The human being : when philosophy meets history. Miki Kiyoshi, Watsuji Tetsuro and their quest for a New Ningen

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III. *NINGEN* AND SOCIETY
The Influence of Marxism in the 1930s

> Le scientisme est un cas particulier de l'aliénation ou de l'objectivation qui prive l'homme de sa réalité humaine et fait qu'il se confond avec les choses.[83]

The 1920s were the period when Marxism philosophically and politically flourished in Japan. Philosophically, its influence was felt in the numerous *ronsō*, or 'intellectual debates', that were being published in different journals. Politically, it was concretized in the advent of a new wave of Marxist followers affiliated with the Japanese Communist Party (JCP), first under the leadership of Yamakawa Hitoshi (1880-1958) and then Fukumoto Kazuo (1894-1983).

The role of Marxist philosophy is particularly important in the development of the concept of the human being both for Miki and Watsuji. As a matter of fact, it is with the introduction of Marxism that the shift from the historicizing of the mere human existence towards a historicizing of 'society' as a whole took place. Moreover, the teleological view of history that underpins Marxist philosophy had a great impact on the Japanese intellectuals of the time, since it provided a new theoretical framework for the writing of Japanese history. Thus, the topics of capitalist modernity, modernization and 'Westernization' began to be interpreted in different ways. For the Marxists, Marxism represented a tangible gateway from the conundrum 'feudalism-capitalist development' Japanese society was struggling with. The conservatives, on the other hand, saw Marxism as a real danger to the status quo that needed to be suppressed.

Miki and Watsuji reacted to these new intellectual trends in opposite ways. Miki remained fascinated with the ideas of 'historical materialism', 'class struggle', and 'ideology' and he made an attempt to create a Marxist 'third way', which synthesised existentialism and materialism together. Watsuji engaged in a philosophical discussion with the intellectual Kawakami Hajime (1879-1946) over the significance of historical and dialectical materialism and denied the social and political value of Marxist ideas.[84]

In this chapter I will show how Miki tried to create his 'third way' by conflating the philosophy of Pascal and Heidegger with Marxist materialism and how Miki's theory of the

[83] Merleau-Ponty 1963: 224.
[84] Kawakami was at that time professor of economics at Kyoto Imperial University.

human being as median prevented him from thoroughly understanding the concept of 'class' in Marxist philosophy. As a matter of fact, Miki still defines his *ningen* as 'medianic existence', where the totality and infinity of the Pascalian period will be substituted by logos and ideology. The human being, constrained between these two polarizing elements, will not be able to overcome them even in the context of the Marxist teleology of history. In addition, Miki's effort to reconcile religion and Marxism will naturally continue the discourse on the 'religion of the human being' begun in *Pascal*. Thus, medianity and religion will be considered as the two major factors that, on the one hand, produced a highly original interpretation of Marxism but that, on the other, practically baulked the creation of a Marxist theory *tout court*. As for Watsuji, Marxism could not but represent a threat to his definition of the human being as betweeness in his Japanese, harmonious society. As we shall see, Watsuji widely criticized the Marxist economic outlook on society because it eschewed the problems of societal ethics and morality. Furthermore, since in Watsuji the state represents the highest ethical and social structure, it was impossible for him to accept Marxism as a feasible political and social theory.

Although it might seem that Miki and Watsuji parted completely at this point in time, which partially corresponds to the truth, I attempt to show how this phase prepares the ground for the next stage of their careers. As a matter of fact, the leap from human existence to historical society ties the previous elaborations on the mere *human being* to its 'historical' role in *society*. In the next stage, with the introduction of philosophy of history, this society will become the nation and, in particular, the Japanese nation. Miki and Watsuji's constant concern in their entire philosophical systems remains the human being and its historical structure and formation, albeit in a different and, more ideological, form.

Marxism in Japan

Miki Kiyoshi, Tosaka Jun, Fukumoto Kazuo, Hani Gorō and others all belonged to the second generation of Japanese Marxists. The first generation, embodied in the figures of Yamakawa Hitoshi, Ōsugi Sakae (1885-1923), Arahata Kanson (1887-1981) and, to some extent, Kawakami Hajime, was still bound to the Taishō liberals' idea of *minponshugi*. These latter intellectuals were more oriented towards socialism and liberalism and they were not acquainted with the writings of Lenin, which were translated in Japanese only in 1921 (Duus and Schneider 1998: 182-3). As we shall see later, Kawakami represents an exception since his views on Marxism underwent a deep rethinking after 1924, when Fukumoto harshly criticized his theories on economics.

The JCP was funded in 1922 under the leadership of Yamakawa and his ideas of the 'change in direction' (*hōhō tenkan*) (Miyakawa 1976: 55).[85] The change towards a more radical proletarian revolution by the socialist-oriented intelligentsia signalled Yamakawa's own shift from a Meiji-style liberalism towards a clear Marxist revolutionary attitude (Duus and Schneider 1998: 195-6). The 'draft plan' (*kōryō sōan*) of Yamakawaism aimed at criticizing the anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists for having departed from the masses and to return, by means of the 'change in direction', to a 'massification' of the Japanese revolutionary movement (Miyakawa 1976: 57). Under the leadership of Yamakawa, the JCP found itself under attack from the Soviet Comintern later in 1922, which judged Japan as still backward and in need of a two-stage revolution due to the residuum of feudal elements lingering in its system (Hoston 1986: 65).

In 1926, Fukumoto Kazuo, upon his return from Germany, addressed a number of attacks at Yamakawa's Change in Direction. In Germany, Fukumoto had studied Marx and Lenin and had become acquainted with the recently published works of Georg Lukács (1885-1971), Karl Korsch (1886-1961) and Rosa Luxemburg (1870-1919) (Duus and Schneider 1998: 198-205). He had built his theoretical basis directly on Lenin's writings and he was at that time considered the most prominent intellectual in dialectical materialism, having introduced in Japan the difference between historical and dialectical materialism (Bernstein 1976: 135). His critique of Yamakawa was Lenin-oriented and aimed at stressing the role of the vanguard as an elite capable of guiding the proletarian revolution (Hoston 1986: 49).[86] Through this vanguard, the proletariat would have gained a sufficient class consciousness

[85] The full title of Yamakawa's article is: 'The Change in Direction of the Proletarian Movement' (*Musan kaikyū undō no hōhō tenkan*), written in 1922 (Iwasaki 1971: 30).

[86] Yamakawa had rejected the idea of an intellectual leadership of the proletariat and he had theorized that some members of the working class itself had to represent the 'vanguard' (Duus and Schneider 1998: 196).

capable of fulfilling the tasks of the revolution.[87] Unfortunately, in 1927, the Comintern published the infamous 'Theses on the Japan problem', where it judged Japan as still a semi-feudal state and called for the abolition of the emperor system in order to start the revolution against the bourgeois state (Hoston 1986: 61). Both Fukumotism and Yamakawism were condemned on the basis of a lack of action, abstractness and for being over-theoretical (Miyakawa 1976: 60). Fukumoto was subsequently expelled from the JCP and replaced by Watanabe Masanosuke.

Despite his expulsion from the party, the influence of Fukumoto Kazuo on the next generations of Japanese Marxists should not be underestimated. As Duus and Schneider point out, Fukumoto had the merit of having taken the JCP to a theoretical level that was one of the highest at that time (Duus and Schneider 1998: 201). He thus introduced 'Marxist philosophy' to the Japanese intelligentsia, forcing leading intellectuals such as Kawakami to revise their previous ideas regarding Marxism (Iwasaki 1971: 12-3). The new 'humanistic' side of Marxism introduced by Fukumoto through the readings of Lukács, Korsch and Luxemburg strongly appealed to the sensibility of the young Marxists such as Miki Kiyoshi and Tosaka Jun.

It is in this historical situation of 'love and hate' of Marxism that Miki and Watsuji's works have to be read. From my point of view, the new 'humanistic' trend in Marxist philosophy proved to be a powerful tool in Miki's hands. It allowed him to bridge his previous existentialist and religious writings, such as *Pascal*, with his new fascination with historical materialism and class struggle. This lead to a new interpretation of Marxism which, I believe, it is still not fully appreciated today. On the contrary, the depth of Marxist theorizations and the scarecrow of a Communist revolution prompted Watsuji to take action and confront Marxist intellectuals.

[87] The term 'intellectual' in Lenin's thought does not have a positive connotation. It should be substituted by the expression 'hegemony of the party', since it is the party that represents the class consciousnessof the proletariat even if completely detached from what the actual proletarian class is. The party functions as a sovra-consciousness that knows what the future of the proletarians ought to be and in which direction it should be pointed at. In his view of the party, intellectuals and workers would have formed a single leadership, after the cancellation of their class differences (Kolakowski II, 1978: 390-1).

Watsuji and Marxism

In 1926, in the aftermath of the Kyoto University incident, Watsuji wrote his first public critique of Marxism. This incident involved a group of thirty-eight students belonging to the Social Sciences Study Group, who were arrested and charged with the accusation of being supporters of the JCP (Bernstein 1976: 141). Watsuji's first article appeared in the Kyoto University Newspaper in October 1926 and was entitled *My Impressions on the Incident of the Students' Arrest* (*Gakusei kenkyo jiken shokan*).[88] Kawakami, who was then professor at the university, engaged in a written dialogue with Watsuji right after the publication of this piece.

Kawakami was still struggling with Marxist philosophy at that time. His initial ideas regarding the reform of Japanese society were characterized by a strong moral trait, which included the eradication of poverty through the voluntary renouncement of luxury by the rich (Yagi 2007: 4).[89] He also saw the involvement of the individual in the social revolution as a voluntary gesture driven by moral revolution, a step towards the improving of society. Most importantly, Kawakami affirmed that the 'value' in Marxist theory had to be extended to the whole humankind rather than to a single individual, therefore de-historicizing the process of production and basing it on an eternal concept that overlooked the emergence of surplus value and exploitation. It was his own student Kushida Tamizō (1885-1984) who first criticized him for his moral approach to economy and for been heavily influenced by idealism rather than materialism (Yagi 2007: 9-10). Kushida highlighted how this idealist bias was the fundamental cause of Kawakami's misunderstanding of the theory of labour and surplus value.

On the other hand, Fukumoto attacked Kawakami on the basis of his new theory on consciousness and totality that he had learnt from his studies in Germany. By introducing the concept of class consciousness, Fukumoto was clearly aiming at criticizing Kawakami's moralistic standpoint and accent on humankind. Fukumoto's criticism, together with Kushida's, made Kawakami rethink his own interpretation of Marxism. In fact, in 1926, he started writing on the concepts of class and on the contradictions that arose when dividing society according to class consciousness (Yagi 2007: 22). Despite his deepening knowledge of Marx's *Das Kapital* and other writings, Kawakami's moral trait always occupied an important position in his thought.

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[88] Now in WTZ XVII: 420-3. Quotations are from the *Collected Works*.

[89] Yagi Kiichirō's article *Emergence of Marxian Scholarship in Japan: Kawakami Hajime and his Two Critics* was originally published in the journal *Rekishi to Keizai* in 2007. Quotations here are from the online version that can be retrieved at http://www.econ.kyoto-u.ac.jp/~yagi/yagi2005/index.htm

It is in this context that the dialogue between Kawakami and Watsuji has to be considered.[90] In his first piece, Watsuji starts out by harshly condemning the students for having followed a 'fantasy of youth' (*seinen rashii kūsō*) fomented by a mere strategy of terror comparable to the violence against the Koreans in the aftermath of the Kantō earthquake in 1923 (WTZ XVII: 420). To him, the reason for the call of violence has to be traced back to Marx's books (WTZ XVII: 421). Nevertheless, Watsuji does not question the utility of the teaching of social sciences per se at universities. What he questions is the outcome this kind of education could have, namely to foment 'class struggle' as if the students should become devotees of the Russian Revolution (WTZ XVII: 422-3).

Kawakami immediately replied to Watsuji's article from the pages of the journal he had founded, *Shakai Mondai Kenkyū*. Kawakami's approach to Watsuji's ideas is clearly from the standpoint of a Marxist academic. Kawakami describes Watsuji's language as 'ambiguous' (*aimai*) and his comparison between the Tokyo and the Kyoto riots as 'uncertain' (*bimyō*) (KHZ XVII: 97-99). He is thus reaffirming the right of students to study dialectical materialism at university. Kawakami thinks that Watsuji is only a follower of Yoshino's *minponshugi*, whilst, in his opinion, Japanese society cannot be renovated as it is in that historical time through the legality of laws. Instead, he sees the study of the Russian Revolution like a physician who is studying new treatments for a sick patient, which therefore requires continuous experiments and trials in order to attain the right remedy (KHZ XVII: 107-11). Kawakami affirms:

> Social sciences, as sciences of the truth, wave the sharp scalpel at the real, living society; they flip the skin of the different phenomena where the truth is hidden; they have to reveal the source of the disease underneath the internal connections. There lies the task of physiology and, most importantly, from the basis of the fundamental theories of physiology, general clinical pathology has emerged
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> (KHZ XVII: 109)

In their continuing exchange, Watsuji defends himself by affirming that he is not against the study of Leninism but, rather, against the 'blind adoration for Leninism and the Russian Revolution' (*Leninshugi naishi Rossia kakumei ni mōmokutekini shinsui suru mono*) (WTZ XVII: 428). His main point is to ask why dialectical materialists interpret dialectics as

[90] The other three articles are: *On the Incident of the Students' Arrest. Addressing Watsuji Tetsurō* (*Gakusei kenkyo jiken ni tsuite. Watsuji Tetsurō ni yosu*), published in *Shakai Mondai Kenkyū* in November 1926; *A Response to Kawakami Hajime* (*Kawakami Hajime hakushi ni kotau*), originally published in *Shakai Mondai Kenkyū* in December 1926 and *My Considerations on Watsuji Tetsurō's Featured Article* (*Watsuji Tetsurō shi yori no kisho narabini kore ni tai suru Watakushi no kansō*) published in *Shakai Mondai Kenkyū* in January 1927. Now they are all included, respectively, in KHZ XVII: 93-114, WTZ XVII: 424-44 and KHZ XVII: 371-97. All quotations are from the *Collected Works.*

a ‘change’, when it is not clear what dialectics is developing towards. He dismisses Marx’s ‘materialism’ as “labelling ‘thing’ what before did not have a meaning [in Hegel]” (WTZ XVII: 429). Therefore the task of explaining the contradictions arising in the material life of the human beings has to be fulfilled by theory and not by materialism. Watsuji continues:

> Employing dialectical materialism as a weapon for the class struggle, meaning that dialectical materialism becomes the *class science* (*kaikyūteki gakumon*) of the proletariat, isn’t it equal to affirming that the proletarian existence is necessarily a product of dialectical materialism?
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> (WTZ XVII: 430-1; emphasis in the original)

Here Watusji sees dialectical materialism as a powerful weapon that could destroy the established social relations and this worry is strictly linked to his outlook on the formation of society. In fact, he interprets the flourishing of dialectical materialism as the source of the establishment of ‘classes’ as a whole. In his view, this entails that, if it had not been for Marxist philosophy, class struggle would not have emerged in Japan. Watsuji tends to overlook the fact that, historically, there was already a class of exploited workers in Japan. Marxist intellectuals were the ones who tried to give voice to this proletariat and ask for more social justice. Nevertheless, they were certainly a threat to the status quo and to Watsuji’s ideas of harmony and inter-relationality. This is the reason why he affirms that the reform of society can be attained only through a dialectics of the will and an idealist path (WTZ XVII: 433). Thus, the Russian Revolution should be taught and studied as historical facts not as an ‘experiment’. If the ‘fundamental principle’ (*konpontekina genin*) of the socialist doctrine is the sacrifice of the people, Watsuji argues, then it means that there is a fundamental contradiction immanent in ‘humanity’ (*ningensei*), because no structure should require the death of its own foundation (WTZ XVII: 437).

Kawakami did not appreciate Watsuji’s second response and, in January 1927, he published the last article of the debate. He quotes that there is no ‘blind love’ for Leninism and for the Russian Revolution. Rather, what Watsuji calls love is only scientific behaviour (KHZ XVII: 380). Thus, he accuses Watsuji of having confused the student riots with the teaching of Marxist dialectics. In a hasty comment, Kawakami affirms that laws could as well have clauses which are not always beneficial for society. Kawakami still could not explain whether Watsuji, despite being a philosopher and an ethicist, is implying something higher that goes beyond the sovereignty of the laws and whether he is not considering the state, or humanity, in a position of superiority (KHZ XVII: 395-6).

Kawakami and Watsuji are discussing the topic from two different standpoints. First of all, Kawakami is trying to defend his position as a teacher of Marxist philosophy, while, on the other hand, Watsuji looks at the situation as a conservative thinker. Their views partly coincide on the effect the incidents had, namely questioning the infiltration of violent doctrines inside the university campus, which clearly put Kawakami in a controversial position. Kawakami does not have a powerful line of argumentation, besides when he rightly highlights the fact that Watsuji could have favoured the creation of a Hegelian modelled state. Watsuji had not changed his ideas since 1919, the year of the publication of his *Two Ways of Breeding Democracy*, where he argued that the socialist ideas could help reforming the state system. Eight years later, after the grant of the universal suffrage, Watsuji is still talking about the 'respect of the laws' and in this sentence Kawakami immediately glimpses the legacy of Yoshino's *minponshugi*. On a philosophical level, Watsuji is more active than Kawakami, with the references to Hegel and idealist dialectics. Concerning the 'fundamental principle' of society mentioned by Kawakami, Watsuji is quick to dismiss it as a non-sense. In Watsuji's eyes, if the human being as *ningen* is a fundamental component of society and, in return, society is quintessential for the dialectical movement of human existence, it follows that the sacrifice of one or more components for the sake of 'research' is absolutely out of question. Kawakami is not clear regarding where his dialectics are aiming towards. For Kawakami, everything is a question of 'trial and error' and the weak point of his reply is the fact he cannot give shape to what kind of society he is foreseeing for Japan.

There is a commonality between the two thinkers that, I believe, could be explained by looking at their intellectual background. Fundamentally, Kawakami's idea of a moral revolution, although it changed in the course of his career, is not that distant from Watsuji's idea of a harmonious society based on morality and ethics. Kushida's critique of Kawakami also addressed this point, because he saw that, by posing the accent on the 'morality' of a social revolution, Kawakami could have implied a positive relationship between capital and labour (Yagi 2007: 11). Watsuji and Kawakami were both concerned with societal welfare and improvement. The difference between them lies, most of all, in the way they approached society as a whole. Whilst Kawakami embraced the social principles of Marxism to some extent, Watsuji despised them. Secondly, it is arguable that Watsuji's considerations on the role of democracy here, if compared to *Climate* or *Study of Ethics*, were undergoing a period of transition. It is possible that the impact Marxism had on Watsuji made him rethink his previous theories on the implementation of democracy in Japan. Therefore, this dialogue exposes how in *Climate*, Watsuji came to affirm that, for Japan, neither Western-style

democracy nor Communism were suitable forms of government. The dialogue with Kawakami thus occupies a middle position in the development of Watsuji's thought from the 1920s to the 1930s.

Miki as well had criticized Kawakami's theory on dialectics in 1929, with the article *Dialectics and its Vulgarization* (*Benshōhō to sono zokuryūka*).[91] In this piece, Miki draws most of his arguments and conclusions from Lenin's *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916) and argues against those who do not see dialectics as logic of development. Since imperialism reveals the highest stage of capitalism, he continues, the logic of continuation and development that underpins both needs to be dialectical (MKZ X: 61). He furthermore explains that the difference between Marxist dialectics and Hegelian idealism is that, in Marx, there is a 'qualitative' change as the development from feudalism to capitalism evidently shows. The vulgar materialists do not realize that the historical development is concentrated in the society of 'now' (MKZ X: 63). Miki thus engages in an indirect dialogue with Kawakami, using Kawakami's theorizations on dialectics to reveal what dialectics is not. For example, Kawakami used the example of the kimono and the kid: once the kid grows, the old kimono would not fit him anymore and affirmed that this instance particularly reflected the dialectical process. Instead, Miki argues that this is exactly what the vulgar materialists are doing, that there could never be a 'dialectics' between those two because the kimono is in an 'external' relation to the kid. The change is 'quantitative' and not qualitative. The dialectical development of capitalism is completely different, given the fact that capitalism sublates itself into imperialism by means of their internal relation (MKZ X: 64-7). Yet, Miki affirms that Kawakami is creating a 'formal logic' because the universal he is describing is nothing else than an abstraction of reality, the contrary of what Marx was preaching. If the truth is the concrete universal, Miki says, then a relationship between a formal universal and its particular could never take place (MKZ X: 69-74). 'Only the particular which lies in the self-aware universal is a true particular' (MKZ X: 75).

Kawakami appears to be the objective of criticism both for Miki and Watsuji. On the one hand, Watsuji regarded Kawakami's struggle to defend the teaching of social sciences as a possible threat to the structure of society. Despite the fact that Kawakami's system was fundamentally underpinned by a moral and humanistic trait, the method he employed did not resemble the one that Miki or Watsuji used for their elaboration of *ningen*. Even the Marxists could not approve of his apparent misunderstanding of the relationship between capital and

[91] The article appeared in *Keizai Jūrai* in November 1929. Now in MKZ X: 57-76.

surplus value. Nevertheless, Miki and Watsuji, given their intellectual and political differences, put forward two separate kinds of criticism against Kawakami. On the one hand, Watsuji's creation of a society characterized by harmony and by the absence of social conflict aimed at downplaying the role of Marxist philosophy. On the other hand, through his reading of Lenin, Miki judged Kawakami's Marxism as being still a form of Hegelian idealism, therefore entailing that Kawakami had not fully understood the relevance of materialist dialectics. To Miki the exploration of Marxism became a priority.

Miki Kiyoshi's 'Humanistic' Marxism

Between 1928 and 1929 Miki was involved, together with Hani Gorō and Kobayashi Isamu, in the establishment of the Marxism-inspired journal *Under the Banner of New Science* (*Shinkō kagaku no hata no moto ni*) (Doak 1998: 234 ff).[92] Miki and Hani later joined the Proletariat Science Research Group, until Miki was attacked by the Marxist historian Hattori Shisō (1901-1956) and was forced to resign from the association (Doak 1998: 248). In this journal, Miki published several articles on different subjects, such as *Criticism of Natural Sciences*, (*Kagaku hihan no kadai*, 1928), *Dialectics and the Organicistic Theory* (*Yūkitaisei to benshōhō*, 1928), and *Materialism and Its Real Form* (*Yuibutsuron to sono genjitsu keitai*, 1928).

According to many critics, Miki cannot be considered a Marxist *tout court* (Uchida 2004: 211; Hattori 1997: 197; Akamatsu 1994a: 166; Maruyama 1998: 164 and, to some extent, Iwasaki 1971: 142). Rather, most of them agree on defining his methodology as 'hermeneutical', 'anthropological' or even as a kind of 'hermeneutical existentialism'. In fact, none of them ever addresses Miki as a 'dialectical materialist', but they rather highlight the influence that existentialism was still exercising on Miki's ideas. Since Miki's object of inquiry was the 'human being' in existential terms, it was almost natural to him to transpose it in a Marxist context where the proletariat as a 'human class' (Miki's new *ningen*) took up a leading role amidst the deep changes Japanese society was undergoing in that period.

In some way Miki's ideas could remind us of the debate between Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Jean-Paul Sartre on the role of existentialism and Marxism in France in the 1960s,

[92] The journal had been modelled on Fukumoto Kazuo's *Under the Banner of Marxism* (*Marukusushizumu no hata no moto ni*) (Doak 1998: 234).

where there was a need for a refreshing wind in Marxist studies and the necessity to combine it with the existentialist thought on the role of the human being (see Merleau-Ponty 1963; Sartre 1960). My aim here is not to compare what Miki wrote in the late 1920s with the works of the two French philosophers, who had certainly never read him. What I would rather point out is the fact that in Europe these ideas gradually returned to the surface with impetus in the 1960s, especially in 1967 with the republication of Georg Lukács' 1922's masterpiece *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics* which featured a new preface by the author himself (Lukács 1971: ix-xxxix).

The impact of Lukács on Miki's philosophy is undoubtedly important, although there is no clear indication that Miki had read this book prior to his fascination with Marxist philosophy.[93] Nevertheless, Fukumoto had been involved in spreading Lukács' ideas in Japan upon his return from Germany. This hints at the fact that Japanese intellectuals might have been acquainted with his work. The similarities between Lukács and Miki touch upon different aspects of their philosophies, in primis the ideas of totality, reification and class consciousness. Before focussing on their relationship, it is necessary to explain how Miki took his first steps into Marxist philosophy.

In 1928, Miki published the volume *Historical Materialism and the Present-day Consciousness* (*Yuibutsushikan to gendai no ishiki*), which had been previously serialized in the journal *Shisō* in 1927.[94] The piece *The Marxist Form of Anthropology* (*Ningengaku no marukusuteki keitai*) is particularly important and it stands as a corner stone in the formation of the 'third way'. In fact, it is here for the first time that the concept of 'basic experience' as part of the three-fold theory of the 'basic-experience, anthropology, ideology' appears. Miki distinguishes between two kinds of 'experience', the 'ordinary experience' of our daily life and the 'basic experience'. Ordinary experience is lead by the logos which, in turn, is produced and required by the deeper basic experience (MKZ III: 5). As previously expressed in *Pascal*, the quintessential particularity of this experience is the uncertain movement (*fuanteki undō*) at the basis of it (MKZ III: 6).

[93] Uchida argues differently. He affirms that Miki had read Lukács book during his sojourn in Germany and that he made use (*tsuyō*) especially of the fourth chapter "Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat" when he wrote his piece on Marxism and materialism (Uchida 2004: 218-9). I would not go insofar as saying that Miki had actually read Lukács' book, since Miki never explicitly quotes or acknowledges his indebtedness to the Hungarian philosopher (contrary to most Japanese philosophers who tend not to quote their sources, Miki is generally very accurate). Having said that, I do think that Lukács had a great influence on Miki as I will explain in the chapter.

[94] Now in MKZ III: 1-156. The last piece of the collection, entitled *Hegel and Marx* (*Hegeru to Marukusu*), was apparently written anew for the publication of the articles in a volume in 1928 (see Kuno 1967: 524 and Miki's own introduction in MKZ III: 3).

The new definition is here given:

> The human being always finds itself in a negotiating relationship (*kōshō kankei*) with others. Because and in this relationship, existence becomes completely meaningful at its eyes. Thus, the significance of the undertaking of existence is, for first time, concretely determined by the mode of its negotiations
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> (MKZ III: 7)

The particularity of the negotiating relationship is that it is coerced in its everyday form (MKZ III: 8). In addition, in the immediacy of experience anthropology comes into being, representing the 'self-understanding' (*jiko ryōkai*) of the human being. On the other hand, when the basic experience is mediated by the historical background and the philosophical consciousness it gives rise to ideology or 'self-interpretation' (*jiko kaishaku*). For this reason Miki argues that ideology represents a second kind of logos that belongs to the *Geisteswissenschaften* and he further defines it as the 'common sphere' (*kyōdōken*) (MKZ III: 11-2). As seen here, anthropology is strictly related to the dynamism and the uncertainty of human existence, whilst, on the other hand, ideology takes the role of almost scientifically defining the changing of existence in history.

Yet again, in his piece *Hegel and Marx* (*Hegeru to Marukusu*), Miki restates his theory of the relationship between first and second logos by saying:

> What I wish to call the 'mode of existence' (*sonzai no moderu*) is the establishment of ideology, which happens thanks to the medium of anthropology that allows the basic experience to be clarified in its specific structure
>
> (MKZ III: 121)

The particularity of every experience is determined by the way negotiations take place in human existence and it is, in itself, related to the specific historical period according to the 'scientific knowledge' (*gakumonteki ninshiki*) of the given time (MKZ III: 121-3).

The concept of anthropology is very important in Miki, as seen before in his study of Pascal. Whilst reading Marx's *Theses on Feuerbach*, Miki affirms: 'In Marxism, anthropology leads the basic experience of the proletariat' (MKZ III: 29). Yet again, always in regard to the Marxist understanding of the human being, Miki appreciates Feuerbach recognition of the importance of human experience. Nonetheless, he subsequently criticizes him for having failed to see that his idea of anthropology was still linked to a critique of religion (MKZ III: 26). In line with Marx's critique of Feuerbach (see *Theses on Feuerbach,* thesis 7), Miki furthermore adds:

> The evolutionary process in which the basic experience of the proletariat was living sank into the contradictions of Feuerbach's anthropology. At that point, the necessary change that was taking place in anthropology was only fully grasped by Marx
>
> (MKZ III: 29)

Most importantly: 'Since the proletariat exercises his influence on the world primarily through *practice*, it grasps the self-essence as praxis precisely in the negotiating process' (MKZ III: 30; emphasis added). Practice is related to 'labour' (*rōdō*) and 'sensuousness' (*kansei*) as described by Marx in the fifth thesis.[95] In the practical process of dialectical exchange with nature, the human essence modifies as much as nature does (MKZ III: 32).[96] To Miki, nature therefore does not have to be seen as in opposition to the human being, but rather in the wider context of the dynamics of the world where man historically develops (MKZ III: 33-4). It is precisely at this point, where the historicity of the human being is defined, that Marxist historical materialism takes the shape of the fundamental moment of anthropology and ideology coming together (MKZ III: 38). The present consciousness is the realization of unity between the leading basic experience of the proletariat together with all the present currents of thought (MKZ III: 37). This creates the starting point of reality (*genjitsu no shuppatsu ten*) where the public sphere becomes our present-day consciousness (MKZ III: 220).[97]

Miki seems to employ standard Marxist terminology when he describes labour, sensuousness, proletariat, materialism. Nevertheless, Miki never defines what his idea of 'proletariat' essentially stands for. He only uses the words *puroretaria* or, interchangeably, *musansha*.[98] Rather, his definition of the proletarian class is always referred to as being *in relation to* something else. For example:

> Labour fundamentally defines the basic structure of the proletariat. The proletariat negotiates and exists through this form of negotiation

[95] 'Feuerbach, not satisfied with abstract thinking, wants contemplation; but he does not conceive sensuousness as practical, human-sensuous activity' (Marx 1970: V).
[96] This concept is originally expressed in Marx's *Das Kapital*.
[97] In *The Basic Concept of Hermeneutical Phenomenology* (*Kaishakugakuteki genshōgaku no kiso gainen*), published in *Shisō* in January 1927. Now in MKZ III: 186-220.
[98] As Uchida points out, Miki could refer to the class of toilers that, at that time, started becoming mere paid workers and were therefore separated from the land (Uchida 2004: 216). Uchida situates this phenomenon in the period of the 'rentier-state capitalism' (*jinushikokka shinhonshugi*) that remained a constant feature of the Japanese economy from the Meiji Restoration up until the end of WWII (Uchida 2004: 217). In Japan, this stage of the development of capitalism is as well described as 'imperial rentier-state capitalism', since the imperial family was at the top of the propertied class (Uchida 2004: 217). As pointed out before, the Comintern had labelled Japan as an 'anomaly' in the Far East, as a result of its mixed type of capitalism, which featured ancient feudal remnants together with an emerging industrial working class.

that is characterized by *sensuous praxis*
(MKZ III: 45-6, emphasis in the original)

Therefore, 'labour' becomes the most important feature of the proletariat because it represents an exchange with existence itself in a sensuous and material practice (MKZ III: 48). It is here that Miki gives his foremost definition of 'materialism' as a 'hermeneutical concept' (*kaishakugakuteki gainen*), which will attract the attention and the criticism of most Marxist thinkers of that time, including Tosaka Jun. [99] It is hermeneutical because it is in 'material things' that the human being self-interprets in the first place (MKZ III: 49). Labour represents the roots of the formation of concrete materialism and, since it takes place in the 'production in society' (*shakai ni oite seisan*), it requires for the human being to be in relation to the Thou of its negotiations (MKZ III: 50). 'The possibility of the human being as a unity if I and Thou is for the first time established [in the unity of subject and object]' (MKZ III: 50). The subject and the object are, like in Feuerbach, in a mutual dependence although they do not share the same essence, because, otherwise, they will reproduce the mechanisms of Hegelian idealism. Man is nothing without the object, says Feuerbach, because man would not be able to recognize himself unless he objectifies his own consciousness (Kolakowski I, 1978: 114-5). What happens in religion is the fact the objectification of consciousness becomes religious mystification (Kolakowski I, 1978: 116). As Furihata underlines, the basic problem of Miki's interpretation of 'the basic experience of the proletariat' is exactly this inter-relationality of the I and Thou (Furihata 1969: 55). As a matter of fact, if Miki had to be a traditional dialectical materialist, he would have seen the basic experience as objectified. Instead, Miki re-defines the limits of it by making it inter-subjective in a manner that it is easily spotted as of Heideggerian matrix. Again, Furihata sees in this shift and in the lack of a socio-economical analysis of history a path leading more towards idealism rather than materialism (Furihata 1969: 56).

The accent on the I-Thou relationship, the lack of a clear definition of the proletariat in economic terms and the accent on anthropology lead the reader to believe that Miki's interpretation of materialism is flawed if looked at from an economical perspective. What Miki sees as anthropology is Feuerbach's anthropology as centred on the human being. In the introduction of *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Marx says: 'To begin

[99] Tosaka writes of Miki: '[…] Miki's Marxist philosophy of that time was not a philosophy, it was nothing else than historical materialism (and therefore it continued negating the dialectics of nature). Moreover, that historical materialism, in reality, was not materialism, but only a philosophy of history' (TJZ V: 106), in *Miki Kiyoshi shi to Miki tetsugaku* (Miki Kiyoshi and Miki Philosophy) written in 1936. Now included in *Tosaka Jun Collected Works* (TJZ) V: 103-11.

with, the question under discussion is *material production*. Individuals producing in a society, and hence the socially determined production of individuals, is of course the point of departure' (Marx 1970: 1; emphasis in the original). As we can see, this is almost what Miki wrote in his piece aforementioned. The problem is that Marx traces material production back to the emergence of bourgeois society in economical terms. Miki only seems to be interested in the role of the human being and of society in this process. Miki does talk about the bourgeois state and ideology but in an abstract way.

Miki's innovations in the field of Marxism materialism part from the main 'scientific' trend that was very popular in Japan at that time. As seen before, even Kawakami's example of the physician and the experiment portrays what could be called 'scientific Marxism'. Miki's elaborations of a more 'humanistic' Marxism were not understood at that time and, in the late 1920s, they sparked an outpouring of criticism from the orthodox Marxists. In the same period, the Hungarian philosopher Georg Lukács was being attacked by the Stalinists for his theory of 'totality' that established a direct link between Hegel and Marx (Kolakowski III: 254). Influenced by Hegel and Dilthey (as Miki was), Lukács made 'totality' one of his pivotal concepts:

> Thus the objective forms of all social phenomena change constantly in the course of their ceaseless dialectical interactions with each other. […] this is why only the dialectical conception of totality can enable us to understand *reality as a social process*
>
> (Lukács 1971: 13; emphasis in the original)

Lukács wrote in favour of a unity of theory and practice and affirmed that reality would reach consciousness only in the unity of the two (Lukács 1971: 2). The proletariat as a 'class' was the subject and object of knowledge, in the moment when it realized that it was only due to the bourgeois ideology that the subject and the object were mutually dependable. Lukács moreover argued that reality as a social process could be only understood through a dialectical conception of reality, which was rooted in the 'totality':

> The totality of an object can be posited if the positing subject is itself a totality; and if the subject wishes to understand itself, it must conceive of the object as a totality. In modern society only the *classes* can represent this total point of view
>
> (Lukács 1971: 28; emphasis in the original)

The methodology implied by Lukács is 'orthodoxy', which, to him, meant only the method of materialist dialectics (Lukács 1971: 1). This method was the product of the class struggle and, with the evolution of the proletariat, it would have eventually proved to be the tool for the destruction of bourgeois society. The revolutionary significance of Marxist

dialectics resided in its relation to the whole and historical knowledge would have become possible solely when the ruling class would have ceased to exist (Lukács 1971: 14 ff). As Kolakowski highlights, the Lukácsian idea of totality implies the immediacy of past, present and future in itself, making it therefore a 'foreseeing' whole in the historical development (Kolakowski III, 1978: 266).

In Miki, Lukács' influence becomes clear in the second part of *Marxism and Materialism* (*Marukusu-shugi to yuibutsuron*).[100] Here concepts such as dialectical unity, alienation of the consciousness of the proletariat and commodification of human relationships appear in a new light.

Regarding the problem of consciousness, Miki explains:

> Because the human being is a reciprocal negotiation in the societal production, a new phenomenon here emerges. It is the *burying* of consciousness
>
> (MKZ III: 52, emphasis in the original)

The problem of consciousness is definitely not a recent philosophical question. The difference, Miki highlights, is how consciousness was perceived from Augustine on. The point of view changed with the advent of Marxism that made consciousness aware of its own contradictions and aimed at solving them in this historical period (MKZ III: 54-5). To Miki language is 'the real consciousness of the unity in society' (MKZ III: 56). As Marx said in *The German Ideology*:

> Language, like consciousness, only arises from the need, the necessity, of intercourse with other men. […] man's consciousness of the necessity of associating with the individuals around him is the beginning of the consciousness that he is living in society at all
>
> (Marx 1970: 74)

So, to Miki, Marx's definition of language is directly linked to Aristotle's definition of the 'zoon politikón' and the 'zoon logastikón', and it is reflected in the *awhileness* (*bon'yosei*, *Jeweiligkeit*) and *neutrality* (*chūwasei*) of our existence.[101] Contrary to what Miki had previously expressed in Pascal, meaning that the three-fold logos proved to be, in the Heideggerian interpretation, the fundamental deception of human existence, here he links the neutrality of existence to the introduction of commodities (MKZ III: 60).[102] The logos used to

[100] Originally published in *Shisō* in September 1927. Now included in *Historical Materialism and the Present-day Consciousness*.
[101] *Jeweiligkeit* is a Heideggerian term. It could be defined as the temporal particularity and unique finitude of the *Dasein*. *Jeweilig* is an adverb meaning 'from time to time' or 'accordingly' (Kisiel 1993: 425-6).
[102] Regarding the three-folded logos in Aristotle and Heidegger, see Chap. 2.

provide the 'particularity' to each existence but, in the modern age, commodities and production have taken over, burying the consciousness of the human being (MKZ III: 60). 'The particularity of the capitalist society is the fact that the relativeness of existence has reached completion in this kind of self-alienation (*jiko sogai*)' (MKZ III: 63). The concepts of 'reification' and 'commodification' of the human existence are explained by Miki on the basis that not only labour has been commodified after the advent of the modern age, but even relationships have become a kind of 'intra-goods' relationships (MKZ III: 62). The proletariat becomes thus a product of its own labour by being alienated by commodities themselves. It is the 'self-alienation of the human being' (*ningen no jiko sogai*; *die menschliche Selbstentfremdung*) that leads to the transformation of the logos into ideology, which thus oppresses humanity (MKZ III: 63-6).

It would be interesting here to highlight the description Lukács gave of reification. In his system, reification (*Verdinglichung*) is an evolution of what Marx had called the 'commodity fetishism' (*Fetischcharakter der Ware*). On the object level, reification represents the laws of the market that exercise their power on the commodities, alienating man through the exercise of this external power. On the subjective level, these laws work on man's activities, which become themselves commodities, including man's labour. Reification thus means the 'abstraction of human labour that makes commodities universal' (Lukács 1971: 91). Lukács thought that these reified relations had become the normal relation, and that our consciousness could not distinguish anymore between natural and reified laws. The development of capitalistic societies, therefore, subjected the human being to artificial laws that alienated consciousness thanks to the abstraction and alienation of human relationships (Lukács 1971: 128 ff). The solution Lukács proposed was for the proletariat to overcome the 'immediacy' of the bourgeois thought and, instead, to find the 'mediation' that would have uncovered the reified laws and helped the proletariat re-appropriating its consciousness (Lukács 1971: 164 ff). Reification could be destroyed, Lukács said:

> only by *constant and constantly renewed efforts to disrupt the reified structure of existence by concretely relating to the concretely manifested contradictions of the total development, by becoming conscious of the immanent meanings of these contradictions for the total development*
>
> (Lukács 1971: 197, emphasis in the original)

To Miki, the estrangement of consciousness from the reification process could be solved by the dialectical unity between the philosophical analysis of reality and the praxis provided by Marxism materialism.

> Marxism reaches the peak of the *possibility* (*genjitsusei*) in the dialectical unity between theory and practice […] The human being, in its material and spiritual whole, has just started glowing in its totality (*zentaisei ni oite kagayaki hajimeru*)
>
> (MKZ III: 73-6)

The difference between Miki and Lukács is that, to Lukács, classes are the point of view of totality that enables us to understand reality as a social process (Lukács 1971: 13). Instead, Miki discards the totality that Lukács foresees for the proletariat from its basis: class. Miki sees the proletariat as a community of human beings. Miki's *musansha* is a societal component abstracted from the socio-economical context and normatized as in a theory of values. What before was created by language, meaning the deception of human existence, is now transposed in the Marxist philosophical context. Miki envisioned a new 'class' consciousness in Lukácsian terms but, nevertheless, he complemented it with the Heideggerian idea of the authenticity of the *Dasein*. Therefore, the solution to the reification of consciousness does not presupposes anymore the existence of the proletarian class *per se* but, rather, it has to be found in the context of a totality striving for an authentic existence.

The process of this development is similar to Watsuji, although they reached a different outcome. They both refused an economical analysis of society and they both stressed the importance of the community. Yet, Watsuji's national community had already been established as such by the time he engaged with Marxism, whilst Miki just hinted at the fact that society was slowly becoming the focus of his meditations. In this context, the uprising that Marxism calls for in the form of the Communist revolution is not present in Miki's thought. The uprising, in Miki, cannot achieve the renovation totality needed. It means that the renovation towards the Heideggerian authenticity has to go a step further; it needs to become a spiritual renovation of the totality of a community. Not as class, but rather as a *ningen*-class, which eludes the Marxist connotation of the word and transforms itself into a new meaning leading to the 'community' of human beings.

Hattori criticizes Miki for having failed to recognize Marxism as an ideology. Rather, he says, Miki openly built his Marxist humanism having ideology as a backdrop (Hattori 1997: 198). The problem of ideology in Miki is as problematic as much as his concept of the proletariat is. In Marx, ideology is strictly related to the means of production and to the commodities fetishism, helping to create the false consciousness of the proletariat through the imposing of the supra-structure of the ruling class.[103] In Lukács, as outlined above, ideology

[103] See Chapter 1, Section 4 of Marx's *Capital* ('The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof').

in the capitalist society is best embodied in the reification of the proletarian consciousness. In order to create a new, true ideology it is necessary to destroy the ruling class and to 'mediate' the immediate reified laws if the proletarian consciousness has to emerge. In Miki, ideology is first identified as the natural development of anthropology and as the 'self-understanding' of the human being or as the common sphere of the *Geisteswissenschaften*. On the other hand, in *Pragmatism and Materialism*, Miki speaks about a logos oppressing humanity by transforming itself into ideology. It appears that while Miki continued to read Marxist texts, the more he grasped the real meaning of them. Thus, it is not a coincidence that the understanding of ideology as a pillar in Marxist thought comes to exist in Miki's interpretation later in 1927. Certainly ideology in Marxist terms has not to be understood in derogative terms. Ideology is formed though the unfolding of history and it belongs to the ruling class of the specific time. This is the reason why Marxism, though a teleological view of history, puts the proletariat and its ideology as the winner of the revolution. Miki sees ideology in different terms. He definitely highlights ideology as linked to the historical process, although it is a more 'natural' development rather than false consciousness.

After this first part, the differences between Miki and Watsuji have become clear. Watsuji criticized the emergence of 'classes' as an erroneous standpoint of analysis. He did not believe in the economically based framework adopted by Marxism because it would have destroyed his particular philosophical system based on the unity of a community. Miki, on the other hand, found Marxism inspirational. Marxist theories on the basic experience provided him with a new framework of analysis that could have helped him escape the mere theoretical conundrum of his first Pascalian phase. What they are both lacking is an economical understanding of Marxism. Miki talks about the human being in a highly theoretical and philosophical way, despite the accent posed on the praxis of the proletariat. Watsuji refuses *in toto* to economically acknowledge capitalism as a global phenomenon. They are both concerned with the 'totality' of the human being, with the I-Thou relationship and, in Watsuji's case, with maintaining the established social order. They are both leading towards a 'communitarian' view of the human being that will be further explained in the following sections. Economics is neither the kernel nor the structure of their philosophical systems; the core is the human being and its transformations.

Watsuji and Japanese Society

Some of the themes that Watsuji touched in his dialogue with Kawakami resurface in the article *An Ethical Critique of Marxism* (*Marukusu-shugi no rinriteki hihan*, 1930).[104] This piece on Marxism is particularly important if read as a prelude to Watsuji's *Study of Ethics* (Yonetani 1992b: 486). Secondly, it helps understanding Watsuji's ideas on the role of dialectical materialism. In fact, if Watsuji agreed with Marx's critique of capitalism and individualism, he harshly criticized his economical-socialist framework.

Most of all, Watsuji's considerations gravitate around the concept of the human being and how this has been interpreted in Marxist philosophy. Watsuji thinks that the theoretical background for any research of the human being has to be grounded in dialectics (WTZBII: 95-6). Using the same conceptual framework of his *Climate* and *Study of Ethics*, Watsuji argues that the human being is formed by the two components of the individual and the social. The family therefore, as seen before, becomes the first embodiment of society and it represents a kind of 'social totality'. The difference between dialectics and formal logic, as Miki had already pointed out in his critique of Kawakami, is the fact that in formal logic there is no 'mediation' (*chōtei*) (WTZBII: 97). Dialectics is a concrete and dynamic movement that rose from Hegel and it is not possible to attribute to Marx the invention of it. As already outlined above, Watsuji thinks that Marx only added 'materialism' to the Hegelian dialectics (WTZBII: 99). Watsuji moreover argues that Marx looked at society only from a political point of view, because, in pure thinking, there is no distinction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

Watsuji did not fully understand the importance of the 'commodity fetishism' in Marxist thought. Instead, he continues his criticism of Marxist thought in Japan as linked to the absorption of the Western idea of individualism in the Meiji period. The individualism inherited from Darwin and Spencer has ruined the old Japanese society:

> Japan nowadays has undoubtedly made great economical progress. Nevertheless, alongside the economical development there has been a loss of the original way of thinking and it is undeniable that a great influence has penetrated [into society] […] Needless to say, things such as familism (*kazokushugi*), state-nationalism (*kokkashugi*) and nationalism (*kokuminshugi*) have now been subverted
>
> (WTZBII: 103-4)

[104] The article is today included in a separate volume of Watsuji's *Collected Works* in the section 'Conference notes'. Yonetani Masafumi has reconstructed the history of this text, which belonged to Watsuji's personal collection. The manuscript was written for the 'Shisō Mondai Kōshūkai' ('Course on ideas'), that was held at Kyoto University in July 1930. The original title is *A Second Ethical Critique of Marxism*, because, as Yonetani explains, a first lecture with the same title had already been given by Fujii Kenjirō in 1928, who was professor of ethics at the same university (Yonetani 1992b: 485).

The real danger would be to forget the standpoint of the people's totality caused by the adoption of the capitalist system. To Watsuji Marxism is not an original 'product' of Japanese culture; on the contrary, it represents the fruit of the individualistic way of thinking typical of the West. Watsuji argues from a completely theoretical point of view, without taking into consideration the real economic development of society. In support of this, he even argues that bourgeoisie and proletariat do not exist as separate entities, since they are both composed by concrete human beings.

In the second part of the article, Watsuji admits that Marxism has the merit of having recognized the historicity of the human being and the abstractness of natural sciences (WTZBII: 105-6). Yet, Watsuji thinks that Marx's concept of production still lacks concreteness and he thus suggests including climatology in the analysis (WTZBII: 109). In addition, Watsuji considers 'class' as another type of abstraction that refers to an abstract economical category. In his view, the original form of society is the totality of the people that participate in it and, if this were to be considered as a mere sum of exchange values, its ethical and moral prescriptions would be erased (WTZBII: 118-25). This would lead to a degradation from a *Gemeinschaft* or 'communal society' (*kyōdō shakai*) to a *Gesellschaft* or 'profit society' (*rieki shakai*).[105] On the contrary, the 'use-value' (*shiyō kachi*) typical of primitive societies could help mediating the two (WTZBII: 125-9). This point is hence very important in Watsuji's critique of Marxism, since he is arguing here that, since in primitive and tribal societies there was no exchange value present, it follows that those cannot be included in the process of the historical development of capitalism. To Watsuji, capitalism is only a 'stage' of history (WTZBII: 128-9). Watsuji fundamentally denies the teleology of history of the Marxist doctrine. If capitalism is only a 'stage' abruptly separated from historical development, certainly a critique based on class distinction would not be appropriate. Watsuji's view of history is teleological, notwithstanding in the Marxist acceptation of the term. His highest aim is to bring society towards its sublation into the state.

Watsuji thinks that since history is a fundamental part of the human existence, and the state is the highest sovereignty above all, then the process of development of both history and historicity is resolved in the morality of the state. It might be argued that the accent posed on the 'use-value' symbolizes to Watsuji a return the purity of pre-Meiji Japan, where Western thought had not been introduced yet. Nevertheless, Watsuji never regarded the Meiji period as

[105] The distinction is drawn upon Friederich Tönnies' distinction between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft.* This point is further developed in Watsuji's *Study of Ethics* and it becomes the corner-stone of his critique of American society in his *The American National Character* (*Amerika no kokuminsei*, 1944).

a period of decadence or loss of the collective identity. The valorisation of the use-value does not represent a form of *nostalgia* for an idyllic past. Rather, the assumption that the state embodies the highest ethical structure above all stands as symbol of an ideal society projected into the future. Kawakami had already pointed out that Watsuji recognized the state as being above the legality of laws. As a matter of fact, Watsuji's state is a spiritual vision beyond its mundane government.

In order to support his thesis on the erroneous standpoint of social and economical analysis, Watsuji affirms that in a communitarian society the concept of 'collective responsibility' (*rentai sekinin*) is at the basis of its unity, whilst it is not present in a company or association where only the leadership alone takes responsibility for the actions of the group (WTZBII: 129). Therefore, it is wrong to include the communitarian society inside the modern profit society, since they do not share the same intrinsic values. Watsuji argues that the theory of the *jita-furi* expressed in *Climate* is exemplificative of the unity between self and other and of the awareness of the individual of belonging to totality. This concept is related to the basic concept of ethics, that Watsuji affirms being at the basis of Kant's morality as well. What Marx has failed to recognize is the importance of moral principles that do not fall under the umbrella of economics. By super-imposing class consciousness related to economical development to the original morality, for example, of primitive societies, Marx has confused the two categories (WTZBII: 130-4). Marx's contradictions are all rooted in the error of looking at ethics from the standpoint of economics and by creating a super-structure (*jōsō kenchiku*) upon it (WTZBII: 135):

> In Marx's interpretation, in the study of dialectical materialism, human morality emerges from the economical structure of society. In other words, is nothing else than a super-structure […] [In the study of dialectical materialism] the legislative and political super-structures that Marx recognizes as structures above the economical one, and in particular the legislative one, are considered to be the religious, artistic and philosophical basis of ideology. Nonetheless, the word morality is never mentioned
>
> (WTZBII: 135-6)

For this reason, Marx is able to argue that there are different kinds of consciousness and morality, one for the proletariat and one for the bourgeoisie, which therefore correspond to the concept of ideology. Watsuji, following the interpretation of Bucharin according to whom to the bourgeoisie belongs a theoretical morality based on egotism while practical materialism belongs to the proletariat, sees it as a contradiction in terms. Marxism is theoretical from the point of view of the economical structure of society, and practical from

the standpoint of the morality of society. Instead, Watsuji proposes a global analysis that will take into consideration the 'totality' of the community, where in the various stages of aggregation, from the family to the people, the responsibilities will be shared. Looking at a concrete totality, Watsuji affirms, means looking at the 'people' (*kokumin*) (WTZBII: 138).

> If we look at the profit society, we will see the proletariat; if we look at the communitarian society, we have to look at the people. In this way, when we concretely grasp human society, we grasp things like familism and nationalism (*kokuminshugi*). This represents, to me, the real and concrete socialism […] The proletariat is often described on the basis of its being an 'international association'. Nevertheless, the union of profit societies and the union of communitarian societies completely differ
>
> (WTZBII: 138-9)

This happens because the communitarian totality represents the self-awareness of the whole community, while the union of proletariat does not, since it is only based on internationalism as unity of different national constituents. Therefore, in order to reform society, it is necessary to start from the moral basis, because the individual is capable of being aware of the totality that resides in him and to return to it as the source of 'humanity' (*ningensei*) (WTZBII: 141). In Japan, nowadays, the dangerous ideas come from the fact that political power has lost its ethical foundations, becoming an immoral government (WTZBII: 142).

In light of these passages, I would argue that this 'totality' of the community that Watsuji is talking about stands as the foundation of his later involvement, in one way or the other, with the Japanese political elites during the years of the war. His system provides justification for the establishment of a Japanese-community based existence. Watsuji created a fragile system of society which is only imagined as idyllic. To Watsuji now the existence of a communitarian society has become a political question aimed at counteracting the practical allure of Marxism on a generation of young intellectuals. I nevertheless believe that Marxism still appealed to Watsuji since they both condemned the isolation of the individual that came along with the industrialization of society. Yet, Watsuji refuses to accept an economical analysis of society on the basis that economy cannot explain morality. This perhaps represents the weakest point of Watsuji's critique, the failure to recognize that the alienation and reification of his *betweeness* is not only a question of 'import' of Western thought, but rather a problem of global development. Watsuji mainly fails to understand the practical aspect of human existence, leaving the human being to this destiny in a particular system of thought.

At this point, Tosaka Jun's words could be quite illuminating. Despite the fact that Tosaka is here specifically criticizing Watsuji's *Study of Ethics*, I believe his critique perfectly nails Watsuji's major flaw regarding his understanding of Marxism. According to Tosaka, Watsuji abstracted universal concepts such ethics and the human being only to transform them into something particular and Japanese. The effect is the creation of an 'Asian' or 'Japanese' ethics. By means of this invention, Watsuji set Japanese people and Japanese 'things' as a model that every other nation would have to look up to (Tosaka 1973: 215). This method epitomizes the culturalist trend that Tosaka vehemently warned against. From Tosaka's Marxist point of view, in Watsuji's works the human existence was completely detached from reality. Therefore, Watsuji merely saw human existence as an 'expression' in words totally abstracted from its significance:

> The result of the creation of the materialist, productive relations by human existence by means of the cause-effect process is not ethics. Instead of opting for structural relationships grounded in materialism, an idealist creative relationship has been chosen so that the basic materialist historical society, as *a social symbol*, is merely a given fact
> (Tosaka 1973: 220, emphasis in the original)

Tosaka said that 'anthropologism' (*ningengakushugi*) was the most significant characteristic of Watsuji's thought and, he pointed out, it was profoundly grounded in the essence of Japaneseness that was unfortunately comparable to Hitlerism in Germany (Tosaka 1973: 222).

In another piece, Tosaka described Watsuji as an 'aristocratic, resistant reactionary' (*kizokuteki hankōsei hansayōsei*) (TJZ V: 96). Regarding Watsuji's idea of nature, Tosaka judged it as being derived from Heidegger and transformed into a kind of philology, which was, most of all, a 'Japanese philology'. Watsuji, in Tosaka's eyes, embodied the leading trend of Japanese academia that epitomized the modern bourgeois philosophy. This bourgeois philosophy was then used by Watsuji as a weapon against Marxist thought.

The anthropologism at the centre of Watsuji's thought is Watsuji's response to the Marxian concept of class. By dismissing 'class' as a useless and super-imposed economical structure, Watsuji wants to re-affirm the centrality of his now 'communal' human being. What before was the small family nucleus has been transformed into a national community which belongs to a specificity that goes beyond mere national characteristics. Instead, it takes the shape of the specificity and the locality of a given race. This step, which started as a reaction to Marxism, brings a whole community towards a fascistization of itself. The centrality of the imperial family represents the centrality of a national community that

reinvented itself in a mythical past in order to come to terms with the shock of modernity. The mythization of the past is rooted in the very same abstractness of the human being that has been transformed into a community. The result is the failure to recognize the importance of materialism, global development and realism of human existence.

Watsuji does speak about the 'concreteness' of the human being he has created by linking it to the historical past through the medium of the relationship with the ancestors. Nevertheless, on a theoretical level, there is a gap. The use of the hermeneutical methodology does not provide Watsuji with a tool to define what ethics substantially is. It only justifies how ethics work in the social realm. This significant gap represents the link between the universal concept of human existence and its particular counterpart. Without grounding the human being in a socio-historical context that goes beyond its mere relation with climatology, Watsuji is able to abstract it and make it become an ideal model that eventually transforms itself into the cultural particularism of Japan. In the critique of Marxism this step emerges quite clearly. Accordingly, the fact that capitalism is not seen in the process of an active, teleological history but a mere 'stage' seems to imply a return to an ideal society where individualism and alienation never existed. Yet again, it is not the *nostalgia* for the past that pushes Watsuji in that direction. Rather, it is a vision of an absolute historical future belonging to a particular society. In this stage, Watsuji's faith in the moral destiny of Japan shows its fist signs of germination. The return to this envisioned community that could overcome 'Western' modernity is precisely that detachment from the reality of history that will bring Watsuji to affirm that Japan was morally entitled to a destiny of victory. The ideal model of cultural particularism of Japan will find further life in the belief in the *escaton* of the war.

The Return to the Pascalian Moment

In his analysis of the importance of history in the formation of knowledge Miki returns to Pascal and Lukács by means of George Sorel (1847-1922).[106] Miki affirms that Sorel's revolutionary-syndicalism was highly influenced by Bergson's intuitionism, because both stressed the intuition of action (MKZ III: 109-10). Nevertheless, Bergson's theories did not allow for a foreseeing of the future, because his focus was limited to the limitation of present and past and their mutual relationship (MKZ III: 111). Sorel, on the other hand, recognized the immediacy of the class struggle by embodying it in the 'general strike' (*sōdōmeihiku*) that would have materialized in a catastrophic event. Miki thinks that Sorel's thought is an eschatological one, because it has complete faith in the idea that the proletariat and its revolution would rise after the destruction of the bourgeoisie (MKZ III: 112). Sorel's theories, Miki thinks, are a kind of 'Pascalinité', because they consider the change possible on the basis of faith (MKZ III: 113). Miki equals Sorel's violent, revolutionary practice to Pascal's *travail pour l'incertain* and the wager due to the fact that they aim at rescuing society from decadence (MKZ III: 112). Despite the fact that Miki seems to sympathize with the anarco-syndacalists, he nevertheless criticizes them for not having recognized the role of dialectics in Marxist philosophy. As seen before, to Miki it was important, as it was for Lukács, to stress the centrality of the dialectical movement inside the totality. Totality is bound to history because it is in history that the human being self-understands itself.

In another example, Miki binds the concept of history in Marxism to its development in the Historicist trend. Miki says that the concept of 'humanity' in Dilthey became crucial because of its relation to the immediacy of totality as the experience at the basis of the study of history (MKZ III: 321).[107] The mistake, or the 'suicide' (*jisatsu*) as Miki calls it, of the Historicists was their failure to recognize the value of the historicity of existence as a two-moment stage in the historical development (MKZ III: 323). Miki explains:

> Regarding what I have analyzed as the two moments of the historicity of human existence, Hegel and the Historicist only completely understood the first one, namely the historicity of life (*sei no rekishisei*). Nonetheless, they almost did not grasp at all [the second moment]: the lifefulness of history (*rekishi no seimeisei*). As a consequence, they did not acknowledge what has to be most importantly grasped: the unfolding of the present-day as history. To

[106] In *Pragmatism and Marxist Philosophy* (*Puragumachizumu to marukishizumu no tetsugaku*). Originally published in *Shisō* in December 1927. Now included in *Historical Materialism and the Present-day Consciousness*.
[107] In *The Organicist Theory and Dialectics* (*Yūkitaisetsu to benshōhō*). Originally published in *Shinkō kagaku no hata no moto ni* in December 1928. Now in MKZ III: 305-33.

> them, the present-day is rather a finite, united body that has reached completion (*kanryō shita tōitsutai*). It is for this reason that whatever is eternal is judged according to this[108]
>
> (MKZ III: 323)

The relationship between history and dialectics becomes therefore even more significant if seen in the light of progression and teleology. The meaning of existence as historicity is important, but the lifefulness of history is even more. Historicity precedes history as the social structure of human existence because, in Miki, it represents the premises for the unfolding itself. As Sugimoto has pointed out, history takes significance from its being lived in the praxis of the present. Therefore, even practical consciousness is the true historical consciousness and history is the history of the present (Sugimoto 2004: 206). The criticism addressed to Sorel is here thus restated in the analysis of Hegel and the Historicist philosophy. The dialectical unity of past, present and future is embodied in the present-day consciousness of totality, which could be as well defined as the Lukácsian 'foreseeing' totality. This is the reason why, I believe, Miki defines the Marxist dialectical system as an open one, contrary to Hegel's closed system of the Absolute Idea (MKZ III: 333). Since dialectical materialism is concerned with the present, it is the present-day consciousness and historicity that take up the roles of corner stones in Miki's philosophy. As a matter of fact, the accent posed on the society of 'now' and on the supremacy of the present time are themes that will be further explored in Miki's subsequent production. In the early 1930s Miki will publish his *Philosophy of History* alongside other works that specifically deal with the philosophical understanding of history and human existence. It will be there that the present time will become the nation-time and the focus will shift from a historical society to a historical nation.

Despite the fact that the present-day is the highest point of consideration, it remains bound to the openness of the dialectical system. It is in this context that we have to read Miki's religious related Marxist pieces that, incidentally, caused the outcry of the 'orthodox' Marxists. They were published in different journals between 1929 and 1930 and they mainly deal with the relationship between the proletarian movement and religion.[109] Uchida considers these articles as the strongest proof of the link between the early *Pascal* and the Marxist

[108] Compare this to Walter Benjamin's XVI thesis in the *Theses on the Philosophy of History*: 'Historicism gives the "eternal" image of the past; historical materialism supplies a unique experience with the past" (Benjamin 1968: 262).

[109] The articles are: *Literature, Religion and the Proletarian Movement* (*Bungei to shūkyō to puroretaria undō*), *What kind of Criticism do we Address to Religion?* (*Donnani shūkyō wo hihan suru ka*), *Religious Struggle and Class Struggle* (*Shūkyō tōsō to kaikyū tōsō*) and *Freedom and Necessity in Dialectics* (*Benshōhō ni okeru jiyū to hitsuzen*). The first three articles were published originally in the newspaper *Chūgai Nippō* in the course of 1930, while the last one was published in October 1929 in *Shisō*. Nowadays they are respectively in MKZ XX: 83-91; MKZ XIII: 3-11; MKZ XIII: 12-19; MKZ IV: 95-139.

period (Uchida 2004: 237). I think that, in addition to this consideration, they are furthermore the evidence that Miki's religiosity of the human being has, at this point, evolved towards a religiosity of the societal human being. The accent Miki puts on the practical side of the human existence seems to me to be the pivotal shift within his elaborations because it allows not only 'concreteness', but, most of all, 'action' on a community level.

In order to fully understand the depth of Miki's religious humanism it is necessary to provide a brief account of the intellectual debates that were taking place between 1928 and 1930 and the reason why Hattori Shisō and his peers found Miki's philosophy completely separated from Marxist orthodoxy. The first critique addressed to Miki appeared in *Marukusushugi Kōza* in 1928 and was written by Saeki Shunpei, the penname used by Hattori Shisō (Iwasaki 1971: 124). The article had the title *Dialectical Materialism and Historical Materialism* (*Yuibutsu benshōhō to yuibutsu shikan*). His critique mainly gravitated around the concepts of 'basic experience' and 'negotiating existence', which, in Hattori's eyes, had nothing to do with Marxism. He accused Miki and the other editors of *Under the Banner of New Science* of having operated a shift (*tenkō*) in Marxist philosophy and that this shift was leading towards a return to the organistic theory and social-democratic ideas (Iwasaki 1971: 125-6). Miki's responded as follows[110]:

> Even theory is a product of history. *From below* (*shita ni oite*), the established theory is regulated by the existence of that historical period. *From above* (*ue ni oite*), it is constrained by the theoretical consciousness of that historical time. The latter represents what I have so far named 'the common sphere'
>
> (MKZ III: 334; emphasis in the original)

Miki thinks that Hattori is theorizing on materialism, while, on the other hand, there should be a clear distinction between concrete, historical materialism and its basic definition (MKZ III: 345). In a reverse course, in the second part of the article, Miki starts justifying himself and his views. He specifies that his 'model of existence' is drawn upon Lenin's concept of property of existence (*sonzai no zokusei*), although he explicitly avoids using this term because he thinks he could be mistaken for a category of natural sciences (MKZ III: 358).[111] He, instead, defines his concept as '*Jedem Dasein mögliche Weisen zu sein*' (*sonzai*

[110] In *Materialism and its Real Form. A Critique of the Critique* (*Yuibutsuron to sono genjitsu keitai. Hihan no hihan*), published in *Shinkō kagaku no hata no moto ni* in January 1929. Now in MKZ III: 334-366.

[111] This part and the following regarding Heidegger are actually inserted in a footnote and not in the main body of the text. Given the sensitivity of the subject, which is concerned with Miki's intellectual integrity, I believe Miki did not want to clearly expose himself and be subjected to further criticisms.

no shikata) (MKZ III: 358)[112]. Most importantly, Miki openly acknowledges his indebtedness to 'Professor Heidegger', however refusing to accept the allegations that his ideas are a copy of Heidegger's formulations (MKZ III: 358). His theories are a form of Marxism, because they comprise the mutual, dynamic relationship between existence of nature and human existence and, moreover, his concept of human existence is socially determined as in Marx's writings (MKZ III: 360).

By looking at the accusations and at Miki's reply, it appears that Hattori's criticism was not without a reason. The theoretical speculations Miki had published at that point could not be considered entirely Marxist, given both the Heideggerian language and the conceptual framework used. Secondly, it appears that Miki was struggling to defend his positions since he was forced to come to terms with the influence Heidegger's thought had upon him. In later articles that were subsequently published later in 1929 and in early 1930, Miki will express his distress even more in counteracting the increasing condemnations coming from different orthodox Marxists. The definition of ideology and his speculations on the 'mode of existence' clearly show an un-Marxist matrix. As seen in the very first part of this chapter, Miki still thinks that the movement at the basis of human existence is anxiety, which, in return, it is the basic assumption for a religious understanding of life. The human being remains so far a 'medianic existence' caught between the everyday logos, guided by the everyday, false language, aka false consciousness, and ideology, which is imposed by above. Between these two constraining forces the role of the human being remains unclear. A new consciousness should arise, as Miki suggested, although it is not evident from which side of the two components. If the human being represents its own possibility, it therefore needs to re-appropriate its authenticity, in Heideggerian terms. This is the key question in Miki's Marxist writings. Has the authenticity to be found in the negotiating process with other human beings at the moment where the reification of their relations has been unmasked? Or, on the other hand, is it impossible to retrace it anywhere in the concrete experience of life?

Miki does not seem to be able to reply to these questions. Therefore, he shifts his focus to the relationship between religion and the proletariat and argues that this relationship is

[112] The original passage from Heidegger reads: 'Die an diesem Seienden herausstellbaren Charaktere sind daher nicht vorhandene »Eigenschaften« eines so und so »aussehenden« vorhandenen Seienden, sondern je ihm mögliche Weisen zu sein und nur das. Alles Sosein dieses Seienden ist primär Sein.' (Heidegger 1927: 42). Miki's German is evidently corrupted. Macquarrie and Robinson translates Heiddeger's passage as: 'They are in each case possible ways for it to be, and no more than that' (Heidegger 1962: 67).

indeed possible, albeit from the *standpoint* of the proletarian movement and class struggle (MKZ XIII: 17-8).[113]

> In a society without exploitation, even religion could completely renovate itself. Nonetheless, it would still be religion. As once Nietzsche said, the future philosophical thought will be born from a type (*taipu*) of human being called the weak and apathetic philosopher (MKZ XIII: 18-9)[114]

He sees an interesting parallel between Marxism and religion in light of the fact that they both point at humanity as a whole. Yet, religion has helped reifing (*butsuka*) human relationship, whilst Marxism aims at destroying the reified laws (MKZ XX: 86 ff).[115] One possible solution Miki foresees would be to view religion from the standpoint of class society, because that is the framework every kind of critique has to start from (MKZ XIII: 6-7).[116] One of the major flaws in Miki's system is that the class struggle he talks about cannot be tied to any 'class'. Yet again, the relationship he sees between religion and the proletariat is 'humanity', which is a clear sign that it was still comprised in his framework of the religion of the human being. Interestingly enough, the reference to the Nietzschean 'type' is a theme that Miki will explore and exploit in the subsequent period of intellectual career and that will become the thrust of his meditations on the renovation of the human being.[117] Understandably, after the publication of these articles, Miki's theories were smashed in nearly every journal that dealt with Marxism, even after his arrest in May 1930.[118]

In August 1930 Hattori Shisō and his peers published the *Theses against Miki Philosophy* (*Tetsugaku ni tai suru wareware no taido. Miki tetsugaku ni tai suru tēzē*) in *Puroretaria Kagaku*. There Miki was extensively accused of belonging to the bourgeois intelligentsia and to be a promoter of bourgeois ideology. His concept of the 'basic experience of the proletariat' was defined as nothing else than bourgeois idealism aimed at preventing the development of Marxism (Iwasaki 1971: 137). In September, Akizawa, under the pressure of the 'theses', publicly renounced his belonging to the 'Miki tetsugaku' faction (Iwasaki 1971:

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[113] *Religious Struggle and Proletarian Struggle.*
[114] Miki's critique of the religious figures rather than to the religious doctrines is very close to Nietzsche's own critique of Christianity as expressed in *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (1883-85), *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886), and *On the Genealogy of Morals* (1887).
[115] In *Literature, Religion and the Proletarian Movement.*
[116] In *What kind of Criticism do We Address to Religion?*
[117] See Chapt. 4.
[118] Miki was arrested under the restrictions of the Peace Preservation Law for having allegedly financed the campaign of the Communist Party. He was released shortly afterwards but subsequently rearrested in July and locked up at Totoyama prison until November (Uchida 2004: 255). As a consequence, he had to leave his position at Hōsei University and start his career outside academia, providing for him and his family with the work of journalist and writer.

131). According to Iwasaki, the betrayal of one of Miki's peers signed the end of Miki's Marxist philosophy (Iwasaki 1971: 132).

As briefly sketched here, the interpretation of Miki as a 'humanistic Marxist' not only is a common agreement amongst the present-day scholars, but it had already initiated in the 1930s. Perhaps, the accent posed on the human being was the fatal move at the eyes of the hard-core Marxists. Furthermore, the references to Dilthey and the semi-positive assessment of Historicism, could as well have contributed, on the one hand, to the creation of Miki's original ideas and, on the other hand, to the problems highlighted by his critics. As Iwasaki says, the position of Miki's philosophy should not be judged too hastily (Iwasaki 1971: 141).

Tosaka Jun had already noticed the incongruence in Miki's interpretation of Marxism. In 1936, Tosaka wrote that Miki was never a Marxist, because Miki's philosophy was a philosophy of history based on historical materialism, not on dialectical materialism. Tosaka traced the causes of this gap in Miki's studies of Dilthey and his previous analysis of Pascal (TJZ V: 106-7). Miki's *tenkō*, Tosaka argued, did not happen after 1930, but already at the time of his involvement with the Proletarian Research Group, where he started being interested in Nishida's philosophy that led him to shape a 'metaphysical, teleological view of history' (*keijijōgakutekina, shingakutekina rekishikan*) (TJZ V: 107).

Miki's philosophy of history is nothing else than humanism, Tosaka said, because:

> Humanism (*hyūmanizumu*) is what stands in contrast to Eastern 'naturalism' (*tōyōtekina shizenshugi*) (which in reality is nothing else than a category applied to metaphysical history). Humanism can be explained in terms of the human being that arises from history, changes in history and dissolves in it
>
> (TJZ V: 108)

The rift between the Marxists actively involved with the JCP and the theoretical Marxists, such as Kawakami, Miki and, to some extent, Watsuji, lies on a different interpretation of ideology (Iwasaki 1971: 142). The academics sought to define and interpret Marx's idea in the light of the history of philosophy and the development of thought. On the contrary, Hattori, Fukumoto and the others saw in Marxism a weapon against the growing totalitarianism perpetrated by the Japanese political elite. Hence, their achievements should not be regarded as a failure, but rather as an attainment of a different vision of Marxism.

Uchida thinks that the importance of religion in Miki's thought has to be seen in the context of the Marx-Feuerbach relation (Uchida 2004: 246). He therefore affirms that the problem of the consciousness of the individual did not start with the publication of *Pascal*, but even before, with Miki's graduation thesis. It is there, Uchida argues, that his 'anthropological

existentialism' took shape for the first time (Uchida 2004: 246). Thus, the question of the individual consciousness in existential terms remains crucial even in Miki's treatment of Marx. The link between the religious reform and the proletarian movement has to be interpreted in the light of the individual renovation and then, in a second stage, in the renovation of the proletariat (Uchida 2004: 248-9). Despite the fact that I agree with Uchida insofar his idea of the individual consciousness and the leap to the proletariat as a class is concerned, I think that it is not merely a question of individual freedom as in Kant. I believe that Miki's contamination between materialism and spiritual matter is a question of *Angst*. His anthropological existentialist Marxist-driven theories are a continuation of the path he had already undertaken with *Pascal*. The problem of the renovation of the human being happens because there is oppression from above. This oppression from above is very similar to the feeling of anxiety connected to the infinite as described in *Pascal*. With the introduction of the Marxist view of historical development Miki was able to link history to nature and to human existence. History and historicity become deeply entangled as fundamental parts of human life. Dialectics helped this process of renovation by providing the methodology and means for a renovation in the religious sense. Furthermore, dialectical materialism, with his focus on *praxis*, helped reshaping the fundamental error the Historicists had done by posing the accent on the theoretical aspect of history. Praxis was also the condition by means of which the new '*ningen*-class' of the proletariat could have freed himself from the oppression of ideology.

Heideggerian authenticity is therefore realized in the religious renovation of the human being that happens through the dialectical movement aiming at the Lukácsian 'foreseeing' totality through the means of praxis. Anthropology becomes the medium between the logos and ideology and, since ideology is the super-structure, it could be compared with the Lukácsian or Marxian false consciousness. That is the reason why individual existences are abstracted in history, because they are guided by the ordinary logos and not by the basic experience. This is purely Heidegger's *das Man*. The difference and overcoming of Heidegger happens in the shift from individuality to society. As Miki said, the human being reaches its material and spiritual whole in Marxist historical materialism, in the unity of theory and practice. Nevertheless, materialism is also hermeneutics, the self-understanding of man. Although Miki affirms that the proletariat self-understands in the praxis of labour, I would go a step further and argue that not only is the proletariat, but it is society as a whole. At this point the medium of hermeneutics clearly appears and it is related to the concept of renovation. Following Lukács, if reality is a social process, then the social part of the structure

of human existence in Miki is transformed in authenticity as a re-appropriation of the openness of the possibilities given to the *Dasein* in the praxis of the everyday life. The religious renovation comes to terms with the expression of the sociality of the human existence in the I-Thou relationship.

Conclusions

As we have seen, Miki and Watsuji seemed to reach similar conclusions but through different paths.[119] They were both concerned with the establishment of a totality: in Watsuji it took the shape of the Japanese nation, in Miki it became his counterpart to the Marxist concept of class. Secondly, philosophy of history makes its first appearance. I believe that Miki, with the construction of his humanism-oriented Marxist system, already prepared his subsequent involvement with this kind of philosophy. Watsuji followed the same path, since philosophy of history had always been present in his works. This major shift does not only regard Miki; it is a common feature of the development of Japanese philosophy in the 1930s and early 1940s. Nishida, Tanabe, as well as the participants of the later *Chūōkōron* roundtables, all saw in the philosophy of history a tool to analyze and justify the Japanese standpoint in the global scenario of the Second World War. Philosophy of history as it will be interpreted by Miki in the 1930s gathers most of the issues already underlined here. Although Miki's career will continue on a different path than Marxist philosophy, the praxis this type of philosophical argumentation provided will linger in Miki's thought for the years to come.

Thirdly, religion also plays an important role in both systems of thought. The abstractness of Watsuji's human existence tends to take the nuances of a nationalistic ideology firmly rooted in the ideology of the *kokutai*. To further clarify the relationship between state and religion in Japan, it is noteworthy to refer to what Karl Löwith wrote in 1942:

> Japan is the only modern nation with a genuine natural religion, where religion neither transcends nor interferes with but supports the socio-political system
>
> (Löwith 1983: 549)

[119] On this relationship, see also Yonetani 1993: 185-6.

The question of religion is therefore important in Watsuji's case, although it does not have to be mistaken for a belief akin to Christianity. The religion of the *kokutai* is a product of society (very much like Marx) and Watsuji recognizes to this principle the function of uniting a whole nation. The religious-political principle explained in the previous chapter has now to be understood as a prototype of national unity. Therefore, the negation of the religious symbolism of the emperor as proposed by the Marxists would have disrupted the whole structure of Japanese society. Thus, I believe that the abstractness of the human being Watsuji created is the result of a culturally based analysis of human existence aimed at safeguarding a semi-religious figure bound to Hegelian idealism. Watsuji's human being, already grounded in history, became thus a political question for a whole community aimed at counteracting the practical appealing of Marxism on a generation of young intellectuals.

In Miki, the role of the human being and its *Angst* finally found a solid ground in the practical basic experience grounded in history thanks to the medium of Marxism. The religious vision present in Miki's works is still a reminder of his previous Pascalian phase. The influence of Heidegger and Lukács, comprehensive of both aspects of theory and praxis, is brought together and underpinned in a unified vision of a communal human being that substitutes class. Miki invented a new *ningen*-class, Watsuji dismissed 'class' *in toto*. Both aimed at preserving or foreseeing a new totality which became more of a 'particular' community rather than a universal concept. In the early 1940s, in the midst of the Second World War and with the expansion of the Japanese empire, this societal totality will finally bring Miki and Watsuji together.