takebe was struck by the fact that Positivist ideals had not sufficiently spread even in England—'one of the world's first-class countries.' The remaining influence of Christianity in English society was repugnant to him. He was also surprised by the jingoism during the Boer War. He wrote of his impression of seeing a military tournament held in London: "The many performances were concluded by a very childish show in which the British soldiers defeated a band of enemies composed
of various races, followed by music to cheer the Empire and the Crown. These are most apposite examples of the paralysis of the national conscience."  

Harrison concurred with such observations, according to Takebe, and "showed his indignation at the harmful tendencies in British society, especially at the fact that the clergy opposed the right policies." After Takebe expressed his opinion of the military tournament, Harrison answered, "I am really depressed by the tendencies in our society which have resulted from the imperialism of recent years. Indeed in the past fifteen years, there have been many things which have made me into a pessimist."  

Takebe insisted that the imperial pride of Westerners was proof that they had not yet reached the last stage of progress, stating that the nature of a people's pride depended on the Shakaisei of their society—the principle under which the society was united. The Shakaisei could change according to the development of the society: from the religious Shakaisei to the 'metaphysical or philosophical' Shakaisei, then lastly to the 'scientific, or positive, humanistic' Shakaisei. European nations, he claimed, had a metaphorical Shakaisei, which fostered their pride that "Europeans alone are civilised" and that "Europeans should rule other races." But they had not acquired a 'positive' Shakaisei, without which they could not realise that "civilisation is not the monopoly of Europeans."  

Since Europe did not possess such a monopoly, things European as now constituted should not necessarily be introduced to Japan. This attitude was clearly shown in his opinion of the British educational system. Of the primary and secondary schools of West Ham, he wrote, "there is nothing particular about them. Their merit is that everything is practical." However, he had a much lower opinion of public schools and Oxbridge. He admitted that British higher education had its own merits: unlike its counterparts in Germany and France, it paid much more attention to the 'formation of personality and the cultivation of character according to an ideal standard' than in 'learning and acquiring knowledge and skill.' But, he argued, this did not necessarily mean that Japan should adopt the British educational system, for it was "too aristocratic, and costs too much." Secondly, "its special appeal [...] lies in its own historical development." The charm was like that of 'an antique.' Further, the ideal of the 'gentleman' was not to be imitated. In the eyes of Takebe, English gentlemen appeared to 'lack backbone, just
M. MITSUNAGA

like dolls.’ Such characters were useless, Takebe said, ‘in times of national difficulty.’ He referred to his discussions of the educational question with Harrison, who, he said, expressed the opinion that, “there are two features in our educational system: one is that its principle is self-government, and non-interference [...]; the other is that it is aristocratic. These two features are derived from the peculiar conditions of our society. Therefore, neither should our educational system be implanted to Germany or France, nor theirs to our soil.” After citing Harrison’s condemnation of the revived influence of the clergy on education, Takebe concluded that it was admitted by Harrison that “my [Takebe’s] opinion was not an exaggerated conjecture.”

Thus, the ‘pessimism’, which Harrison felt as the result of imperialism, and his relativist point of view, shown in his opinion of national education, were interpreted by Takebe as supporting his own opinion that the West was not in advance of Japan in absolute terms. On the contrary, as far as moral aspects were concerned, Eastern civilisation as represented by Japan was nearer to the final goal, because, according to Takebe, the concept of Jin [perfect virtue] in Confucianism was the same thing as ‘Humanitarianism’ advocated by Auguste Comte.

This led Takebe to the conclusion that Japan “is qualified to accept the leading role in guiding less advanced countries in the fields of education, politics, and international relationships.” He considered that the essence of Eastern civilisation was represented by Japan, for Indian civilisation itself was ‘purely transcendental,’ and Chinese civilisation was simply repeating what it had achieved in the period of Confucius; in Japan alone had ‘the practical effects’ of both civilisation borne fruit.

This conclusion was at first sight similar to the views of the English Positivists that Japan should become the nucleus of the unity of Asian countries. However, Takebe differed from them in denying the ultimate superiority of the West; in denying the moral and intellectual superiority of China to Japan, in which some of the Positivists, such as John Carey Hall, believed; and in insisting that Japan should use military force to spread civilisation among the “less advanced countries.” Takebe maintained that the foreign policy of Japan should be based on ‘Humanitarianism.’ But, this Humanitarianism “does not necessarily decline to go to war, because for the propagation of Humanitarianism it is necessary to defeat the savage and punish the enemies of humanity.” Such was the
conclusion reached by one of the leading Japanese ‘Positivists.’

(IV) Positivism and the Meiji Constitution: John Carey Hall on Japan

If most of the Positivists did not know much about Japan except from second-hand knowledge, the same thing cannot be said of John Carey Hall (1844–1921). He was a Positivist who actually lived for a considerable time in the country.

John Carey Hall was born in the County of Londonderry. After higher education at Queen’s College, Belfast, he entered the Consular Service in 1868, and began his career as Vice-Consul in Tokyo in 1869. He served as Acting Japanese Secretary to the British Legation in Tokyo, from 1884 to 1889, and as Acting Assistant Supreme Court Judge for China and Japan from 1889 to 1890. From 1902, he served as Consul-General at Yokohama until 1914, when he retired from his office and returned to England, to settle at Hampstead. Though he spent most of his life in Japan, he visited England periodically, and was called to the Bar at the Middle Temple in 1881.1

It is not clear when he began to be interested in Positivism, nor is it clear when he began to be associated with the English Positivist movement. In the early 1870s he assisted the Meiji government’s attempt to reform the prison and judicial systems in Japan. In 1871 he accompanied three officers of the Government to Hong Kong and Singapore to investigate conditions in English prisons there,2 a visit which contributed to the enactment of the Prison Law of 1872.3 In the same year, he also gave lectures on the British judicial system, which were translated into Japanese and published, but the pamphlet does not show any clear sign of Positivism.4

However, it is at least certain that he had become interested in Positivism by 1887, because in that year he translated a French Positivist’s work on Chinese civilisation.5 His association with the English Positivist movement also became evident in 1892, when he contributed an article on the life of Buddha to The New Calendar of Great Men, edited by Frederic Harrison.6 His obituary in the Positivist Review says that he was ‘a regular attendant at the Sunday Meetings’ of the London Positivists ‘during his periodical visits to England.’7

It is doubtful whether he engaged in any ‘missionary’ work for Positivism in Japan. His occupation may have prevented him from
participating, at least publicly, in such 'religious' activities, and Hall himself once admitted that he had no 'co-religionists' in Japan.\(^8\) His wife's funeral in September 1913 was probably the first, and possibly the last, Positivist funeral in Japan.\(^9\) However, he was not inactive in promoting mutual understanding between East and West, being one of the founders of the China Society in London and also one of the earliest members of the Asiatic Society of Japan, of which he became the president in 1913.\(^{10}\)

Unfortunately, most of his articles were written after 1906, when he was over sixty, but in the comparatively brief period until his death in 1921, he published many articles and reviews in the *Positivist Review* and the *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*.\(^{11}\)

However, though Hall spent most of his life in Japan, his 'deepest affections' were not centred in Japan, but in China, as one of his colleagues later admitted.\(^{12}\) This fact is critical for an understanding of his appraisal of the development of modern Japan.

An examination of his attitude towards religious influences in Japan may help clarify this point. He was not an admirer of Shintoism. Like most of his fellow Positivists, Hall admitted that Shintoism was the oldest and probably the most influential religion in Japan. In every village community, he said, 'the centre of unity' could be found in the Shinto shrine.\(^{13}\) He also acknowledged that the original cult of Shintoism had been the worship of nature gods, and that in this sense, Shintoism was essentially a rudimentary form of Fetishism.\(^{14}\) However, he did not believe that the original form of Shintoism had included ancestor-worship, which, according to him, was of relatively later date, and of Chinese origin—and which later became merged with Shintoism.\(^{14}\) Furthermore, ancestor-worship itself does not seem to have attracted his attention very much.

He also had a rather low estimation of Buddhism. He did welcome the increase of interest in Buddhism among the Westerners, but he insisted that "Buddhism has its own defects." In order to demonstrate these defects, he translated some extracts from the *Bendō Sho* [The Moral Truth Defended] (1735) written by Dazai Shundai (1680–1747), a Confucianist in the *Tokugawa* period, in which Dazai says that Buddhism is a system "which aims only at individual enlightenment," and "is not a way for governing the empire."\(^{16}\)

As this may suggest, it was with the Confucianism imported from China that Hall had the greatest sympathy. Moreover, he attached the most
importance to the social and secular aspects of Confucianism. According to Hall, Confucius resembles Comte in many ways. Both had a 'profound sense of social mission', believing that improvement must begin with the 'best intellectuals', and basing their moral systems on the 'social nature of man'; both felt the 'need of synthesis, of unity', and based their knowledge of man's nature on the 'recorded history of the past'; and both 'rejected the metaphysical mode of thought as firmly as they eschewed theological imaginings.' In other words, Hall was impressed with the idea of 'noble oblige' and the 'positivity of conception,' which he considered to be the basis of the whole Confucian teaching.

It was this influence of Confucianism that seemed to him to have played the decisive role in preparation of the intellectual basis for the transformation of modern Japan. The orthodox Confucian doctrine, elaborated by Chu Hsi (1130–1200), was, he wrote, introduced by the Tokugawa Shoguns at the beginning of the 17th century. In rivalry with this orthodox school, there were also 'Confucian Puritans.' Obviously Hall had much more sympathy with the latter, noting that one of them, Dazai Shundai, tried to 'demonstrate the superiority of primitive, or pure, Confucianism over both Shinto and Buddhism, as well as over the amalgam of Confucian ethics with Buddhist metaphysics which had been elaborated in China by Chu Hsi.' Hall claimed that this Confucian influence was important in understanding the rapid progress of modern Japan, and argued that "it was mainly by two and a half centuries of study of China's political and ethical philosophy that Japan found herself mentally and morally qualified to grapple with the complicated problems presented half a century ago [in the 1860s] by the forceful intrusion of the West."  

This theory of modernisation was all the more important for Hall, because it implied that China could progress as rapidly as Japan, and that its progress might be assisted by Japan. He asserted that, given their common heritage of Confucianism, Japan could understand China more thoroughly than any other great Power. In 1910 he wrote: "Whatever the vicissitudes of their political relations, the intellectual accord between the two Oriental empires has predominantly been intimate and amicable. Towards China more distant states may nowadays have benevolent intentions, but for generations to come Japan will have over them the advantage of adequate knowledge as the foundation of her friendly policy." Chinese civilisation had lagged behind that of Japan because of strong 'anti-foreign prejudice,' but, according to Hall, this situation
M. MITSUNAGA

was rapidly changing: many Chinese students were now studying in Japan; foreign instructors, principally Japanese, were implanting the seeds of Western knowledge in China; China was trying to follow the Japanese example in abolishing the privileges of extraterritoriality and foreign settlements; and she was also following Japan in establishing a modern army.24

In the political sphere, Hall naturally supported the constitutional reform party led by Kang Yu-wei (1858–1927), ‘the intellectual protagonist of the new learning in China,’ whose ‘zeal for reform was ardent, and his literary activity prodigious. His first task was to prove that reform was compatible with the teaching of Confucius.’25 The failure of the reform movement by the Emperor Kwang-su (1871–1908) and Kang Yu-wei was disappointing to him.26 After the Boxer uprising and the Russo-Japanese war, Hall’s sympathy was always with the moderate reformers, whose advocacy of constitutional reform was more or less modelled on Japanese experience. He expected that some achievement might be possible under the Empress Dowager (1835–1908), who had become ‘a convert to progress.’27 This hope in constitutional reform also led him to support Yüan Shi-kai (1859–1916), the political rival of Sun Yat-sen (1866–1925), the leader of the Kuomintang [Nationalist Party]. In September 1914, after the establishment of Yüan’s rule, Hall condemned Sun Yat-sen, declaring that the republican movement was bound in any case to fail: “It involved too sudden a rupture with the past; and the aspiration of the majority of the Chinese people is not for a republic but for a constitution.”28

It was desirable, then, to secure the co-operation and assistance of the Japanese government for China. Hall wrote in 1910 that “how best to awaken China out of her mediaeval sleep was a problem that sorely vexed Japanese statesmanship for years.”29 However, he did not place full confidence in the ‘good will’ of the Japanese government. Japanese intervention in Korean politics in the 1880s appeared to Hall as an experiment to propagate Western culture ‘with missionary zeal,’ but it was fated to fail, because the Korean people had not forgotten “the brutal extinction of her civilisation by the Taikō Hideyoshi’s armies.”30 Japan also should be condemned for starting the Sino-Japanese War. “Partly to cover her failure [in Korea] and partly to avert a crisis in her own internal politics, she now threw moral considerations to the winds, and deliberately had recourse to the Bismarckian policy of blood and iron.”31

How was he able to attack the militarism of Japan while, at the same
time, looking for the assistance and co-operation of her government for China? This was largely because he paid much attention to Japanese political rivalries. Unlike most of the other Positivists, he did not treat the Japanese as a homogeneous nation. Rather, he thought that Japan's political history after the Meiji Restoration had been a fundamental contest between two rival parties: 'the Satsuma war-party' and 'the civilian or peace party.' The relative strength of both parties changed around 1890, when 'the military oligarchy' established its rule by the Meiji Constitution of 1889. Before that, European influences had been mainly English and French, as was shown in the influence of Herbert Spencer on Fukuzawa, Mori Arinori, and Itagaki. However, "it was Pussian autocracy, then dominant in Europe owing to the policy of Bismarck, that had most affinity with the instincts and ambitions of the Japanese oligarchs, and it was on the model of the Prussian State system that the new Japanese Constitution was framed." This victory of 'the military oligarchy' was followed by a change in foreign policy. From 1873 to 1893, the foreign policy of Japan was under the direction of the civilian or peace party in the Cabinet. But "Itō [Hirobumi], imitating Bismarck's methods and now reinforced by the Satsuma war-party which had at length obtained ascendancy in the Cabinet councils, repelled every attempt to make the Cabinet responsible to the nation, and only the excitement of a foreign war could divert the persistent aspiration for greater political freedom." Thus, the China war revived the militarism which had lain dormant since 1873.

Hall hoped keenly for as great an increase as possible in the political power of the 'peace party.' The opportunity seemed to have come when, in 1913, Ōkuma Shigenobu (1838–1922) became the Prime Minister after the collapse of the Katsura and Yamamoto Cabinets. Hall was delighted to see the end of 'the domination of the military oligarchy,' and expected that Ōkuma would return Kiaochow to China when the war ended. "Under a pacific civilian statesman of Count Ōkuma's calibre, the only wise course of action as regards the disposal of Kiaochow is likely to be adopted." Hall was to be disappointed, because the Ōkuma Cabinet, contrary to his expectations, issued the 'Twenty-One Demands' to the Chinese government the following year. In 1916 Hall admitted that even 'such influential and popular leaders' as Ōkuma or Ozaki Yukio (1859–1954), in order to get into government at all, were powerless to resist the schemes of the military party.
By 1916 Hall had reached the conclusion that what was necessary was to amend the 1889 Constitution. Basing his argument on Walter W. McLaren's work on the Meiji Era, Hall explained that the Cabinet in Japan was not at all responsible to the nation. In the Constitution an attempt was made to define the channels through which the prerogatives of the Emperor should be exercised, and it was stated that the absolute powers of the Emperor should be exercised in accordance with the law of the land. However, Hall insisted that "the most important article of this constitution is purposely ambiguous. It reads thus: 'The Respective Ministers of State shall give their advice to the Emperor and be responsible for it.' Responsible to whom? To the people as represented in Parliament, or to the Emperor?" Furthermore, the Constitution put a restraint on the power of Parliament to control the Budget, and, there was also an extra-constitutional provision that the portfolios of the War Minister and of the Navy Minister could not be held by civilians. Thus, the whole parliamentary machinery had become 'a hollow farce.' In conclusion, Hall said that "the next step of capital importance in Japan's progress will be the amendment of the existing Prussianising Constitution," though he did not specify clearly the contents of such a revision.

This amendment was all the more important for Hall, because what was at stake was the efficacy of Positivism itself. If the Constitution was amended, Hall thought there would be a better chance of securing the two main Positivist principles: the subordination of politics to morals in international relations; and the separation of the temporal and spiritual powers.

On the question of international morality, Hall was no pessimist. He was a firm believer in the "unceasing influence of moral sentiment in international affairs," which, he claimed, had brought about the improvement in Western opinions and sentiment towards China, as well as the amendment of the unequal treaties between Japan and the Western nations. Apart from China, which was "the oldest and largest and most peaceable amongst the existing political aggregates of mankind," it was the United States of America that gained Hall's confidence. America, he wrote, in its treaty with China in 1903, had boldly limited the rights of Christian missionaries in China; further, the 'open door policy,' then advocated by the United States, was nothing but the policy of Free Trade, which had benefited Japan so much. Thus, he welcomed China's entry into the First World War in 1917, as the result of the appeal by President
Wilson. On the other hand, Hall continually insisted that Germany was the disturber of international morality. Like Harrison, he was a Germanophobe and pictured the German intellect as an enemy to Positivism, saying that it believed in Darwinism and the 'metaphysical' theories of Nietzsche and Treitschke.

In this contest between America and China on the one hand and Germany on the other, Hall expected that Japan would come to the aid of the former. This opportunity seemed to have come, for example, in the autumn of 1914, when Japan occupied Kiaochow, German territory in China. Hall urged that Britain and Japan should return Wei-haiwei and Kiaochow respectively to the Chinese government when the war was over, saying that this would gain the moral support of the United States and thus help to form 'a band of amity' between China, the United States, Britain, and Japan. However, as was noted above, this expectation was betrayed by the 'Twenty-One Demands' of 1915, and one year later Hall was to conclude that the 'Prussian' Constitution had to be revised in order to bring about a change in Japan's foreign policy. Indeed, revision of the Constitution was indispensable to assist progress towards international morality, and was also necessary for the separation of temporal and spiritual powers.

While some Positivists, like Harrison, had been attracted to the 'theocracy' of Meiji Japan, this does not seem to have been the case with Hall. He has left little comment on the contemporary Emperor system in Japan. Although it can be inferred from his comments on republicanism in China that he was not a dogmatic republican, it may be safe to assume that he was not in favour of the combination of political and religious powers in the Emperor of Japan.

This much is clear from his writing on Japanese history. In 1908 he published a translation and review of Kenmu Shikimoku [The Legal Code of the Kenmu Period], in which he averred that Ashikaga Takauji (1305–1358), who had put an end to the rule of Emperor Godaigo (1287–1339), was "clearly the foremost statesman of his age." This was a polemic against 'Japanese historians in general' who praised Kusunoki Masashige (1294–1336) and thus "display very shallow judgment." Hall asserted that "less than two and a half years' experience of the restored theocracy were sufficient to convince him [Ashikaga Takauji] that the nation had outgrown it; that its traditions, its spirit, and its basic ideas
were incompatible with the welfare of the body politic as a whole." The reasons for the collapse of Godaigo's theocracy were both material and spiritual: first, the feudal form of land tenure had become too widely and firmly established to allow the old aristocracy of Kyōto to resume its former political ascendancy in the state; second, the Buddhist religion "had developed in a new and secular direction, its two latest sects, the Hokke and Zen, having assimilated a few of the elements and much of the spirit of the Confucian ethico-political teachings." In other words, 'the spirit of the age' in Japan was towards the 'secularization of political affairs.' This decline of the power of divinely descended Mikadoes in Japan was parallel to that of the Popes in Europe in the fourteenth century. Hall's explanation was clearly a revival of the analysis made by Comte and Cookson on the separation of the temporal and spiritual powers in Japan.

If the revision of the Constitution could promote the separation of the two powers, this revision would not be achieved without help from a new spiritual power—the intellectuals. In 1916, Hall was glad to hear that 'some professors' of the Imperial University of Tōkyō, which was "like our own Oxford, the last stronghold of conservatism and reaction," had been allowed to criticise the colonial administration both in Taiwan and Korea. It was from such intellectuals that Hall expected to hear criticism of the Constitution. Thus, Hall began to think that, in order to save the principles of Positivism, it was above all necessary to amend the Constitution of 1889 and reorganize the Meiji regime—an evaluation of modern Japan which differed markedly from that of Harrison, and those of Kaneko, Hozumi, and Takebe.

(V) Conclusion

Some Positivists described the progress of modern Japan as a victory for Positivism, but, at a deeper level, it actually represented a crisis for the two key Positivist principles—the moralisation of international relations and the separation of the temporal and spiritual powers. This is clear from the fact that Harrison's contact with Japanese intellectuals served not so much to strengthen the Positivist idea of progress in Japan, as to foster their belief in ethnocentrism or a peculiarly Japanese version of Positivism. John Carey Hall, who was resident in Japan, was much more skeptical about the development of modern Japan, and eventually
came to the conclusion that it was necessary to revise the Meiji Constitution. However, most of the Positivists did not live to see the full consequences of modern Japan in the 1930s and 1940s. Congreve, Bridges, Ingram, Beesly, Hall, Harrison, and other Positivists of the first generation had all died by the early 1920s, and it should be noted that the second generation of English Positivists, which included Francis Sydney Marvin, Shapland Hugh Swinny (1857–1923), and Frederick James Gould (1855–1938), did not share the kind of vivid interest in Japan that Harrison had shown, although it is true that Gould showed much more sympathy for Japan in the 1930s than most English people. In 1933, for example, he attacked the 'cheap and easy verdict' of the Lytton Report. However, his sympathy for Japan was not so much based on his interest in Japanese civilisation as on his anxiety that the League of Nations would not work without Japan. By the 1930s the English Positivists' admiration for Japan had, together with the first generation of Positivists, died away.

Notes

(I)

4) The ‘missionaries’ included Samuel Lobb, James Cruickshank Geddes, and Henry J.S. Cotton. All of whom belonged to the Indian Civil Service. See Geraldine Hancock Forbes, Positivism in Bengal (Calcutta, 1975), chap. iii.
5) Ahmed Riza of the Young Turks had been influenced by Positivism and acquainted with some of the English Positivists. See, for example, E.S. Beesly, ‘The Turkish Revolution,’ Positivist Review, September 1908, pp. 201–205.
6) See the case of John Carey Hall in the section IV. John Henry Bridges, one of the leading Positivists, also felt much sympathy for Chinese civilization. He sometimes even thought of going to live in China to diffuse Positivism there. See Susan Liveing, A Nineteenth-Century Teacher: John Henry Bridges (London, 1926), p. 127. See also his article on China in International Policy, op. cit., second edition, pp. 221–307.
7) John Kells Ingram as a historical economist will not be treated in this article, though his view on ancestor-worship will be referred to in the following section.
8) The backnumbers of the Positivist Review in the National Diet Library of Japan are stamped (in Japanese) “Presented by the Editor.”

(II)

4) Ibid.
5) Charles Alfred Cookson, 'England and Japan,' International Policy, op. cit., first edition, pp. 451–514. This article was not republished in the second edition of International Policy.
7) Ibid., pp. 474, 479.
9) E.S. Beesly, 'Japan and Europe,' Positivist Review, June 1895, pp. 115–118.
12) Harrison uses this word in saying that "Japan has rushed to the very front rank of efficiency at sea." Frederic Harrison, 'Russia and Japan,' Positivist Review, April 1904, pp. 87–91, p. 87.
13) Frederic Harrison, 'Lessons from Japan,' loc. cit., p. 146.
14) Ibid., p. 146.
16) Frederic Harrison, 'A Last Word about Comte,' Commonwealth, 2 June 1866.
18) Frederic Harrison, 'A Last Word about Comte,' loc. cit.
19) For Harrison's political view, see Christopher Kent, Brains and Numbers (Toronto, 1978).
20) Frederic Harrison, 'Lessons from Japan,' loc. cit., p. 146.
21) See, for example, Bridges' view that Shintoism was a genuine product of Japanese soil and that it was composed of simple nature-worship and ancestor-worship. J.H. Bridges, 'The Day of All the Dead,' Positivist Review, April 1906, pp. 83–85, p. 84.
26) Ibid., p. 148.
29) See, for example, E.S. Beesly, 'White Foes and Yellow Friends,' Positivist Review, March 1902, pp. 55–59; Frederic Harrison, 'Russia and Japan,' loc. cit.
33) Beesly quoted a letter from 'a well-informed resident in Japan.' E.S. Beesly, 'Paragraphs,' Positivist Review, January 1896, p. 16. See section IV.
34) E.S. Beesly, 'White Foes and Yellow Friends,' loc. cit., p. 58.
Harrison’s attitude towards the British monarchy is ambiguous, and Kaneko’s interview with him may throw a new light on this question. Harrison was a republican by conviction. In 1875 he declared that “the hour that political education and public spirit shall have reached that stage of advancement [...] that hour will be the last of the Monarchy.” At the same time, however, he admitted that “the Monarchy is undoubtedly robed with a real historic attraction.” (Frederic Harrison, Order and Progress, op. cit., pp. 28–29.) Until his death in 1923, he seems to have struggled to reconcile his republican conviction with the historic charm of the British monarchy. It is at least certain that Harrison became more sympathetic to the monarchy after the accession of Edward VII. According to Harrison, Edward played a considerable role in concluding the Anglo-French Entente of 1904, by ‘creating an atmosphere,’ if not by exercising actual political
It was at this time that Harrison wrote: “The first lesson from Japan is the fact that a certain type of monarchical concentration is quite compatible with intense patriotism and individual energy.” (Frederic Harrison, ‘Lessons from Japan,’ loc. cit., p. 146.) Edward’s son, George, became almost an idol for Harrison. After the First World War, he wrote that “the historic halo and romantic traditions which gather round our Royal House are priceless and irreplaceable.” In order to reconcile this feeling with his republicanism, he proposed that the Crown should function as ‘Hereditary Chief of the United Commonwealth.’ (Frederic Harrison, Novissima Verba, London, 1921, p. 202.) The record left by Kaneko suggests, however, that Harrison might have been far more sympathetic to monarchy in the Victorian period than is usually supposed. If we can rely on that record, Harrison said: “I believe that the two-party system has become useless even in Britain, and that the time has come when we should have a wise monarch and by his order form a Cabinet, which would consist of many able men.” (Kaneko Kentarō, Kenpō Seiteit to Ōbeijin no Hyōron, op. cit., p. 290.) This is all the more striking, because, in the same year, Harrison told his fellow Positivists that their ideal was an ‘Industrial Republic,’ though he admitted that the ideal would not be achieved by simple abolition of the British monarchy. (Frederic Harrison, The Industrial Republic, London, 1890, pp. 14–17.)

16) Kaneko Kentarō, Kenpō Seiteit to Ōbeijin no Hyōron, op. cit., p. 291.
18) Ibid., p. 130.
22) Kaneko Kentarō, Kizokuin Rei Kiso no Enhaku, op. cit., p. 18.
25) Hozumi maintained that the Japanese people, whether Shintoists or Buddhists, were all ancestor-worshippers. Ibid., p. 2. See also Frederic Harrison, ‘Lessons from Japan,’ loc. cit., p. 146.
36) Hozumi Nobushige, Ancestor-Worship and Japanese Law, op. cit., p. 34.
39) Ibid., p. 331.
THE ENGLISH POSITIVISTS AND JAPAN

682–703, and January 1879 (vol.xxxi. o.s., xxv. n.s.), pp. 114–130.

41) Frederic Harrison, 'The English School of Jurisprudence I,' loc. cit., p. 479.

42) Ibid., p. 481.


44) Ibid., p. 492.

45) Ibid., p. 492.


49) For Takebe, see Akimoto Ritsuo, Nihon Shakai Gakushi [A History of Sociology in Japan] (Tokyo, 1979), pp. 55–63.


52) Ibid., vol.iv., p. 577.

53) Ibid., pp. 606–611.

54) Ibid., pp. 589–595.

55) Ibid., p. 580.


57) Ibid., p. 276, 283, 288.

58) Ibid., p. 362.

59) Ibid., p. 275.

60) Ibid., p. 272.

61) Ibid., p. 271.

62) Ibid., p. 275.

63) Ibid., pp. 361–366.

64) Ibid., pp. 283.

65) Ibid., pp. 283–286.

66) Ibid., p. 288.

67) Ibid., p. 371.


69) Ibid., pp. 596–597.


(IV)

1) See his obituary in the Positivist Review, December 1921, pp. 258–260.


4) Jon Horu [John Hall], Eihoku Saibanjo Ryokusetsu [The Outline of the British Judicial System] (Tokyo, 1872).


7) See his obituary, loc. cit., p. 260.

M. MITSUNAGA

9) Ibid.
10) See his obituary, loc. cit., p. 259.
11) An incomplete bibliography of his writings can be found in the Positivist Review, January 1922, pp. 16–17.
12) See his obituary, loc. cit., p. 259.
15) Ibid., p. 127.
18) Ibid., p. 6.
19) Ibid., p. 9.
20) J.C. Hall, 'Dazai on Buddhism,' loc. cit., p. 25.
22) Ibid., p. 245.
26) Ibid., p. 208.
31) Ibid., p. 146.
33) Ibid., p. 203.
34) Ibid., p. 206.
36) J.C. Hall, 'Modern Japan's Imperialism,' loc. cit., p. 204.
38) J.C. Hall, 'Modern Japan's Imperialism,' loc. cit., p. 204.
39) Ibid., p. 208.
40) J.C. Hall, 'China's Brightening Outlook,' loc. cit., p. 245, 249.
41) Ibid., p. 245.
42) Ibid., p. 248.
43) Ibid., p. 249.
45) J.C. Hall, 'Paragraphs,' Positivist Review, September 1916, p. 214. Hall was not only a Germanophobe, but also an anti-Bolshevik. He supported the Japanese expedition to Siberia, because he thought it would keep Siberia “free from the dangers of Germany's mischievous intrigues and of Bolshevik misguidance.” J.C. Hall, ‘Note on Japan and Siberia,’ Positivist Review, April 1918, pp. 93–94.
48) Ibid., p. 19.
THE ENGLISH POSITIVISTS AND JAPAN

49) J.C. Hall, 'Modern Japan's Imperialism,' loc. cit., p. 208.

(V)
1) See, for example, Francis Sydney Marvin, The Modern World (London, 1929), pp. 236-239.
3) Ibid., p. 154.