The Making of an Alternative Religion in Late-Meiji Japan (1899-1912): A Study of Arai Ōsui (1846-1922)

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Notes on Style

All translations are my own unless otherwise stated. Japanese names are presented by convention of surname-given name, and are referred to by their surnames. In the case of popular figures, I follow the Japanese convention and refer to them by their given or professional names (e.g. Ogiwara Morie is referred to as Rokuzan). For Romanising Japanese terms I follow the Hepburn system, deviating only for better-known spelling conventions (e.g. Tokyo instead of Tōkyō). Dates of birth and death are given for the first mention of historical subjects where possible.

Abstract

This paper makes the case for Alternative Religion as an intellectual concept, and uses it to uncover previously overlooked patterns of thought in the late-Meiji and Russo-Japanese War period. It examines Arai Ōsui (1846-1922), an overlooked religious figure, who I argue was vitally influential despite his erasure from our historical knowledge. By using his writing and writings of those interacting with Arai, I make the case for an alternative religious movement operating between the bounds of religious and secular, and East and West bifurcations. This approach elucidates not only Arai's significance, but also lends reinterpretations of Tanaka Shōzō (1841-1913), and artists Ogiwara Rokuzan (1879-1910) and Takamura Kōtarō (1883-1956) in the early twentieth century.

Keywords: Arai Ōsui, Tanaka Shōzō, Religion, Alternative Religion, Russo-Japanese War, Swedenborgism, modern Japan, late-Meiji Japan, transnational history.

Table of Contents

Notes on Style 2

Abstract 3

Table of Contents 4

Introduction 5

Sources and Methodology 8

Historiography 10

Chapter 1

Discovering Alternative Religion in Meiji Japan 15

Arai's religious background 15

Religion for Arai Ōsui: Theos-Pantheos 20

Chapter 2

Bi-sexuality: Society Reimagined in a Twain-in-One God 28

Education and Bi-sexuality 29

Fighting Fleshly War with Spiritual War 34

Chapter 3

An Alternative Religious Movement 40

The Kenwasha: Arai's Network 40

Shinsen in Yanaka: Tanaka Shōzō and Alternative Religion 43

Alternative Religion in Art 47

Conclusion 53

Bibliography 55

Archives 55

Journals and Periodicals 55

Primary Sources 55

Secondary Sources 56

Introduction

The failure of Tanaka Shōzō (1841-1913) and Kōtoku Shūsui's (1871-1911) *jikiso* (direct appeal) to the Meiji Emperor in 1901 over the Ashio Coppermine Incident captured the national discourse in Japan.[1] Among criticism and comment from all sides, a reclusive, religious thinker by the name of Arai Ōsui (1846-1922) published an article in the journal *Nihonjin* praising Tanaka's sense of benevolence and humanity.[2] Using an extraordinary range of knowledge, from Jesus to Mencius, Arai likened Tanaka's appeal to Edo-era Confucian ideology of a "transcendental outsider" bypassing the state.[3] Highly critical of the Imperial Constitution and abstract rights, Arai quoted a story from Mencius which alludes to the guilt of the Emperor for taking inadequate care of his citizens, not just his advisers' failures, and called for a new benevolent society.[4] For Arai, the actual *practice* of benevolence and goodness was most important, and is a theme of this paper. The anarchist Kōtoku was ultimately executed for treason, whereas Tanaka sought out Arai and voraciously consumed his teachings, even coming to call the younger man *sensei*.[5]

The lens of Western modernity pervades our interpretation of late-Meiji Japan. Consequently, the only historical meaning given to the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) is the ascension of Japan to the club of Christian, Western nation-states in

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[1] Kenneth Strong, *Ox Against the Storm: a biography of Tanaka Shōzō, Japan's conservationist pioneer*, (Tenterden: Norbury, 1977), 132-136. Editorials quickly began speculating that Tanaka was mad.
[2] Arai Ōsui, "Ka o mite sono jin o shiru," *Nihonjin*, 154, in *Arai Ōsui chosakushū*, 9 vols. Arai Ōsui chosakushū henshūkai (eds.), (Yokohama: Shunpūsha, 2003), 8-14, 148-153.
[3] See: Robert Stolz, *Bad Water: Nature, Pollution and Politics in Japan 1870-1950.* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 80-81.
[4] Arai Ōsui, *chosakushū*, 8-14, 149-150, 152, 174.
[5] Strong, *Ox Against the Storm*, 146.

the system of international relations.[6] However, the cumulation of the first Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895), the Russo-Japanese War, and growing environmental crises, epitomised by the Ashio Coppermine dispute, led a number of people to believe that human progress and civilisation was retrogressing.[7] Despite these voices, Tanaka Shōzō's failed *jikiso* is often seen as a stand alone act of radical subversion against the Meiji state's march towards Western modernity, an "ox against the storm" and an increasingly hopeless remnant of an earlier Tokugawa ideology.[8] Concurrently, "Western artists" of the period have been consigned to meanings only related to their Western influence, as evidence of Japan's modernisation and culture, rather than the alternative (non-West) imaginations of society they conveyed. However, as I argue in this paper that Tanaka and the artists Ogiwara Rokuzan (1879-1910) and Takamura Kōtarō (1883-1956) can be wholly reinterpreted by examining their epistemic links to Arai, revealing their mutual efforts to realise a civilisation based on spiritual, not imperial or Western, progress. This dissertation is centred on uncovering the forgotten religious movement in late-Meiji Japan surrounding Arai, which I term Alternative Religion.

Alternative Religion refers to activities that fall outside of the commonly accepted bounds of religion (*shūkyō*). James Ketelaar explains the meaning of *shūkyō* as the Protestant understanding of religion in Meiji Japan — centred on private belief as the defining feature, with institutions playing a distinguishing role.[9] However, this

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[6] Ibid, 144.
[7] Sho Konishi, *Anarchist Modernity: Cooperatism and Japanese-Russian Intellectual Relations in Modern Japan,* (London: Harvard University Press, 2013), 144.
[8] Stolz, *Bad Water*, 55-56; Strong, *Ox against the storm*.
[9] James Ketelaar, *Of Heretics and Martyrs: Buddhism and Persecution in Meiji Japan*, (Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1990), 124-126.

meaning assigned to religion by the Meiji state was just one narrow definition in a multiplicity of meanings, as I demonstrate using Arai Ōsui's case.

Arai's understanding of religion lies in his eclectic religious encounters. He was a classically educated samurai on the losing side of the Boshin War that established the Meiji government, encountered Russian Orthodoxy in Hakodate, then spent twenty-eight years on Swedenborgian-inspired communes in America before returning to Japan in 1899 and becoming an influential religious figure. Arai's absence from our historical knowledge belies his significance as someone who was using (Neo-) Confucian and Christian sources of knowledge to articulate his alternative vision of society, influencing numerous notable figures. Arai is unknown today, but was well-known enough in Tokyo society to appear on *banzuke* (ranking lists popular in the Tokugawa period) of "eccentrics" and "strange people" in 1911 and 1913, contextualising him alongside other famous, rebellious and controversial figures.[10]

Arai saw *practice* and *doing* as defining elements of religion, rather than private belief: "Religion (*shūkyō*) originates in labour… The Way (*michi*) is the teachings of mutual love and mutual work."[11] Therefore, Arai's Alternative Religion is the action-oriented manifestation of *practice*, irrespective of individual belief or institutional loyalty. Using this new interpretation, I unfold previously obscured connections and meanings between Arai and his famous contemporaries in late-Meiji Japan.

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[10] Such as Fukuda Hideko (1865-1927), Akiko Yosano (1878-1942), Uchimura Kanzō (1861-1930), Tanaka Shōzō, Katayama Kuniyoshi (1855-1931) and Kinoshita Naoe (1869-1937), to name but a few. "Tōsei kikotsu kantai banzuke," *shinkōron*, 26:2, (1911) and "Hen na otoko, hen na onna banzuke," *shinkōron*, 28:1, (1913) in: *Arai Ōsui chosakushū*, 8-28, 518, 519.
[11] Arai Ōsui, *chosakushū*, 2-2, 232-234.

Re-examining the idea of religion beyond bifurcations endemic in extant literature, this approach demonstrates how those on the 'wrong side of history' are expunged from national history through not just frames of relevance, but frames of analysis.[12] This exercise of analysing a historical actor's religion and associated movement between discrete ontological categories produces fruitful avenues of analysis, which can be used for future reinterpretations of movements within and beyond Japan.

Sources and Methodology

Civil war losers' roles in history are always precarious, and Arai Ōsui is no exception.[13] Intellectual and cultural practices such as Arai's that were not compatible with Western modernity, nor neatly fit in dichotomies such as East and West, religious and secular and discrete religion-religion have been overlooked. Therefore, in Arai's case, he has often been framed as "interesting but irrelevant," as academics have struggled to find historical relevance without Western modernity, cultural nationalism, pan-Asianism or the above dichotomisations.[14]

Hence, as so little is written about Arai in Japanese or English, what remains of his own writing, compiled in the *Arai Ōsui chosakushū* (collected works of Arai Ōsui), forms the bulk of my primary sources.[15] Deciphering his archaic Japanese and rhetorical writing style required reference to a study by the Arai Ōsui Sensei Kinenkai

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[12] Micheal Wert points to a Meiji-era proverb, *kateba kangun, makereba zokugun* (win and you are the Emperor's army, lose and you are the rebel army — equivalent to 'might makes right') as an indication of how historical memory favoured the Meiji victors over the losing Tokugawa forces. Idem, *Meiji Restoration Losers: Memory and Tokugawa Supporters in Modern Japan*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), 1.

[13] For a discussion of Japan's case, see: Wert, *Meiji Restoration Losers,* 1.

[14] See: Ivan Parker Hall, *Mori Arinori,* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 206.

[15] Much of Arai's correspondence is likely destroyed. In remaining letters to his friend the poet Edwin Markham, Arai reminds him to burn his letters after reading them. *Chosakushū*, bekkan, 224.

(memorial association), who provided interpretations of some of Arai's terms, including many of his unique expressions.[16] For Arai's twenty-eight years in America, I relied on footnotes in Ivan Parker Hall's monograph on Mori Arinori (1847-1899), Arai's student Nagashima Tadashige's hagiography, and biographical information on Arai in Senoue Masahito's work on Swedenborgism in Japan.[17]

Beyond these sources, I trace otherwise disassociated actions of those that knew Arai, and analyse particular uses of language and expression in their own diaries and writings (such as Tanaka's) with discernible epistemic links to Arai's alternative religious philosophy.[18] Translation as a methodological strategy also informs this paper. I use Arai's writing as evidence to counter previous claims of Arai as a "Swedenborgian" or Ogiwara Rokuzan as a "Western artist."[19] Rather, I see their writings as rearticulations of non-West, non-East knowledge, disputing the unidirectional, self-colonising flow of ideas from West to East in extant studies.[20]

Uncovering the networks and associations around Arai required a reassessment of the historical and contemporary meaning given to religion. Therefore, I take a methodological approach that fragments the meaning of religion to see, in the words of Gilles Deleuze, that the "states of things are not unities or totalities but multiplici-

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[16] Arai Ōsui Sensei Kinenkai (eds.), *Shirarezaru inochi no shisōka: Arai Ōsui o yomitoku,* (Tokyo: Shunpūsha, 2000). See also Daniel Corl and Kim Tae-Chang (eds.), *Arai Osui: A transnational communitarian,* (Tokyo: Tokyo University Press, 2010). Both these studies discuss theological rather than historical concerns, so are rich in information and poor in contextualisation and argument. They are nevertheless useful for studying Arai.

[17] Senoue Masahito, *Meiji no suēdenborugu: Arai, Arinori, Shōzō o tsunagu mono*, (Tokyo: Shunpūsha, 2001).

[18] For example: Tanaka Shōzō, *Tanaka Shōzō zenshū,* 7 vols. Anzai Kunio, Kano Masanao, Komatsu Hiroshi, Sakaya Junji and Yui Masaomi (eds.), (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1989); Takamura Kōtarō, *Nihon gendai bungaku zenshū 40: Takamura Kōtarō, Miyazawa Kenji shū,* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1963); Ogiwara Morie and Sugii Mutsurō (ed.), *Rokuzan Nikki*, (Tokyo: Dōhōsha, 1980).

[19] Senoue is a major offender here, in his attempts to find the entire origins of Arai's and some of Mori Arinori's and Tanaka Shōzō's ideas in Swedenborgism. Idem, *Meiji no suēdenborugu*.

[20] For example see: Lee Hyewon, "The cult of Rodin: Words, photographs, and colonial history in the spread of Auguste Rodin's reputation in Northeast Asia," (PhD thesis, University of Missouri, 2006); Senoue, *Meiji no suēdenborugu*.

ties," that only by "unfolding" the meaning of religion can we see that "multiplicity grows from the middle like grass."[21] It is from this "middle" — the space between religion and secular, Christianism, Buddhism and Confucianism, and East and West — that by way of rhizome Alternative Religion unfolds the meanings obscured by past reliance on "unities" and "totalities."

In the first chapter, I reexamine definitions of religion in Meiji Japan, to disclose Arai's Alternative Religion. Chapter two explores a hidden epistemic strand of a religious criticism of the Meiji state's nation-building by examining how Arai practiced his understanding of religion in education and in opposing state violence. Finally, I apply this alternative religious perspective to unveil the connections between, and to reinterpret the writings and actions of just three of the most well-known historical actors who can now been seen within this movement: environmental activist Tanaka Shōzō, and artists Takamura Kōtarō and Ogiwara Rokuzan.

Historiography

Arai Ōsui is absent from the historiography of modern Japan. Except for his collected works, Arai only appears in footnotes or as a passing reference in Japanese academic texts on the Meiji Jogakkō (Meiji Girls School), or as the man Tanaka Shōzō came to call *sensei*.[22] Robert Stolz in *Bad Water* is the first to elaborate Arai's influence on Tanaka in English, giving just a few lines to Arai's thought, relying on Japanese secondary sources.[23] Furthermore, despite being a transnational actor writing in English,

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[21] Gilles Deleuze, *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975-1995*, (New York: Semiotext(e), 2006), 309-10. See also Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: capitalism and schizophrenia* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 26-27.

[22] See for example: Fujita Yoshimi, *meiji jogakkō no sekai: meiji jogakkō to 'jogaku zasshi' o meguru ningen gunzō to sono shisō*, (Tokyo: Seieisha, 1984); Stolz, *Bad Water*; Strong, *Ox Against the Storm,* 146.

[23] Stolz, *Bad Water*, 106-111.

Classical Chinese and early-modern Japanese, scholars such as Senoue Masahito have only seen Arai's work 'as translation', leaving his articulations in Japanese as remaining tethered to the West-centric understanding of a unidirectional flow of knowledge from West to East, hence the tendency to refer to Arai as a Swedenborgian.[24] Yet, rather than "translating the foreign," Arai's writing in Japanese presents a multi-directional and dialectical creation of a religious philosophy in the late-Meiji period.[25]

This historical research thus aims to demonstrate how academics such as Stolz failed to grasp the full significance of Arai due to the way religion in Japan is understood. I use post-colonialist scholarship to elucidate the historiographical foundation of Alternative Religion, demonstrating why the contemporary understanding of religion is just one strand in a multiplicity of meanings, and how reconstructing religion is essential for articulating Arai's significance in modern Japan's historiography.

In order to explore and establish the idea of 'Alternative Religion' as a mode of analysis, examining how historians have interpreted what religion meant in Meiji Japan is essential. James Ketelaar's *Of Heretics and Martyrs* and Trent Maxey's *The Greatest Problem* are both invaluable for evaluating the meaning of religion in Meiji Japan.[26] However, their reliance on examining religion from the perspective of the state leaves some stones unturned. Helen Hardacre tackles religion and new religions in modern Japan, identifying the vague boundary between 'religion' and 'secular'.[27]

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[24] Senoue, *Meiji no Suēdenborugu*; See also: Ibid, *Bad Water*, 80, 107-108; Strong, *Ox Against the Storm,* 146.
[25] See: Naoki Sakai, *Translation and Subjectivity: On "Japan" and Cultural Nationalism*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997); Konishi, *Anarchist Modernity*, 98-99.
[26] James Ketelaar, *Of Heretics and Martyrs*; Trent Maxey, ""The Greatest Problem": Religion in the Politics and Diplomacy of Early Meiji Japan, 1868-1884." (PhD, Cornell University, 2005).
[27] For Example: Helen Hardacre, *Kurozumikyō and the new religions of Japan*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

Maxey, however, disassembles religion further in the Meiji-Japan context, citing the "private belief" mark of Protestant Christianity, and highlighting the lack of a discrete ontological and epistemic boundary between 'religion' and 'not religion' in Ishin Japan.[28] I use Arai's Alternative Religion to disassemble this further, as his understanding of religion is not bounded by belief.

Delineating the category of religion is further complicated by an understanding that *sui generis* religion has been constructed politically, historiographically, anthropologically and sociologically. Therefore, identifying what constitutes religion, particularly in unfamiliar cultures and locales, led to diverse interpretations of so-called religiosity, without acknowledging that the deciding criteria for what religion is, and is not, is in itself creating implicit hierarchies.[29] If one particular religion, is the 'gold-standard' for religion (Protestantism), then other religions are corrupted or are in Tetsuo Najita's words "same-to-be not-yet-same."[30] Max Weber's term, the "Protestant work ethic," is influential in essentialising narratives of why certain countries have developed in particular ways. In this view, not only is Protestantism the 'gold-standard' for the definition of religion, but it is also the most beneficial for mankind. I turn to post-colonial scholarship to find ways of overcoming the Protestant definition.

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[28] Maxey, "The Greatest Problem," 20-22.

[29] See: Peter van de Veer, *Imperial Encounters: Religion and Modernity in India and Britain*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 25-26; Gauri Viswanathan, "Legacies: Intention and Method," *University of Toronto Quarterly,* 83:1, (2014) 3-11; David Chidester, *Savage Systems: Colonialism and Comparative Religion in Southern Africa*, (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1996); Richard King, *Orientalism and Religion: Post-Colonial Theory, India and the Mystic East,* (London: Routledge, 1999); Yasumaru Yoshio, "Minshū shūkyō to 'kindai' to iu keiken," in *Shūkyō to higashi ajia no kindai o tō; nikkan no taiwa tōshite*, in: Pyondoku Ryu et al. (eds.) (Tokyo: Perikansha, 2002); Maxey, "The Greatest Problem," 22-25.

[30] Tetsuo Najita, "Japan's Industrial Revolution" in: Harootunian, Harry and Miyoshi Masao (eds.) *Japan in the World*, (London: Duke University Press, 1993).

The post-colonial scholarship of Gauri Viswanathan, Talal Assad and Dipesh Chakrabarty present attempts to overcome the 'Protestant standard' for religion, scrutinising how the local history of Christian Europe has been applied uncritically to world histories.[31] Chakrabarty "provincialises" Europe, placing it on the same plane as subaltern regions in "area studies."[32] Many studying Japanese religions have not made this step.[33] Viswanathan's work on conversion in Indian post-nationalist culture seeks to resist positivist ways of conceptualising difference such as race, religion, colour, ethnicity and nationality — challenging these fixed categories through which we interpret human behaviour and actions. She finds Theosophy as non-hierarchically operating outside of the colonialist-nationalist dichotomy, but cannot break free of the coloniser-native power relationship.[34]

Returning to Japan's case, "Tolstoyan religion" or "religious anarchism" as described by Sho Konishi demonstrates just how differently we can reinterpret an intellectual movement and temporality, which was until recently excluded from the bounds of religion.[35] By separating Lev Tolstoy from the idea of him being a "Christian thinker," he no longer fits the "historiographical paradigm that Christianity was a major force in the Westernisation and modernisation of Meiji Japan."[36] Similarly, by extricating Arai from Swedenborgism, we can uncover an alternative intellectual current in late-Meiji Japan — one separate to both the East-West and religious-secular

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[31] See: Talal Assad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 42; Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, (Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008).
[32] Chakrabarty, *Provincialising Europe*.
[33] See for example: Mark Mullins (ed.) *Critical readings on Christianity in Japan*, (Leiden: Brill, 2015), vol. 2.
[34] Gauri Viswanathan, "The Ordinary Business of Occultism," *Critical Inquiry*, 21:1 (2007), 1-20.
[35] See: Konishi, *Anarchist Modernity*, 95.
[36] Ibid, 96.

bifurcations, and the historical discourse of discrete religious entities. Within the Russo-Japanese War context, the epistemological origins of war opposition have been wholly assigned to "enlightened Christians" such as Kinoshita Naoe (1869-1937) opposing the "traditional" politicians and oligarchs cheering on imperialism.[37] This presents a case to use Arai's writing to critique the traditional-enlightened Christian dichotomy.

Therefore, in this study I untether the meaning given to religion from its Euro-American roots, and reapply through it Alternative Religion, to the case of Arai Ōsui. As a transnational actor with a non-institutional religious philosophy, he is an excellent opening for unfolding in multiplicity what religion meant and what religion was used for intellectually and practically in late-Meiji Japan. In doing so, I seek to overcome the post-colonial bifurcation, and lens of temporal hierarchy and Western modernity in extant studies.

[37] Ibid, 144. See also David Wells and Sandra Wilson (eds.), *The Russo-Japanese War in Cultural Perspective, 1904-05*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1999).

CHAPTER 1

Discovering Alternative Religion in Meiji Japan

Disclosing 'Alternative Religion' challenges the norms of extant scholarship on religion in Japan as it requires a reassessment of a core component of religion: belief. The role of belief is debated and contested regarding religion in the Japanese context,[38] but I go a step further and find Arai disregards 'belief' as a defining principle of his Alternative Religion. Therefore, I use Arai's understanding of religion as an example of how far religion can be re-examined.

Alternative Religion's definition is not intended to replace religion, nor create a strictly bounded definition itself, but to see what we can discover in such a multiplicity of meanings. The process of moving from essentialisations of discrete religious entities defined by their comparison to Protestantism to an alternative understanding based on the practical application of ideas is essential to elucidate the significance of Arai's work. This chapter gives background and historical context to Arai, before examining his understanding of religion in the late-Meiji period, concluding by showing why Alternative Religion can be a fruitful methodological strategy for re-understanding Arai and for reinterpreting other historical figures and periods.

Arai's religious background

Arai was born in Sendai in North-Eastern Japan, and aged six he started his education at the Sendai Domain school, Yōkendō, which in 1815 was the first Domain school to teach Rangaku (Dutch medical studies) introduced by leading Rangaku scholar Ōtsu-

[38] Reader, "Historical, New, and "New" New Religions"; Timothy Fitzgerald rejects a soteriological understanding of religion in Japan, and focuses on *ritual* in social organisations, which I argue is different to 'practice' or 'doing'. Idem, "Japanese Religion as Ritual Order," *Religion*, 23, (2007), 315-341.

ki Gentaku (1757-1827). Under the tutelage of Ōtsuki Shūsai (1811-1865), Gentaku's grandson, Arai learned Confucian classics and the *kanbun* (Classical Chinese) writing style favoured by the Tokugawa elite. Thus, his education relied on memorising Confucian classics, particularly Mencius and the Analects, but not a completely 'Eastern' education, as the Yōkendō was an important site of learning for Rangaku.[39]

On graduation, he was sent to Edo to continue his studies. However, after a brief stint at the Shōheizaka Gakumonjo, he transferred to Yasui Sokken's (1799 - 1876) Sankeijuku, where his study was cut short by the outbreak of Boshin War in 1868. Loyal to his domain, Arai returned to Sendai, retreating with the Bakufu forces to Hakodate under Enomoto Takeaki (1836-1908), ending up on the 'wrong side of history'. There, Arai met Russian Orthodox priest Nikolai Kasatkin (1836-1912, later Saint Nikolai of Japan), who had been in Japan for eight years studying Japanese and spreading Russian Orthodoxy. Nikolai required learning *kangaku* (Chinese learning) as part of Russian Orthodoxy in his seminary.[40]

Arai's initial encounter with Christianity, therefore, was atypical. Rather than the Calvinist Protestantism that captivated the likes of Nitobe Inazō (1862-1933) and Niijima Jō (1843-1890), Arai's encounter was through Russian Orthodoxy via Nikolai's Classical Chinese translation of the bible. In a letter, Arai expressed his initial reaction to Christianity as "so refined (*kōshō*) it cannot be compared to Confucianism or Buddhism. Moreover, it is a righteous path (*shōdō*) that anyone, regardless of status, can learn from."[41]

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[39] For a detailed timeline of Arai Ōsui's life, see: *chosakushū*, bekkan-1, 7-38.
[40] Nakamura Kennosuke, *Nikorai: kachi ga aru no wa, ta o awaremu kokoro dakeda*, (Tokyo: Mineruva shobō, 2013), 31-75; Konishi, *Anarchist Modernity*, 103-104.
[41] Senoue, *Meiji no suēdenborugu*, 26-27.

Consequently, Arai's encounter with the Bible is also inconsistent with the perception of Japanese-Christian encounters at the time. In the construction of religion as a discrete unit, religiosity becomes a socio-cultural means to a distinguish temporal hierarchy in systems of belief and practice, with modern, rational, progressive Protestantism at the centre, and "primitive" and natural religions at the periphery.[42] Russian Orthodoxy occupies an ambiguous position in this hierarchy, as it is undoubtedly Christianity, but not a truly 'Western' Christianity — Russian Orthodoxy, much like Russia, occupied a peripheral position vis-à-vis Europe. Nevertheless, Christianity in Arai's experience was separate from Western modernity, coming to it through Russian Orthodoxy rather than American Protestantism and its claim as the most advanced religion on earth. Not only did Arai not approach the Bible from an unadulterated position of 'Eastern' education, due to being educated in an important site of Dutch medical studies, but instead of encountering 'Western religion', he came to Russian Orthodox Christianity via Classical Chinese, bypassing American Protestantism and its claim as the most advanced religion on earth.

Due to Arai's encounter with Christianity happening outside of Western temporality, he interpreted Christianity as being "for everyone, high or low (*kisenjōge no bechi naku*)," seeing this as one of its attractions.[43] This points to his dissatisfaction with the hierarchical emphasis of mainstream Neo-Confucian teaching in Japan. This impression of Christianity as non-hierarchical is due to encountering Russian Orthodoxy, which had a radical aversion to hierarchy and status, as demonstrated by the

[42] Maxey, "The Greatest Problem," 21.
[43] Senoue, *Meiji no suēdenborugu*, 26-27.

likes of Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821-1881) and Vladimir Solov'ev (1853-1900), embracing mysticism, and feminine aspects of God, as opposed to the more masculine Protestantism.[44] By saying it was incomparable to Buddhism and Confucianism, he was citing a distinction in thought, but not imagining a hierarchy of religious doctrine as were other notable Japanese Christians, such as Niijima Jō (1843-1890), who certainly saw Christianity as an enlightened, temporally advanced doctrine.[45]

Arai's religious experience took an adventurous turn when he met Future Minister for Education, Mori Arinori (1847-1889), in 1870, soon after the Boshin War concluded. Mori was preparing for a diplomatic post in Washington D.C., and decided to take Arai with him to America to join the mystic Thomas Lake Harris' (1823-1906) Brotherhood of New Life, a commune in Brockton, New York State. Mori secured an official pardon for Arai, who then went as Mori's servant aboard the *Great Republic* to New York.[46] In May of 1871, Arai was admitted as a commune member and stayed with the Brotherhood until 1899.[47] The Brotherhood's primate, Harris, was a mystical preacher, who was initially a Universalist minister, before becoming involved with mystic Andrew Jackson Davis (1826-1910) and his sexual aspects of religious practice, eventually coming to the Swedenborgian congregation in New York, The New

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[44] See: Paul Valliere, "Vladimir Soloviev (1853–1900)". In Witte, John, Jr. and Alexander, Frank S. *The Teachings of Modern Orthodox Christianity on Law, Politics, and Human Nature,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007); for Protestantism's masculinity in Japan see: George Oshiro, Nitobe Inazō and the "Sapporo Band: Reflections on the Dawn of Protestant Christianity in the Early Meiji Period," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 34:6, (2007), 90-126.

[45] For the link between Protestantism and science, see: Hall, *Mori Arinori*, 208. See also: Inoue Katsuya, *Niijima Jō: hito to shisō*, (Tokyo: Kōyō Shobō, 1990); Konishi, *Anarchist Modernity*, 99.

[46] It was never clear to Arai why Mori decided to take him to the commune, but he recounted in a letter to his nephew, Arai Ichirō, that Mori claimed also not to know why, nor did he know why he felt compelled to join himself four years ago, but that he had a premonition and he trusted it was God's will. Letter in Nagashima Tadashige, *Arai Ōsui Sensei*, 197-201. This point is also discussed in Hall, *Mori Arinori*, 203.

[47] The Brotherhood moved from Brockton, New York to Fountaingrove, Santa Rosa, California in 1875.

Church.[48] Whilst some refer to Harris as a "Swedenborgian," it is more precise to say he found similarities between his own branch of mysticism and the writings of Emmanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772), and used Swedenborgian terminology to develop his theology.[49]

The New Church had distanced themselves from Harris within four years, and Harris set about establishing his own churches, seeing himself as a modern-day messiah.[50] Within the commune Arai learned concepts and vocabulary relating to the bisexuality of God, Divine respiration, THE USE, as well as cooperatist modes of living, which he rearticulated after returning to Japan. Arai's background in Russian Orthodoxy bore similarities with the feminine, non-hierarchical and mystical concepts in the commune. The use of Swedenborgian terminology in Harris' writing, and subsequent translations by Arai led previous scholars to brand Arai a Swedenborgian.[51] However, I argue that Arai used Harris', not Swedenborg's, theology to inform his conception of God, as Harris only used Swedenborgian vocabulary to express his own revelations. Furthermore, once back in Japan, rather than straightforwardly translating Harris' ideas, Arai used Confucianism, Buddhism and Shinto (mostly undistinguished in the form of Neo-Confucianism) to reinterpret and rearticulate parts of Harris' teaching for true purpose in Japan. THE USE, for example Arai termed *nichiyō jōkō* (daily ascendance through work) in Japanese, derived from Neo-Confucian lan-

[48] Hall, *Mori Arinori*, 97.
[49] Slade, "Historical Sketch," 185.
[50] Ibid, 184-186.
[51] Examples include: Stolz, *Bad Water*, 108-115; Kenneth Strong, *Ox Against the Storm*, 146; Senoue, *Meiji no suēdenborugu*; Arai Ōsui sensei Kinenkai, *Arai Ōsui o yomitoku*; Corl and Kim, *Arai Ōsui*, 25-34.

guage.[52] Arai's rearticulation transformed an esoteric theology into an action-oriented alternative religious movement.

Religion for Arai Ōsui: Theos-Pantheos

In accordance with his religious background, Arai was part of a different negotiation of Christianity vis-à-vis Confucianism and Buddhism. He took a flexible approach to different religions, using the idea of 'Theos-Pantheos', that God is omnipresent, "all embracing in one humanity; all fraternising in one Filial God."[53] This meant that to Arai, religion is not just related to God, but to *practice*, and that different modes of practice, i.e. different religions, are still part of the same God. "The way" is unrelated to which church one attends, or the deity to which one pledges oneself.[54] This is reflected in his religious philosophy, which stresses the importance of earnestly practicing the teachings of one's religion — a daily sacrifice to God, through doing good deeds, meditative labour and prayer, as a way of continuing Jesus' work by taking up the cross in daily-life.

Unlike the Jesuits in early modern Japan and Protestants in Meiji Japan who claimed a doctrinal superiority, Arai's notion of the relationship between existing Japanese religions and Christianity is non-hierarchical. He did not abandon the Confucian training he was raised on, and made no claim that he had discovered "hidden

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[52] Not unlike past (Neo-) Confucian scholars in Japan, such as Andō Shōeki's (1703-1762) *chokkō* (direct action), and the efforts to practice goodness by doing in late Tokugawa Japan by medical practitioners at Juntendō using *jinjutsu* (compassionate art of healing) and at Kaitokudō. In the late-Meiji period, Kōtoku Shusui utilised *chokkō* as a call to direct action in mutual aid, in reference to the Chokkōdan. See: Konishi, *Anarchist Modernity*, 191-196; Ibid, "The Emergence of an International Humanitarian Organization in Japan: The Tokugawa Origins of the Japanese Red Cross," *American Historical Review*, 119:4, (2014) 1129-1153; Yasunaga Toshinobu (Ed.), *Ando Shoeki: Social and Ecological Philosopher*, (New York: Weatherhill, 1992); Najita Tetsuo, *Visions of Virtue in Tokugawa Japan: the Kaitokudō Merchant Academy of Osaka*, (Honolulu: Hawaii University Press, 1997).

[53] Arai Ōsui, *Inward Prayer and Fragments*, in: Idem, *chosakushū*, 1-1, 36-39.

[54] Ibid, *Inward Prayer and Fragments*, 39.

truths" or the "right way."[55] This contrasts with Meiji Protestants who saw their religion as a civilising force — superior Protestantism is the path to God and prosperity.[56] In this sense, the boundaries between each religion are strictly and clearly demarcated in the minds of those for and against Christianity in Japan.[57]

Aside from disavowing hierarchies of discrete religion, a major aspect differentiating Arai's religious philosophy is his disregard for 'belief', focusing instead on practice. De-stressing belief as the core concept of religion is subversive and destabilising from the state's perspective, as the separation between 'religious' and 'secular' has been mediated through a distinction between private belief, and everyday conduct and practice. Private belief is one of the tenets of a Western understanding of religion.[58] When the concept of religion as separate to the state arose in 17th century Europe, in light of intense sectarian violence, the very purpose of separating "speculative" and "practical" articles of faith, as termed by John Locke, was to tolerate different religions and achieve social order.[59] Therefore, by separating politics and religion according to belief being the purview of the church, and practices with social and political consequences as under the provision of the state, a so-called secular society should be possible.[60] By emphasising the "practical" (*jissen*) and disregarding the importance of private belief, Arai's understanding of religion subverts this idea.[61] Locke

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[55] In contrast with "new religious" leaders in Japan emerging at the same time, see: Hardacre, *Kuruzumikyō*, introduction.
[56] See: Inoue, *Niijima Jō*.
[57] This is a historiographical perspective, as Maxey makes it clear, Meiji bureaucrats struggled to distinguish between religious and political loyalty, which contributed to the "imagined crisis of conversion," where converting to Christianity was tantamount to treason. Idem, "The Greatest Problem," 43-49.
[58] See: Derek Peterson and Darren Walhof, *The Invention of Religion, rethinking belief in politics and history,* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 3.
[59] John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, (South Bend: Infomotions, 2000), 21.
[60] Peterson and Walhof, *The Invention of Religion*, 3.
[61] Arai Ōsui, *chosakushū*, 2-1, 100.

saw this as a "great danger, lest one of these jurisdictions intrench upon the other, and discord arise between the keeper of public peace and the overseers of souls."[62] This was mirrored by the actions of the Meiji state in its efforts to purge Buddhism from the public sphere by denouncing it as an "ancient evil," and instigating *seikyō bunri* (separation of rule and doctrine) to separate religion from other conceptual fields, as well as to reconfigure parameters between newly discrete religions.[63] Paradoxically, the state used Directive 12 in 1899 to ban religious education from schools.[64] State Shinto was declassified as a religion and became the de facto 'moral education' in Japan, circumventing the Directive's ban on religious education and associated "separation of rule and doctrine."[65]

Thus, in contrast to the Meiji government's concerted efforts to separate the "speculative" and "practical," Arai's notion of a non-discrete religious realm is grounded in practice. For how Arai arrived at this concept, we must look at his communal life in America. In 1891, The Brotherhood of New Life became plagued by scandal and Harris permanently left the Fountaingrove commune.[66] It is reasonable to speculate Harris' abandonment of the commune affected the way Arai saw the "righteous way." Cause and effect are unclear, as Arai never wrote about his time in America, but diary entries by Mrs. Harris cite "sad failures" and "indiscretions" on Arai's part for his ejec-

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[62] Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, 22.
[63] Ketelaar, *Of Heretics and Martyrs*, 41-42.
[64] Yamaguchi Kazutaka, "Monbushō kunrei 12 gō (1899) to 'shūkyōteki jōsō kyōiku no kanyō ni kansuru' monbu jikan tsūchō (1935) no rekishiteki igi nitsuite, *ICU Bulletin, kyōiku kenkyū*, 22, (1979) 41-69.
[65] This exemplifies Talal Assad's point that the separation between the religious and the secular are entirely constructed. Idem, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 25.
[66] A journalist, Alzire Chevaillier, posing as a potential follower wrote an exposé to destroy the Fountaingrove commune, accusing Thomas Lake Harris, of promoting "disorderly doctrines" with sexual practices "worse than those of Mormonism." See: Joshua Paddison, "Disorderly Doctrines: Religion, Race and the Fountaingrove sex scandal of 1891-1892." *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era,* 14, (2015) 475–502.

tion form the colony.[67] Harris himself alluded to these "indiscretions" in a letter to Arai in 1899, offering forgiveness and paying for the steamship to Japan, promising to "meet again in the Holy and blessed Hereafter."[68] After Harris left, the number of followers in the colony dwindled and it became more focused on winemaking under the management of Nagasawa Kanaye, the eventual inheritor of the estate. Little was left for Arai in terms of spiritual progression or practice, likely why he left California for good. The religious transformation regarding the "righteous way" Arai went through at that time is apparent in his writing as soon as he returned to Japan.

Arai's early English language work written before he returned to Japan takes a predictable line for someone who was isolated in a commune for nearly thirty years, as he clearly linked the true way to salvation as being within his own sect, The Brotherhood of New Life, before his turn to embrace Theos-Pantheos.[69] He had changed his mind vis-à-vis "the way." Rather than proclaiming that the New Life was the only path to salvation, as he wrote in a letter to Russian Orthodox priest Ōjima Ungan (birth-death unknown) in 1899, he argued that anyone who tries to help those in hardship, speed up someone's healing or provide salvation for those who commit crimes is properly practicing Buddhism or Confucianism and therefore is a close friend of his.[70] Rather than pick over the "nihilism of Buddhism, or the conservatism of Confucianism," he states that one should gradually proceed along the "true way" (*shindō*) in

[67] Mrs Thomas Lake Harris, Harris-Oliphant Papers, Box 12, "Letters and Diary: 1899-1906.", diary entries 25 June and 14 July 1899. All documents relating to Fountaingrove are written by those with particular agendas, Chevalier in her attempt to scandalise the commune saw Arai as an infantilised, innocent dupe, whereas Harris sought to defend the colony and discredit detractors. Arai said almost nothing of his time in America after he returned to Japan, nor why he returned. See also: Hall, *Mori Arinori*, 205-206; Paddison, "Disorderly Doctrines."
[68] Thomas Lake Harris, letter to Arai Ōsui, June 25, 1899. From the Edwin Markham Archives, reprinted in: *Arai Ōsui chosakushū*, bekkan-5, 214-215.
[69] Arai Ōsui, *Second Book of Fragments*, written 1896, published 1897, *chosakushū*, 1-2, 131.
[70] Arai Ōsui, *chosakushū*, 2-1, 100. Published in 1904 in his collected work *Shinkan.*

their own way.[71] This could seem as an individualistic understanding of religion, but what he is stressing is the point that each person should be *doing* "mutual love and mutual work," rather than arguing over the right way to salvation.[72] He prefaces this by asserting that he himself was a student of Confucianism and Buddhism, and "if someone earnestly (*majime*) practices those 'ways', they cannot be criticised." Unlike the missionary zeal of Protestants in Japan, who offer salvation through only their own interpretation of God, for Arai it is *doing* that is the most important.[73] Actual belief for Arai is secondary, outside of the right and wrong, good and evil arguments that preoccupied Meiji intellectuals regarding religion. Arguing over "correct" practice of Buddhism or Shinto is superfluous, achieving salvation in everyday life through doing and practice regardless of the reasoning is the "true way."

To understand how and why Arai saw multiplicity in 'correct' religious practice, we need to examine what religion meant, and how Confucianism fitted within religion in Meiji Japan. The separation of politics and religion in the West and by the Meiji government has confused the idea of whether Confucianism (*jukyō*) is a religion or a moral code. The absence of private belief, rituals and worship in Confucianism means that from a Protestant perspective, it appears not as a religion, but as a code of governance or elite ideology. The translated term religion (*shūkyō*) composed of the characters for 'doctrine' and 'teaching' came into common usage in Japan in the 1870s and marked a change from earlier descriptions of religion.[74] Buddhism was referred to as both *buppō* (Buddhist law) and *butsudō* (Buddhist path) but was replaced by the

[71] Ibid, 2-1, 100.
[72] Ibid, 2-2, 234.
[73] Ibid, 2-1, 100.
[74] Ketelaar, *Of Heretics and Martyrs*, 124-135.

character *kyō* (teaching). Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Confucianism and Shinto were all assigned the *kyō* suffix indicating their status as religion.[75] Confucianism occupied a peripheral position in this definition, evident by it also being referred to as *jugaku* (the study of Confucius). During the early-Meiji period, Confucianism drifted further from the state definition of religion to occupy a different category of *dōtoku* (morality).[76] This unstable definition of religion indicates the fluidity of thought for defining 'the religious', as Confucianism was initially included in this newly created all-encompassing designation, but was soon jettisoned as the Protestant definition became more accepted as *the* definition of religion by academia and the state in line with the international community. Academics and officials at the time were frequently educated in Europe or the United States, absorbing the Protestant understanding and applying it to Japan, gradually contributing to the understanding of *shūkyō* in Japan today.[77] However, the initial inclusion suggests the Japanese understanding of what constituted religion differed from the eventual understanding, and indicates an alternative imagination of religion as a category.

Arai had his own view on what constituted religion. He included Buddhism, Confucianism and Christianity, and excluded Taoism. Here he seeks to distinguish between the great teachers (Sakyamuni, Confucius, Laotze and Jesus Christ) from their respective religious organisations:[78]

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[75] Isomae Jun'ichi, *Religious Discourse in Modern Japan: Religion, State and Shintō*, (Kyoto: Nichibunken, 2014), 98.
[76] Ibid, 99.
[77] Religious scholar, Anesaki Masaharu, sought a different understanding of religion vis-à-vis the Protestant understanding from his experience as a child as a lay practitioner of Jōdo Shinshū Buddhism pre-Meiji and after his studies in Germany, during his time at Tokyo Imperial University. Ibid, 149-154.
[78] 'Sakyamuni' is the term used in Japan for the Shakyamuni Buddha 'Siddhārtha Gautama', and 'Laotze', legendary author of the Tao Te Ching, is also known as 'Laozi'. I use Arai's spellings for consistency.

> [W]e know Buddha through Father's works, and we believe his real teachings are as far different from that which is known as "Buddhism," as Christianity is from "Christianism." Christ taught by His life and work: so taught Buddha by his life, in his degree: so taught Confucius also, according to his genius. If Buddha was deep in spirituality, Confucius was great in humanity.[79]

He praised Buddha and Confucius for practicing their religions, not just by words but in action. Laotze, however, was merely a thinker in Arai's eyes, someone who lacked humanity, urging the "mere natural pacification of the ego," rather than a great religious practitioner — "He has no mind to shape words for practical ends of use… it is no religion."[80] Arai was rejecting institutional understandings of religion by declaring the great teachers as separate to their religious organisations. He used his understanding of God as Theos-Pantheos to interpret Confucius and the Buddha as manifestations of Jesus. By rejecting Laotze (and Taoism as a religion), Arai defines religion as requiring *practice* over doctrine. Arai's understanding of religion can appear 'syncretistic'. However, this implies an amalgam of ontologically distinct 'religions', whereas the Alternative Religion framework defies such clear boundaries. Regarding Confucius and the Buddha within a Christian worldview is not syncretistic, rather it is seeing religious teaching as being between discrete religions.[81] In tandem with the 'action-oriented' definition Arai used, and the idea of God as Theos-Pantheos, we can see a multiplicity and continuum of beliefs and ideas; wheresoever a follower falls on the continuum, they lie within the bounds of Arai's Alternative Reli-

[79] Arai Ōsui, letter to 'Dr Berridge', 6 June, 1895, *chosakushū*, 8-1, 24.
[80] Ibid, 23-25.
[81] See Viswanathan for further criticism of 'syncretism'. Idem, "Literacy and Conversion in the Discourse of Hindu Nationalism" in: Needham, Anuradha Dingwaney and Sunder Rajan, Rajeswari (eds.) *The Crisis of Secularism in India*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 338, 353.

gion if they apply their system of knowledge to focus on *action*, *practice* and *doing good*.

The emphasis on doctrine and belief in religious studies, as with Locke's and the Meiji state's division of religious-secular spheres, has obscured alternative movements such as Arai's, as they fit with neither the strictly political nor secular, nor what was seen as the religious. By upstaging this particularistic definition of religion that relies on faith, ritual or belief thus far used to determine religious movements, Arai's alternative religious movement can be disclosed. Throughout this paper, I elucidate how the actions of Arai and his followers are linked together through this alternative movement, rather than the independent actors in extant narratives.

CHAPTER 2

Bi-sexuality: Society Reimagined in a Twain-in-One God

> Now we are shown the way of the bi-sexuality of man... His thought, sense, spirit and form will be all the man, and will be a woman as well — a one-twain. And when a woman shall be fully evolved by the law of Throughness in the Divine Form, she will be all the woman, and will be a man as well — a one-twain. This doctrine, though incredible to the mind of the natural man, is as true and absolute as the Law of God... Let them change the attitude, change the motion, and hold every thing by the right end, then they can behold That-Which-Is, Christus-Christa, Man-Woman, the One-Twain God.[82]

Arai used his alternative religious philosophy — the idea of a bi-sexual God — to put into practice his ideas of sexual equality in education and resisting the appropriation of education for the evils of war.[83] Rather than isolating himself from society and establishing his own commune based on Harris' teachings, Arai sought to change society through education and continued to lead a simple life focused on *practice*. In the context of the Russo-Japanese War Period (1902-1907),[84] there were numerous competing ideas of what Japanese society should look like, and what constituted modernity and progress considering the Meiji state's increasing push for integration in the system of international relations.[85]

This chapter uses Alternative Religion to explore hidden 'traditional' and 'Christian' sources of knowledge opposing Meiji nation-building activities. It does this by

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[82] Arai Ōsui, *Second Book of Fragments, chosakushū*, 1-2, 144-145.
[83] I use Arai's term "bi-sexual" in this dissertation, meaning God is of both sexes. As Arai was writing before the terminological distinction between 'sex' and 'gender', we must interpret his meaning as being linked to masculinity and femininity as well as physiological distinctions of sex.
[84] The war itself was 1904-1905, but for the purposes of this paper I am examining the timeframe before, during and after the Russo-Japanese War.
[85] See: Konishi, *Anarchist Modernity*, 7-8.

examining how Arai's idea of God as bi-sexual informed his writing on women's education and his opposition to war. I first discuss Arai's writing and actions regarding education, then his opposition to war articulated through non-Western, non-Eastern Alternative Religion representing a different imagination of progress and society — one that emphasises spiritual progression, founded on equality of men and women, and equality among mankind.

Education and Bi-sexuality

Writing in the journal *Nihonjin* in January 1904, Arai expounds his educational philosophy.[86] For him, the true purpose of education was to learn *shinsen*.[87] *Shinsen* is Arai's term for the fight alongside God to which each person must commit on a daily basis, composed of the character *shin* (God) and *sen* (fight). It refers to the fight to annihilate one's own desire and anger (*yokudo no senmetsu*), by which a person can then practice goodness, benevolence and virtue, as well as humility and selflessness.[88] He reiterates throughout the piece that "*shinsen* should not stop," emphasising the importance of spiritual learning in education, to proceed along the way to a state of *yūshin muga* (Godfull, Selfless).[89] In this sense, Arai was teaching a spiritual basis for educating children, rather than teaching children 'moral' lessons or proselytising. His reasoning lay in his notion of knowledge as innate, through the "Indwelling Reason," therefore had to be continually teased out of people rather than taught, requiring

[86] Arai Ōsui, "Kyōiku seinen," *Nihonjin*, 203 in *chosakushū*, 8-14, 181.
[87] Ibid, 181.
[88] Throughout his writing he uses the Confucian vocabulary of good (*zen*), benevolence (*gi*) and virtue (*toku*).
[89] 'Muga' often means the 'denial of self' in Buddhism, or 'rising above self' but as Arai rejected 'the nihilism of Buddhism' for active self-sacrifice, it seems 'selfless' — connoting placing others before oneself — more accurately describes Arai's intended meaning.

multi-generational education based on experiential learning.[90] He argues, not through explanations or instruction can things be learned, but through observation, through which the knowledge within you can come forth. Arai's understanding of education, therefore, is opposed to that of state intellectuals such as Inoue Tetsujirō (1855-1944) of Tokyo Imperial University who advocated rote learning of national morals.[91]

> *Knowledge is inherent in man*: it comes to existence in him from the Indwelling Reason. It evolves through the flow of reason to that point, there the Divine Light converges upon man… The feeling of pain in the nerve, suggests growth of force in man, and he acquires therefrom fortitude to hold: here he has come to know one thing. The seeing of the flight of a bird in air, suggests to him the laws of gravitation and levitation, and he wakes to an ascensive thought: here he has come to understand another thing.[92]

The quote elucidates why he emphasised achieving spiritual peace as the foundation of learning, rather than doctrinal elements or instructional methods. He equates *knowledge* to God: the "Indwelling Reason" is part of God within each person, and to know something is to know God. This concept also partly informs why Arai focused on pre-natal learning, to lay a spiritual environment best suited for a child to draw out their inherent knowledge. Education did not start at birth, but before birth through nurturing the mother in becoming child-like before God herself, becoming receptive to God, as well as being able to practice goodness — not doctrinal instruction. He draws this back to *shinsen*, as the mother too must commit fully to the spiri-

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[90] This bares similarity, but was unconnected, to the Free Education Movement, who moved the emphasis in the word *kyōiku* (education) from *kyō* (to teach) to *iku* (to nourish) — from *KYŌiku* to *kyōIKU* — to maximise the nourishment of individuals, rather than teach national morals. Konishi, *Anarchist Modernity*, 331-332.
[91] Konishi, *Anarchist Modernity*, 331.
[92] Arai Ōsui, *Inward Prayer and Fragments*, 1896, in: Idem, *chosakushū*, 1, 30-31. Emphasis in original.



Figure 1. Calligraphy by Arai Ōsui. Aikyō nijiichi (Love and respect for Twain-in-One). Idem, Koseki Taiheiji Archive, in: Arai Ōsui Chosakushū, bekkan.

tual fight, through which she can follow the right way, as a sheep and lamb for a virtuous education.[93] His actions reflected his writings, as he was directly involved with Iwamoto Zenji's (1863-1942) Meiji Jogakkō, not as a teacher but an advisor and journal contributor.[94] He also opened the Kenwasha (his teaching dormitory) as a kindergarten, inviting mothers and young children to meet fortnightly. In doing, so he was contributing to the multi-generational education of the girls at the school by seeking to educate their parents and grandparents in spiritual matters, which for him involved a practical element.

In addition to promoting experiential, multi-generational education, Arai made deliberate efforts to be involved in educating women. Since his initial encounter with Russian Orthodox Christianity via Nikolai in Hokkaido, one of the things drawing Arai to Jesus' teachings was the notion of equality. What Harris preached and Arai understood was that God is "bi-sexual" — of both sex — referred to as the (Divine) Twain-in-One, or *ichijini, nijiichi* when writing in Japanese as in figure 1. He wrote that the love felt by men and women for each other is the love of God within each person.[95]

[93] Ibid, *chosakushū*, 8-14, 185.
[94] The school also received advice and lectures from Uchimura Kanzō, and many of Arai's connections to artists and intellectuals were through the school. It deserves a study in its own right. For a study in Japanese see: Fujita Yoshimi, *meiji jogakkō no sekai*.
[95] Arai Ōsui, *Second Book of Fragments*, *chosakushū*, 1-2, 130-148.

For Arai, the meaning of a bi-sexual God had important practical consequences — in this case, educating girls.

What Arai showed here was a radically different and opposing educational philosophy compared to late-Meiji discourse. He was outraged by the popular rhetoric of *ryōsai kenbō* (good wife, wise mother) that characterised the way women were educated. It was for preparing women for a secondary role in supporting their husbands and sons, who were idealised as serving the interests of the state in industry and war. Arai used the logic of a bi-sexual God to reject the relegation of women in industrial society, as evident in Arai's calligraphy in figure 2, below. The dividing of the sexes' educations for the purposes of what Arai called *nikusatsu ketsubatsu* (lit. flesh killing, blood chopping — a graphic phrase meaning the utilisation of men for fighting and killing in war, connoting slaughtering people as animals), was an "unforgivable evil."[96] Education for war does not achieve equality, nor does it help people with their spiritual fight to rid themselves of selfishness, anger and desire, to practice goodness in their lives. He objected to the polarisation of boys and girls' educations, so in response to *ryōsai kenbo*, Arai proposed in 1904 that "if the purpose of educating girls is to create *ryōsai kenbo*, then the purpose of educating boys should be for *ryōfu kenfu* (good husband, wise father)."[97] Education for the strength of the nation was no education at all, and worse it was turning men of the world against each other, training them only to practice the art of *nikusatsu ketsubatsu*.[98]

[96] Arai Ōsui, Jikken kyōju shishin, 2(11), in *chosakushū*, 8-22, 384.
[97] Ibid, 2-2, 217.
[98] Ibid, 8-22, 385.



Figure 2. Calligraphy by Arai Ōsui. *Zaiten no chichihaha wa shijo o sutezu* (Our Heavenly Father-Mother discards not daughters). Idem, *Arai Ōsui Kōroku*, 1, iii.

Arai's ideas of equality grounded in the spiritual world were not limited to sexual equality: he advocated human equality expressed through criticism of the Imperial Constitution. Article three of which secures the Emperor's place in a State Shinto hierarchy, stating that "the Emperor is scared and inviolable," to which Arai respond-

ed "humans are sacred and inviolable, not just the Emperor. *All* of humanity is sacred and inviolable."[99] Again, his objections to inequalities in Meiji society were founded in something different. He had no connection to European socialism and never mentioned ideas of class conflict or other Marxist interpretations of the world — all of his critique came from his Alternative Religion.[100] His source of knowledge lay in God as Twain-in-One, which he used as evidence for why humans are equal, and why men and women are part of the same spiritual struggle, and should not be misled for the government's nation-building projects. This is a case of a belief system being interpreted in an alternative way for criticising the Meiji government's attempt to become a civilised nation. His idea of civilisation is wholly different to the state's, one based in cultivating the spiritual in each person, not for national glory and industrial prowess. Religion for Arai was not abstract teachings or doctrines, but the action-orientated, physical manifestation of practice, indicated in this case by his efforts regarding education.

Fighting Fleshly War with Spiritual War

In the context of the First Sino-Japanese War, and preceding the Russo-Japanese War, sacrificing individuals for the well-being of the nation was cheered on by newspapers, politicians and popular rhetoric.[101] Colonising Korea was seen as essential for the safety of the nation to prevent further Russian expansion.[102] This section examines Arai's

[99] Ibid, 6-5, 269; 6-6, 446. Emphasis added in my translation.
[100] Senoue links Harris to European socialism due to his time spent in London. He then extends this to Arai uncritically. Idem, *Meiji no suēdenborugu*, 22-36.
[101] See: Sandra Wilson, "The Russo-Japanese War and Japan: Politics, Nationalism and Historical Memory" in: Wells, David and Wilson, Sandra (eds.) *The Russo-Japanese War in Cultural Perspective, 1904-05*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1999), 175-182.
[102] Supported by the British Empire through the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, to stop British as well as Japanese anxiety about a Russian rail link to the Sea of Japan. Ibid, 6-7.

opposition to war in the early Russo-Japanese War period, elucidating an overlooked intellectual basis for opposing state violence. "War is a crime. It is a great crime. From any position, it is absolutely unforgivable."[103] So starts Arai's article entitled *The Crime of War*, a violently rhetorical piece outlining his uncompromising attitude towards international conflict, published in late 1903 in the build-up to the Russo-Japanese War. However, according to Arai, fighting itself (*tatakai*) is a right for every member of humanity, but only in their fight for survival and fight for spiritual development. Arai describes all people as soldiers, not just the ones in the military, each of whom are engaged in their own fight between good and evil which is both "over in an instant and everlasting" — these people are the "true soldiers (*shingunjin*)."[104] Conversely, fighting in wars is not only wrong and evil, but ineffective.[105] The soldiers who fight in wars are merely learning the art of *nikusatsu ketsubatsu*, for what he describes as a fleshly fight (*nikusen*), as opposed to a spiritual fight (*shinsen*) for salvation. Here, Arai presents his opposition to war using the language of violence; on one hand, encouraging people to engage in a spiritual fight in their own lives, while castigating fleshly fighters engaging in brutal murder for national purposes.

As Sho Konishi identifies Tolstoyism as a turn towards neither Western assimilation nor nationalist Pan-Asianism, but an anti-hierarchical moral society beyond either school. Arai's alternative religious movement also fails to fit the dichotomy. He too was presenting an alternative imagination of society based in spiritual refinement

[103] Arai Ōsui, "Sensō no zaiaku," *Jikken kyōju shishin*, 2:11, in *chosakushū*, 8-22, 383. My translation of *zaiaku* as 'crime' rather than 'sin' is due to Arai's frequent evocation of 'law' in a religious context.
[104] Ibid, 8-22, 384.
[105] Ibid, 8-22, 383.

of each person through a sustained and generational effort through spiritual work.[106] Moreover, the idea of Western liberalism as the source of resistance to nationalism and conservatism fails to account for, and draws attention away from, Arai and his followers — he relied on Confucian and Christian thought as equally valid counters to nationalism and war hysteria in late-Meiji Japan.[107] He drew on Mencius, citing the moral bankruptcy of the state, claiming that a government with such weak and incompetent officials who seek to solve humanitarian issues (*jindō mondai*) through military force is no government at all.[108] He also uses *shinsen* and an alternative imagination of cause and effect, with a focus on human life and development, not 'national progress'.

Thus, in opposing the coming Russo-Japanese War, Arai's argument against *nikusatsu ketsubatsu* also draws on ideas of multi-generational cause and effect, that doing harm to another person will result in harm to yourself, somewhat comparable to Karma in Buddhism. Arai sees a temporal aspect in this warning, using filial piety to make his initial point.

> If I kill another's father, they will kill my father. Therefore, killing another's father is akin to patricide… Needless to say, it is a diabolical sin. It is true you can force submission by killing someone's family members, but this is temporary. This is not true submission. You will get your just reward. It might come in a lifetime, or within two or three generations. It could come late or early, or soon or far, but it will definitely come.[109]

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[106] Konishi, *Anarchist Modernity*, 99. For a full discussion of Tolstoyism see: Idem, chapter 2.
[107] Konishi also discusses how Western descriptions and categorisations of Japanese political movements, such as 'liberalism' or 'conservatism' have contributed to obscuring cooperatist anarchist practices. In the same way, these labels have obscured Arai's alternative religious movement. See Idem, *Anarchist Modernity*, 15.
[108] Arai Ōsui, *chosakushū*, 8-22, 384
[109] Ibid, 8-22, 385.

As with his argument for multi-generational education, he saw the actions of your ancestors as affecting you, they influence your innate knowledge and you must commit to fighting in your daily-life to guide yourself and your descendants towards goodness, away from evil. The starting block in life changes depending on your parents and grandparent's actions, hence his emphasis on educating mothers as well as girls and boys, and in this case on how an individual's actions, namely violence, will impact their own family — an appeal to a peaceful society based in spiritual reciprocity, and the desire to protect one's own descendants from harm by doing good in one's own life. National objectives such as security and pride are irrelevant to Arai, as killing only leads to more killing. Using this argument, Arai emphasised the uselessness of attempting to solve humanitarian issues with military force. No matter how 'secure' Japan could become by colonising Korea, or stopping the Russians leasing Port Arthur, committing violence will lead to more violence.

He reiterates his point by supplying an anecdote taken from a serialisation about the Franco-Prussian War, showing the futility revenge, how the wife of a soldier killed in battle sought revenge by killing her husband's killer, whose widow sought her own revenge by trying to kill the first wife.[110] While the two widows managed to resolve their dispute with words, for Arai, their husbands' murders illustrates the pointlessness and evil of war. Neither side could be said to be "saintly," but as Arai points out, each side must believe they are saints opposing the virtueless.[111] However, both engage in *nikusatsu ketsubatsu*, so neither side is practicing goodness, and both are

[110] Arai Ōsui, *chosakushū*, 8-22, 387-389.
[111] Ibid, 8-22, 385.

wrong. If you are a "saint" Arai asks, then why would you be concerned with such people?[112] To stop state conflict from continuing, Arai suggests making soldiers take their families to the battlefield. After the initial bloodshed which would be worse than before, and once everyone realises how evil war is, the killing could stop and people could live peacefully.[113]

Arai's rhetorical method relies on an emotional response to family, filial piety and violence itself. The way Arai uses violent vocabulary as a way of opposing war carries through to the very idea of *shinsen*. More than opposing war on moralistic appeals to the goodness in human beings, he repeatedly stresses the need for fighting in everyday life. As with much of Arai's writing, he is using Confucian ideas about family and human relations to articulate his own religious philosophy of practicing goodness through sustained labours in daily life. Neither a purely Christian nor (Neo-) Confucian source of war critique, Arai's criticism stems from something outside of East-West, or Western liberal verses Pan-Asianist bifurcations, finding moral problems with war in all the schools of thought he drew upon. This challenges the idea that opposition to Japanese imperialism came from a small group of "enlightened Western thinkers," who relied on their Christianity as the basis of opposition to war.[114]

This chapter showed how Arai's alternative vision of society, critical of the state's education and war policies, lie between extant categories and is irreducible to

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[112] Ibid, 8-22, 385.
[113] Ibid, 8-22, 385.
[114] Never mind that (Christian) Western newspapers and leaders praised Japan for colonising Korea and joining the club of nation-states, so the assumption that Christian values were the whole basis of the Nonwar or anti-war movements in Japan is disingenuous at best. The Nonwar Movement, comprised of several Christian voices, was seen as the leading opposition to Japan's accelerating military action in Korea and China, using the Heimin Shinbun as a major platform for their anarchist and socialist themes. Konishi discusses Japanese-Russian intellectual relations in this period for a more balanced understanding of Nonwar attitudes vis-à-vis the Russo-Japanese War. Idem, 142-148.

either Eastern or Western thought. Through Alternative Religion, the multiplicity of his ideas on civilisation and progress in the Russo-Japanese War Period can be unfolded. We can then see that Arai's varied epistemological inputs form a cohesive envisioning of a society based on spiritual development and equality, not a syncretic conflating of 'traditional' and 'modern' values.

CHAPTER 3

An Alternative Religious Movement

The people following Arai lend this chapter its focus. Using Alternative Religion to examine Arai's network, relationships with Arai become influential connections. I discover Arai as an influential religious figure in environmental protest and art, who can change our interpretations of the period, but has been overlooked due to frames of analysis using East-West bifurcations that obscured Arai as a significant historical actor in the Russo-Japanese War Period. This chapter shows Arai as nodal figure in an alternative religious movement who influenced Tanaka Shōzō's later life, and impacted the way artists Takamura Kōtarō and Ogiwara Rokuzan saw life, beauty and religion.

The Kenwasha: Arai's Network

Arai opened the Kenwasha (House of Humility and Harmony) in Sugamo, Tokyo one month after the Russo-Japanese War started in 1904, where he lived until his death in 1922. It was a *juku* (teaching dormitory) where Arai boarded around twelve young men, quietly writing in the first-floor room and receiving numerous visitors (see figure 3). Arai did not preach to his followers. Instead, a group of people formed and met at the Kenwasha monthly of their own volition to discuss his writing, calling themselves the Taikakai (Society of Great Harmony).[115] Before the Kenwasha's establishment, Arai spent five years relying on the kindness of people he met to host him in their homes, writing the entire time for whomsoever would like to read what he had

[115] Taikakai Pamphlets are in: *chosakushū*, 8-24, 457-476.

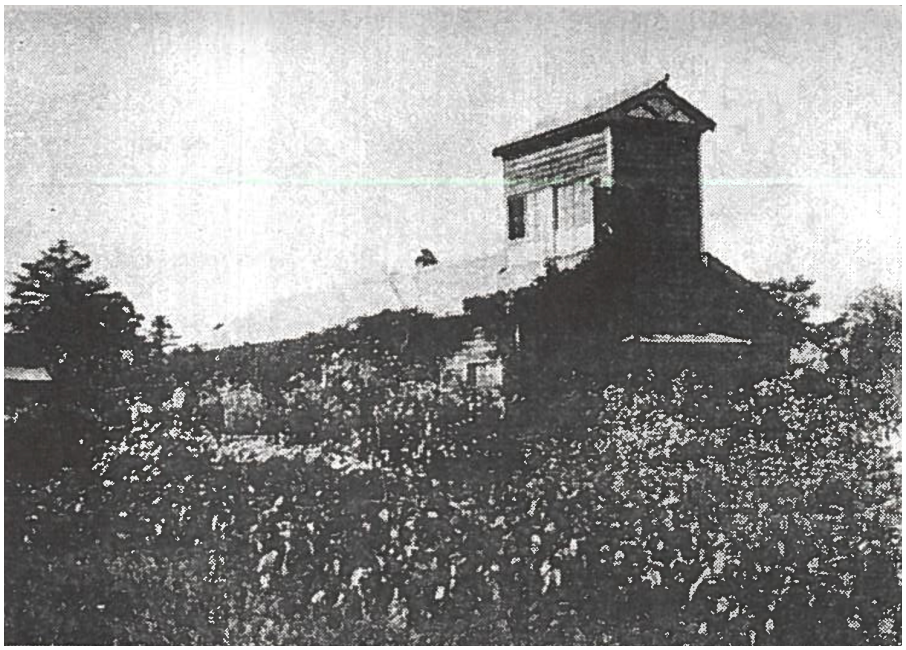

Figure 3. The Kenwasha, Arai Ōsui's room is visible on the first floor.
Uncredited, *Arai Ōsui Kōroku*.

to say, gradually building a following of readers and admirers. Initially, he lived in Takano Takenori's (1854-1919) residence, who Arai had been following whilst still in California.[116] As the head of the High Court of Justice, Takano made international news in 1897 for uncovering corruption, and accusing the Japanese officials and soldiers of unlawful activity in newly-annexed Taiwan. He was subsequently dismissed, but took his case to court causing further controversy. This resonated with Arai as someone who fought against the Meiji government, and brought a newspaper clipping of the incident from California to Japan, going straight to Takano to stay with him in Tokyo.[117] After his itinerant period, an admirer of Arai's, Yokohama merchant Hiranuma Enjirō (birth-death unknown), paid for the Kenwasha to be built according

[116] Arai favourably compares Takano to Tanaka Shōzō for his criticism of the Imperial Constitution in: *Dokushadoku, chosakushū*, 1-4, 150-151.
[117] Senoue, 214.

to Arai's request, so he could have somewhere to live and provide accommodation for up to twenty people to live and study.

What sets Arai apart from his contemporary Christians in Japan was not joining or founding any church or Christian society, nor preaching his own religious beliefs in public. Instead, his humble attitude won him many favours and great respect. By practicing extreme humility (he requested not to have a gravestone), people around him went to the lengths of building a place for him to live and encouraging people to interact with his ideas, even though Arai himself was unenthusiastic about teaching directly, preferring to write in his room or have quiet discussions one-on-one.[118] This chapter charts how Arai's non-state tendencies, his aversion to hierarchies, and philosophy of daily practice founded in ideas of God are found in the writings and actions of Tanaka Shōzō, Takamura Kōtarō and Ogiwara Rokuzan.[119] This is an overlooked corner of history. These individuals have not been linked together in such a concrete way before: as part of an alternative religious movement. This chapter focuses on how looking at Arai helps us reinterpret these three figures to demonstrate how they were involved in non-state activities, and had an alternative imagination of society to the dominant late-Meiji discourse, an imagination which nevertheless represents a significant movement overlooked in Japan's modern history.

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[118] This image of Arai was recounted in an interview of Kudō Naotarō, Kenwasha student from 1918-1922, who was a scholar of English literature and later translated Arai's *Prayers and Fragments* into Japanese. He was present in Arai's later years, so it is unclear whether Arai was more willing to be directly involved when the kenwasha was founded. *Arai Ōsui kōroku*, bekkan, 3-35.

[119] Numerous prominent people in late-Meiji society interacted with Arai, but the aim here is not to exhaustively examine those under Arai's influence, but to reinterpret some key figures from the time period. For a list of Taikakai members see: *chosakushū*, 8-24, 461.

Shinsen in Yanaka: Tanaka Shōzō and Alternative Religion

Tanaka Shōzō is known as a liberal politician and environmentalist who was drawn towards Christianity in his later life.[120] Due to Tanaka's detailed diary, he is perhaps one of the best sources of evidence for Arai's Alternative Religion, as he documented his practice, and changed his appeals to God according to Arai's teachings in his writing. As I defined Alternative Religion for Arai as being based on action and practice over specific doctrines or belief, it is apparent that Arai and Tanaka were part of the same alternative religious movement, which without this lens is hard to recognise.

Anger with the failures of the state brought Tanaka and Arai together, becoming acquainted following Tanaka's public protest over the pollution in Yanaka village in the failed *jikiso* to the Meiji Emperor in December 1901. The *jikiso* attracted widespread media attention and intellectual comment. Arai's article could be seen as just one voice in a mêlée, except that it was published in the journal *Nihonjin*, to which Tanaka was also a contributor. Head of the Meiji Jogakkō, Iwamoto Zenji, arranged a meeting between Tanaka and Arai, who did not immediately get along, with Arai reserved and contemplative to Tanaka's forthright nature, but they clearly saw something in each other.[121] Tanaka's interest in Jesus blossomed via Arai's interpretation of religion, such as annihilating greed and desire*, yūshin muga* (Godfull, *S*elfless) and *chichihaha* [*kami*] ([Our Lord] Father-Mother) which began appearing in Tanaka's diaries, as well as a clear indication of him taking Arai's concept of *shinsen* to heart.[122]

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[120] Robert Stolz makes the case for reconsidering Tanaka as a "liberal" in *Bad Water*, 62-66.
[121] Senoue, 215; Arai told Tanaka that due to his "sheer excess of activity" he would become neurotic and should go to the hospital immediately — which Tanaka did not appreciate. Corl and Kim, 28; He reflected on this in his diary eleven years later, concluding that Arai was in fact right, and he was grateful to his *sensei*. Strong, 146-147.
[122] See: Stolz, for Tanaka's diary excerpt, 107.

Tanaka was practicing *shinsen* as Arai taught in his later life and writings. Learning scripture or participating in church services was shunned by Arai and Tanaka alike. In his diary in June 1911, Tanaka castigated conventional believers in Christianity and church attendees as nothing more than "armchair theorists" who were far from the true form of religion, as it required no courage (*yūki*) to just worship God far away from polluted places; implying only through a physical engagement with problems, such as pollution, could someone truly practice religion. The idea of Christ atoning for all humanity's sins in his crucifixion was fanciful, rather, each person had to continue that fight against anger and desire in their daily lives.[123] This echoes Arai's teachings, particularly *shinsen* and *muga*. Only by fighting against worldly problems, which for Tanaka was fighting pollution in an act of selflessness by physically going to live in Yanaka village and learn from the villagers, could he commit to the spiritual fight. Tanaka, therefore, devoted all his later life to *shinsen*, ensuring his daily life was focused on helping the Yanaka villagers through his own labour. He idealised them as being advanced in their spiritual development, noting that unknowingly to them, God resided within them, as their daily sacrifices and spiritual labour was so intense due to the immense hardship they endured on a daily basis just to live in Yanaka.[124]

Tanaka's remark that he could see God residing within people is another concept from Arai in the vocabulary of Twain-in-One (*ichijini, nijiichi*). The term itself refers to several ideas about God. Firstly, that there is no distinction between God and Jesus Christ. Jesus was part of God on earth, subsequently returning to God. Secondly,

[123] Senoue, 220.
[124] Tanaka Shōzō, *zenshū*, 5-188. See also Stolz, 107 for a different interpretation of this diary entry relating to Tanaka's concept of *nagare* (flow).

God as bi-sexual. Thirdly, the male and female parts of God form part of humans themselves, God is both "dwelling in the human creature" as well as in "Christus, Christa."[125] Properly practicing *shinsen* is essential for the goodness to manifest within a person, as this allows the God within someone to flourish and enables a person to do God's work, fighting alongside God through their labours.[126] When Tanaka said he saw God within the Yanaka villagers, it was precisely because of their efforts against all odds to live in deplorable conditions, in the remains of their dismantled houses. Their inner God was visible from more than enduring hardship, which Tanaka complained about when he lived in the same conditions, but that they did so without complaint, in apparent peacefulness.[127] The Yanakans in their labours, suffering and hardship were the ultimate exemplars of goodness and virtue for Tanaka, a practical and experiential realisation of God in the most wretched of places.

Biographers of Tanaka regard such events and statements as his own muddled conception of a religious philosophy.[128] Kenneth Strong even states that "the truths he was now glimpsing could only be apprehended as they were lived out situationally," regarding Tanaka's failure to crystallise any particular, specific religion or philosophical approach.[129] However, if we see Tanaka as being part of a movement with Arai, as someone who was willing to devote his remaining life to *shinsen*, it is clear he was practicing Alternative Religion. For Tanaka, it was the action *itself* that was religious,

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[125] Arai Ōsui, *chosakushū*, 1-2, 146. In this instance Arai is quoting T.L. Harris' work *The Holy City and the Light therein*, from c.1880, but written by Arai in 1896, published in 1897. He later explains these points in Japanese in *Jogaku Zasshi* regarding education and spiritual health on 15 January 1901, "Kanyoroku" in: Idem, 8-17, 284.
[126] Again this has parallels with Andō Shōeki's 'direct action', and Rangaku scholars' 'art of compassionate healing'.
[127] Tanaka, 5-188, in Stolz, 107.
[128] See: Strong, 148.
[129] Ibid, 148. See Stolz, 106-116 for a concrete interpretation of Tanaka's philosophy.

not the teaching or specific doctrines, on which a conventional religious study would concentrate.

Robert Stolz identifies Tanaka's later work as being a thesis on the idea of flow (*nagare*), based on natural freedom and equality in nature, equating restricting nature — hindering the flow of water — to constricting the natural *nagare* of human freedom, which could even result in death and could eventually destroy Japan.[130] Indeed, Tanaka's thesis based on nature and universal principles, unreliant on the nation-state, subverts and exists beyond Japan itself. However, Stolz describes this as a Taoist understanding of the world and humans, inflected with "Arai's Swedenborgian theology and its teaching of taking up the cross in daily life."[131] While his identification of particular aspects of Tanaka's philosophy is valid, he fails to make the intellectual leap of identifying this as a religious movement. Tanaka related his own ideas about nature and freedom via *nagare*, to Arai's proactive encouragement for redemptive labour through *shinsen*. Within the bounds of Alternative Religion, this constitutes a movement — Tanaka's entire outlook was indeed a culmination of his own diverse observations and thoughts, but the actions he took to practice goodness and realise his goals were through *shinsen* — a concerted effort to practice religion the way Arai taught.[132]

Hence, before Tanaka settled on *chisui* (what Stolz calls "natural water management"),[133] we can see his own *sanmu kyōkai* (Three Nothings Church)[134] as fitting

[130] Stolz, 109.
[131] Ibid, 111.
[132] Arai himself noted that Tanaka was always carrying out his thoughts. See: Senoue, 226.
[133] Stolz, 112.
[134] The 'three nothings' are: "No selfishness, no prices, no literature." Tanaka, 6-279, in: Ibid, 112.

within the same alternative religious movement as Tanaka's effort to "systematise Yanakagaku and rebuild a *daily practice* of nature based on a sense of value different from the nation, capitalism or mere aesthetics."[135] Both are ways of putting *shinsen* into practice, articulated through his own attempt at making a conventional religious movement. It is telling that he abandoned the conspicuously religious aspect of his philosophy by settling on natural water management, that 'the religious' was already satisfied by being part of Arai's Alternative Religion. Establishing a church was unneeded, as what he was practicing before and later rearticulated as natural water management were both *shinsen*, and confirm the idea of *yūshin muga* — Tanaka undoubtedly strove to be Godfull, Selfless.

Alternative Religion in Art

Several still-famous artists were drawn to Arai Ōsui. Takamura Kōtarō and Ogiwara Rokuzan being prime examples.[136] Both were captivated by French sculptor Auguste Rodin's (1840-1917) *The Thinker*, and both wrestled with 'modern' Western art forms and 'traditional' Japanese thought.[137] Kōtarō is known more for his poetry, and Rokuzan as a "Western-style sculptor."[138] As so-called Western artists, it is unsurprising how both found solace in Arai's writings as a negation of an East-West conflict in practicing art. *Dokushadoku*, Arai's first collected work published after his return to Japan, was avidly consumed by Kōtarō, becoming a seminal influence in his own

[135] Stolz, 112. Emphasis added.
[136] Ogiwara Rokuzan's given name was Ogiwara Morie, but I refer to him by his professional name, Rokuzan, in this paper.
[137] See: Hirakawa Sukehiro. "Takamura Kōtarō's Love-Hate Relationship with the West," *Comparative Literature Studies* 26:3, (1989) 214-33; Andō Yasuhiko, *Nihon kindai shiron: Takamura Kōtarō no kenkyū*, (Tokyo: Meiji Shōin, 2001), 3-37; Yuhara Kanoko, *Takamura Kōtarō: Chieko to asobu mugen no sei*, (Tokyo: Mineruva Shobō, 2003); Ogiwara and Sugii, *Rokuzan Nikki*.
[138] See: Penelope Mason, *History of Japanese Art*, (New York: Abrams, 1993), 384-385.

work, evident in his writing *On Beauty* (*Bi nitsuite*), poetry, and translations of Rodin entitled *Rodan no kotoba*.

Kōtarō studied fine art at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, graduating in 1902 before going to New York in 1906 and London in 1907, finally returning to Japan in 1909. He was first acquainted with Arai in the years preceding his travels abroad, and held close Arai's concept of the relation between 'words' and 'the way' (*kotoba to michi*) — meaning the relationship between 'expression' and 'practice'.[139] The short passage in *Dokushadoku* explains how *kotoba* and *michi* are life's ultimate truth from heaven.[140] *Kotoba* only has meaning through 'the way', that is, the truth of life is through the practice of expression. As Arai discredited Laotze as a religious figure for being a man of words only, he goes further to claim that words or expressions are meaningless without practice. Both what the words *are*, and what the practice *is*, is open, but without both, life cannot be comprehended.[141] Arai communicates this further through his expression *nichiyō jōkō*, utilising Neo-Confucian vocabulary to rearticulate "THE USE" from communal life in America.[142] Arai states that "the truth of life (*inochi no jitsu*) bears no separation from the way of daily life (*michi no seikatsu*)," reiterating the oneness of expression-practice.[143] Kōtarō used *nichiyō jōkō/kotoba to michi* as a function of artistic expression and practice, committing himself to eliminating the distinction in his work. In his first collection of poetry, *Dōtei* (The

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[139] See Kitagawa Taichi "Arai Ōsui to geijutsutachi" in Arai Ōsui sensei kinenkai (eds) *Arai Ōsui o yomitoku*, 152-158.
[140] Arai Ōsui, *chosakushū*, 1-4, 53.
[141] Kitagawa infers that, 'kotoba' must mean the words of Jesus Christ, although as Arai is not explicit, as he demonstrated his openness to Confucian and Buddhist paths to goodness, I interpret it as being flexible for Arai's readers to fit within their own ideas of 'the way' and 'expression'.
[142] For discussions on THE USE and *nichiyō jōkō* see: Senoue, 56; Daniel Corl, "nichiyō jōkō" in: *Arai Ōsui o yomitoku*, 101.
[143] Arai Ōsui, *chosakushū*, 5-3, 63.

Journey),[144] Kōtarō applies the furigana (phonetic markers) *kotoba* to the character for *michi* when referring to the way each person can lead a healthy life, finding their "way" in our chaotic world, a clear effort to reconcile the expression-practice distinction using Arai's vocabulary.[145] Aside from these overt references to Arai's teachings, by acknowledging that Arai and Kōtarō were interacting, and by taking seriously Arai's impact on Kōtarō, much of his writing could be reinterpreted.

For example, consider Kōtarō's realisation of Rodin's artistic philosophy in Japanese. Demonstrating a multidirectional flow of knowledge, Kōtarō used understandings from Arai's teachings when translating Rodin, articulating an original aesthetic approach. In finding beauty in the work of ancient sculptors, Kōtarō's phrasing of beauty in relation to life, goodness and a spiritual link through time to those that came before, is articulating Rodin's ideas through his interpretation of Arai's teachings.[146] Kōtarō was still in his early career when he was framing his own and Rodin's ideas through Arai's teachings, so at that moment, one could regard Kōtarō as being part of Arai's Alternative Religion. Far from a simple process of "translating the West" into Japanese, Kōtarō engaged in a reimagining of life and art via Alternative Religion. By acknowledging Arai's impact on Kōtarō's translation, the flow of knowledge from "West to East" is disrupted, as Kōtarō the translator was using an understanding of life

[144] Published in 1914.
[145] Takamura Kōtarō, *Takamura Kōtarō, Miyazawa Kenji shū*, 38.
[146] See: Ibid, 220-222. See also: *Bi wa zen no bun* (*A passage of beauty is goodness*), 2-1, 121-122; *Seimei wa ai* (*Life is Love*), 2-1, 122-123.

outside of East and West, drawing on Arai's overlooked, separate system of knowledge.[147]

Friend and fellow artist to Kōtarō, Ogiwara Rokuzan, met Arai in 1900 through Iguchi Kigenji (1870-1938) of the Meiji Jogakkō, and as an avid reader of their *Jogaku Zasshi* publication.[148] This was one year before Rokuzan went back to New York, only returning to Japan in 1908 via Paris and London. Rokuzan frequently visited Arai, admiring his humility and teachings, and even after leaving Japan, he requested copies of Arai's writing to be delivered to him.[149] Sōma Kokkō (1876-1955), the owner of the famous sweetshop, Nakamura-ya, was from a samurai family in Sendai like Arai, and was herself educated at the Meiji Jogakkō.[150] She and her husband Sōma Aizō (1870-1954) patronised Rokuzan, and after he returned to Japan in 1908, built him a residence nearby, where he died two years later.[151] Despite spending as little as three years in Japan with Arai, but receiving deliveries of his writings whilst abroad, some of Arai's writing on life, beauty, goodness and humility appears in Rokuzan's work. Rokuzan echoed the close connection Arai drew between life itself and one's actions, stating that one's life and character are expressed within one's artwork, no matter the intention.[152] Through Arai's teachings, Rokuzan's aphorism, which became famous for

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[147] For further evidence of Arai's disruptive influence on breaking the idea of West to East flows of knowledge in translation, Yamakawa Heizaburō (1876-1942), student of Arai at the Kenwasha, and Japan's first translator of Dante's *Divine Comedy* needs examining.

[148] Rokuzan frequently references *Jogaku Zasshi* in his diaries. See: Ogiwara and Sugii (ed.), *Rokuzan Nikki*.

[149] Kitagawa, 158-159. Arai told Rokuzan not to go to America, as there was nothing for him to learn there; he went anyway.

[150] Author Nogami Yaeko (1885-1985) was also educated at the Meiji Jogakō and Arai makes an appearance as a character in her autobiographical final novel *Mori*. Idem, *Mori*, (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1985).

[151] Nakamura-ya was a nighttime hub for worldists and former Nonwar participants, including Takamura Kōtarō and Kinoshita Naoe, not unnoticed by the police. The Sōmas also cared for Vasilii Eroshenko (1890-1952), a blind Esperantist, and harboured Indian anticolonialist revolutionary Rash Bihari Bose (1886-1945). See: Sho Konishi, Translingual World Order: Language without Culture in Post-Russo-Japanese War Japan, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 72(1), 2013, 91-114.

[152] Ogiwara Morie, "danwa no issetsu" 1908, in: Kitagawa, *Arai Ōsui to geijutsutachi*, 166.

its romantic implication, "love is art, struggle is beauty," takes on new meaning.[153] As beauty (*bi*) and goodness (*zen*) are synonymous with God to Arai, the daily struggle to practice goodness for God is beauty.[154] With this background, "love is art, struggle is beauty" seems to refer more to Rokuzan's efforts to combine *expression* and *practice*, and to commit himself to that struggle for God in life, not a romantic saying. Previous studies have cited "the cult of Rodin" for finding origins and meanings for such phrases from Kōtarō and Rokuzan alike — placing them within a colonial narrative — but this overlooks the vast body of Arai's teachings with which both artists were interacting.[155]

Far from being a "Western style" sculptor whose influence was a result of self-colonisation of French culture, the intellectual foundation for Rokuzan's perspective was grounded in a non-West, non-East, non-state sphere, interacting with historical actors like Arai and the Sōmas who were far outside the 'West' and the Meiji establishment. His posthumously published diaries and the enduring popularity of his sculptures has thus far only been understood as "Western influence."[156] The irony of Rokuzan's legacy is that far from being treated as a non-state artist with close ties to people on the losing side of the Meiji Ishin, he is championed as "Japan's first modern sculptor" and two of his works are designated as Important Cultural Properties of Japan.[157]

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[153] See for romantic interpretation: Kida Kei, "Rokuzan no kotoba 'LOVE IS ART, STRUGGLE IS BEAUTY' no kōsatsu," *Seigakuin daigaku ronsō*, 6, (1994), 97-112.
[154] Arai Ōsui, *chosakushū*, 2-1, 121.
[155] See: Lee, "The cult of Rodin."
[156] See: Mason, *History of Japanese Art*, 384-385.
[157] Rokuzan Art Museum, exhibition poster, 2015.

The state has de-politicised Rokuzan's work by seeing only Western (and 'traditional') influence, thus making him an acceptable face of modern Japan, when in fact his worldview was also informed by interactions and experiences in Japan with people who envisioned and understood a wholly different society to the accepted narrative of national history. In this chapter, I showed how unfolding the space between East and West means the way Kōtarō and Rokuzan articulated Rodin's ideas in Japanese was through an alternative religious worldview acquired from Arai Ōsui. It indicates that two of Japan's earliest and most famous "Western" artists were not imitating the West, but remoulding ideas via a forgotten religious movement.

Conclusion

Interpreting Arai Ōsui's writing in this period without reevaluating the concept of religion leaves much of the significance behind. In this paper, I formulated Alternative Religion as an intellectual concept, and used it to uncover previously overlooked patterns of thought in the late-Meiji and Russo-Japanese War period. I made the intellectual leap from an ontologically bounded, hermetically sealed understanding of the interplay between belief, practice and religion, to Alternative Religion; a way of unfolding religion to find a multiplicity of meanings between the totalities of the Protestant-centred understanding of religion.

In formulating Alternative Religion, this paper introduced Arai and the alternative religious movement to Japan's historical narrative, demonstrating how changing the frame of analysis allows us to uncover ideas, histories, actors and movements. Arai was forgotten from the history of modern Japan, as was Andō Shōeki, the physicians at Juntendō; and the cooperatist-anarchist group, Chokkōdan, in Taisho Japan who were all non-state actors and organisations advocating practice and doing good.[158] As they were recently rediscovered, doing the same for Arai can contribute richly to our understanding of the non-state in this period. To unfold the alternative vision of society and human progress Arai presented, I discussed his religious basis for women's education, equality and war opposition. His use of violent vocabulary and both 'traditional' and 'Christian' sources of critique point towards a forgotten view of societal progression centred on spiritual development. Finally, I discussed

[158] Konishi, *Anarchist Modernity*, 337. Ibid, "The Emergence of an International Humanitarian Organization in Japan."

how Arai's disregard for private belief, and emphasis on practice, has historical consequence for Tanaka, Kōtarō and Rokuzan. It indicates a negation of West to East knowledge flows, and an epistemic background in Arai's concepts of *shinsen*, Twain-in-One and the unity of expression-practice. Accordingly, I used Alternative Religion to evince the connection between Tanaka, the artists and Arai. Numerous other actors, not included in this study but with connections to Arai, need to be investigated to further our understanding of this alternative religious movement's role in late-Meiji society, particularly those involved in the Meiji Jogakkō and the Kenwasha.[159]

As post-colonial scholarship still struggles to overcome the systems of knowledge that emerged from Western modernity, I hope that Alternative Religion can provide a starting point for new inquiry into religious movements without the shackles of Protestant coloniality.

[159] Such as Uchimura Kanzō (1861-1930), Kinoshita Naoe, and Yamakawa Heisaburō.

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