

*Graduate Research Essay*

**LAFCADIO HEARN AND THREE ROADS TO  
NATIONAL SURVIVAL**

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**Preface: Lafcadio Hearn as a Man of Science**

A leading Japanese intellectual, Tanigawa Tetsuzō, once remarked that he had always assumed that Koizumi Yakumo, the Japanese name adopted by Lafcadio Hearn (1850-1904), was merely a Romantic figure, and was surprised to learn of his “wide social interests” as revealed in a series of articles on politics.<sup>2</sup> Tanigawa cites a number of articles Hearn wrote as a journalist while living in Kobe from 1894 to 1896: namely “Cheap Labor in Japan” (1894), “Growth of Population in America” (1894), “The Military State of Europe” (1894), “A Problem of Treaty Revision” (1894), and “A Triple Alliance in the Farther East” (1894).<sup>3</sup>

Tanigawa’s essay was published in 1938, but his surprise still reflects a dominant Japanese view of Hearn as a Romantic figure. Indeed, Hearn is frequently viewed as a somewhat whimsical Romantic who loved “Old Japan”—a phrase used to indicate the values and traditions of pre-Meiji Japan, and which was contrasted with the Westernized and increasingly industrialized “New Japan” of the Meiji era (1868-1912) and beyond.

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<sup>2</sup> Tanigawa Tetsuzō, “Furui Nihon atarashii Nihon, Koizumi Yakumo no mita Nihon” (Old Japan, New Japan: Japan as Witnessed by Koizumi Yakumo), *Bungei shunjū* (Literary Spring and Autumn), vol. 16, December 1938, pp. 200-6, at p. 204.

<sup>3</sup> These articles are available in Lafcadio Hearn, Makoto Sangu ed., *Editorials from the Kobe Chronicle*, Tokyo: The Hokuseido Press, 1960.

Although Hearn was by no means the only individual to express a deep appreciation for “old” or “traditional” Japan, a social construct of the Western imagination, he has, for whatever reason, managed to best capture the hearts of Japanese readers as someone who truly understands “Japan”. Indeed, “sympathetic” foreigners such as the British potter, Bernard Leach (1887-1979), and the American Japanologist, Donald Keene (1922-), are not infrequently labeled “today’s Hearn” (*gendai no Hān*), or “the second Hearn” (*dai ni no Hān*) or “another Lafcadio” (*machi no Rafukadio*), terms which mean a “foreigner who understands and values traditional Japan”.<sup>4</sup>

Because of this Romantic image, however, some “have questioned whether he [Hearn] really saw Japan in her entirety”.<sup>5</sup> That is, since Japan’s modernization was a matter of survival rather than taste or fashion, Hearn has been criticized for ignoring the socio-political realities faced by modern Japan. Moreover, the Orientalist assumptions embodied in depictions and contrasts of a non-changing, non-Western “Old Japan” and a changing, Westernized “New Japan” have also been criticized. Indeed, Keene finds it “outrageous” (*tondemo nai*) to be called “the second Hearn”.<sup>6</sup> Viewed as hopelessly Romantic, Hearn has often been either praised or criticized for having been anti-scientific and anti-rational.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Bernard Leach is known for his love for Japanese pottery and “good old Japan” (*furuki yoki Nihon*). He is sometimes called “today’s Hearn”. Suzuki Sadahiro, “Līchi” (Leach), in Hirakawa Sukehiro ed., *Koizumi Yakumo jiten* (Koizumi Yakumo Encyclopedia), Tokyo: Kōbunsha, 2000, pp. 676-79, at p. 78. Donald Keene is known for his appreciation of Japanese literature and is sometimes called “the second Hearn”. (Keene himself rejects this label: see footnote 6 below). An NHK TV program, “Cool Japan” (2006), introduced an American architect who fell in love with traditional Japanese architecture and is now attempting to revive it as “another Lafcadio”. See <http://www.nhk.or.jp/cooljapan/>.

<sup>5</sup> Benchong Yu notes that, because of Hearn’s love of Old Japan, “many have questioned whether he really saw Japan in her entirety”. Benchong Yu, *An Ape of Gods: The Art and Thought of Lafcadio Hearn*, Toronto, Ontario: Wayne State University Press, 1964, p. 184.

<sup>6</sup> In an interview, Keene says, “I do not think much of Koizumi Yakumo. He is not studious. His stories are nothing but a dictation of what his wife told him, as he did not study the Japanese language. What is more, he spoke ill of Japan in letters to his British friends. At one time, there were some who called me the second Koizumi Yakumo. This is outrageous”. Ōhira Kazuto, “Donarudo Kīn—Watashi wa dai-ni no Koizumi Yakumo dewa nai” (Donald Keene: I am not a Second Koizumi Yakumo), *Ushio* (Tide), no. 407, February, 1993, pp. 372-77, at p. 377.

<sup>7</sup> Hearn is celebrated by many Japanese critics for his freedom from a “cold” rationality and science. Ikeda says Hearn “suggests to us what Japan’s modern rationalism has dismissed since the Meiji era, such as the Japanese gentleness and sensibility”. Ikeda Masayuki, *Koizumi Yakumo no Nihon* (Koizumi Yakumo’s Japan), Tokyo: Regurusu bunko, 1990, p. 53. Yanagi Muneyoshi says Hearn was able to understand Japan thanks to his “acute instinct” (*surudoī chokkan*) as an artist and his freedom from science which, Yanagi believes, tends to cloud the ability to truly appreciate Japan. Yanagi Muneyoshi,

Hearn, however, believed that it was contemporaneous missionaries who were anti-scientific and anti-rational.<sup>8</sup> In his work, *Kokoro* (1896), he notes: “To destroy personal faith in a fine mind previously satisfied with Buddhist cosmology, because innocent of science, is not extremely difficult. But to substitute, in the same mind, Western religious emotions for Oriental, Presbyterian or Baptist dogmatism for Chinese and Buddhist ethics, is not possible.”<sup>9</sup> Here we need to mention the antipathy that existed in Hearn’s Japan—the Japan of the late nineteenth century and very early twentieth century—between Christian missionaries on the one hand and Darwinians (and other proponents of Evolutionism) on the other.<sup>10</sup> Many of those who are known as lovers of Old Japan, including Edward Morse (1838-1925), Ernest Fenollosa (1853-1908), and Hearn himself, belong to the latter group.<sup>11</sup> (Hearn called himself “a student” of Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), a

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“Chōsenjin o omou” (On Koreans), *Yomiuri shinbun*, 20 May 1919, reprinted in Yanagi Muneyoshi, *Yanagi Muneyoshi zenshū chosakuhen* (Complete Works of Yanagi Muneyoshi), vol. 6, Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1981, pp. 23-32, at p. 24. Hughes, on the other hand, introduces Western Japanologists’ negative views of the “irrational” Hearn, and says that “[i]n some circles in Britain[,] it must be said, Hearn represents exactly what a mediator and commentator on Japan should *not* be”. George Hughes, “Lafcadio Hearn: Between Britain and Japan”, in Hirakawa Sukehiro ed., *Rediscovering Lafcadio Hearn: Japanese Legends, Life and Culture*, Kent, UK: Global Oriental, 1997, pp. 72-82, at p. 74. In *Britain and Japan 1859-1991*, Hearn’s name is negatively mentioned as an individual who, unlike the balanced Chamberlain, “lost sight of his own Europeaness” and loved Japan too much to do justice to the West. Richard Bowring, “An Amused Guest in All: Basil Hall Chamberlain”, in Sir Hugh Cortazzi and Gordon Daniels eds., *Britain and Japan 1859-1991: Themes and Personalities*, London and New York: Routledge, 1991, pp. 128-36 at p. 133.

<sup>8</sup> Many of these missionaries came to Japan as *oyatoi* or foreign employees employed by the Japanese government to impart Western knowledge to Japanese students as a part of Meiji Japan’s state-sponsored modernization. For the *oyatoi*, see, for example, Umetani Noboru, *The Role of Foreign Employees in the Meiji Era Japan*, Tokyo: Institute of Developing Economics, 1971.

<sup>9</sup> Lafcadio Hearn, *Kokoro: Hints and Echoes of Japanese Inner Life*, Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1896, reprinted in Elizabeth Bisland ed., *The Writings of Lafcadio Hearn*, vol. 7, Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1922, pp. 265-512. The citation is from “A Conservative”, pp. 393-422, at p. 408.

<sup>10</sup> Ōta Yūzō, *E. S. Mōsu—“Furuki Nihon” o tsutaeta shin-Nichi kagakusha* (E. S. Morse: A Pro-Japanese Scientist Who Introduced “Old Japan”), Tokyo: Liburopōto, 1988, p. 209. John Ashmead also notes that “[t]he Japanese very quickly discovered European arguments against Christianity and used them with the missionaries”. John Ashmead, *The Idea of Japan 1853-1895: Japan as Described by American and Other Travelers from the West*, New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1987, p. 376.

<sup>11</sup> Members of the latter group interacted with one another. There is evidence of correspondence between Hearn and Morse. See Ōta, *E. S. Mōsu*, pp. 220-22. There was also correspondence and interaction between Hearn and Fenollosa. See Hearn’s letters to both Fenollosa and his wife, included in Elizabeth Bisland ed., *The Life and Letters of Lafcadio Hearn*, Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1906, reprinted in

Social Darwinian and evolutionist who is perhaps best known for his term, “survival of the fittest”.<sup>12</sup>) Naturally, those who promoted the ideals of Old Japan were, even if only indirectly, supporting what would have been viewed as the virtues of a “pagan Japan”, and were thus viewed with disfavor by missionaries eager to Christianize Japan. Indeed, some missionaries attributed the slow Japanese rate of conversion to the fact that “the Japanese had read Spencer, Darwin and Huxley”.<sup>13</sup> Hearn always believed that he had been mistreated by missionaries in Japan because of his scientific and “liberal” views. Upon his ousting from Tokyo Imperial University in 1903 (where he had been teaching English literature), he declared that he was a victim of a missionary conspiracy. In a letter to a friend in 1903, he wrote:

I have long been a subject of persecution in Japan—inconstant persecution and intrigue. The object has been religious (...) A great many attempts (some of a very shameful kind) were made at various times to force me to resign my chair in the university—Jesuit influence being especially used (...) I am not the only victim: indeed, every foreign teacher of liberal views has been forced out of the institution, on one or another pretext; and recently a liberal school was ruined upon the most frivolous pretext possible to imagine.<sup>14</sup>

Of course, not all Christian missionaries were prejudiced against Old Japan. Indeed, some such as William E. Griffis (1843-1928) were sympathetic to “pagan” Japan.<sup>15</sup> However, it is also true that a scientific outlook helped those such as Hearn to appreciate the culture of a non-Western, non-Christian world. As Endō notes, modern science to Hearn meant the destruction of old customs and cultures, but, at the same time, represented the hope that scientific knowledge would liberate people from prejudice, especially Christian prejudice, and enable them to appreciate non-

Elizabeth Bisland ed., *The Writings of Lafcadio Hearn*, vol. 15, Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1922, pp. 115-17, 135-37, 173-74, 177-79.

<sup>12</sup> Lafcadio Hearn, *Japan: An Attempt at Interpretation*, New York and London: Macmillan, 1904, reprinted in Elizabeth Bisland ed., *The Writings of Lafcadio Hearn*, vol. 12, Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin and Company, 1922, p. 199.

<sup>13</sup> Henry Theophilus Finck, *Lotos-time in Japan*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1895, p. 280, cited in Ashmead, *The Idea of Japan*, pp. 376-77.

<sup>14</sup> Lafcadio Hearn, letter to Arthur H. Diósy, dated 28 April 1903. Cited in Watanabe Yasuyuki, “Hān no mikōkai shokan ni tsuite” (On Hearn's Unpublished Letters), *Herun* (Lafcadio Hearn), no. 37, 2000, pp. 111-14, at pp. 111-13.

<sup>15</sup> Griffis wrote *The Mikado's Empire* (1876) and other works, including pieces on Christian missionaries such as G. Verbeck (1830-98) who contributed to the modernization of Japan. He also wrote a book review of Hearn's *Japan: An Attempt at Interpretation* (1904) and praised it, stating that it was “the very best book of Hearn's, for the kind of knowledge and sense of reality we need”. William E. Griffis, “Two Books on the New Japan”, *The Critic*, vol. 46, February 1905, pp. 185-86, at p. 185.

Western and non-Christian cultures.<sup>16</sup> In this sense, Hearn was sympathetic to science.

The view of Hearn as a man of science, and especially as an adherent of evolutionism, is not a new one. According to Yamashita, Hearn's fourteen years of prolific writing on Japan took place through the filter of Spencer's evolutionism.<sup>17</sup> Hearn in fact believed in the significance of survival, a core concept of evolutionism, and showed a great interest in what needed to be done to survive on both a personal and a national level.

Despite the influence of Spencer and Hearn's acceptance of the notion of evolution and progress as a means to survival, Hearn was not a typical evolutionist. Evolutionism is, as Watanabe says, using Chesterton's terms, a philosophy of a forward looking and optimistic "good time coming", rather than a backward looking and pessimistic "good time going".<sup>18</sup> Charles Darwin, for example, optimistically praises the modernization efforts of Japan in a letter to Edward Morse, saying "[o]f all wonders in the world, the progress of Japan, in which you have been aiding, seems to me about the most wonderful".<sup>19</sup> Needless to say, Hearn was not as optimistic about, or as approving of, Japan's modernization. On the contrary, he grieved over the loss of traditional Japan.

This ambiguity of Hearn as an adherent of evolutionism has long been a source of confusion. One might wonder how the contradiction between Hearn's love for Old Japan and his stance as an evolutionist can be explained. Some like Watanabe explain it as a "disjunction between emotion and reason".<sup>20</sup> That is, according to Watanabe, Hearn fully understood the necessity of Japan's modernization as an evolutionary process yet, emotionally, was attached to the more "Romantic" state of pre-industrial Japan. In other words, Hearn's ideas were the product of a combination of a hard-headed pragmatism and a soft-hearted Romanticism. Others such as Benchong Yu argue that Hearn's love for, and grief over the loss of, traditional Japan needs to be explained not only in terms of an emotional Romanticism but also in terms of a pragmatic sense of crisis.<sup>21</sup> That is,

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<sup>16</sup> Endō Masaru, "Kindai kagaku" (Modern Science), in Hirakawa Sukehiro ed., *Koizumi Yakumo jiten* (The Koizumi Yakumo Encyclopedia), Tokyo: Kōbunsha, 2000, pp. 177-78.

<sup>17</sup> Yamashita Shigekazu, *Supensā to Nihon kindai* (Spencer and Modern Japan), Tokyo: Ochanomizu shobō, 1983, p. 225.

<sup>18</sup> See Watanabe Shōichi, "Supensā shokku to Meiji no chisei (1)—Rafukadio Hān no baai" (The Spencer Shock and Meiji Intellectuals (1): The Case of Lafcadio Hearn), in Watanabe Shōichi, *Kyōyō no dentō ni tsuite* (On The Tradition of Culture), Tokyo: Kōdansha gakujutsu bunko, 1977, pp. 23-37, at p. 33.

<sup>19</sup> *More Letters of Charles Darwin*, vol. 2, publisher not indicated, pp. 383-84. Cited in Dorothy G. Wayman, *Edward Sylvester Morse: A Biography*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1942, p. 251.

<sup>20</sup> Watanabe, "Supensā shokku to Meiji no chisei (1)".

<sup>21</sup> See Yu, *An Ape of Gods*.

without traditional virtues such as loyalty and thrift, Hearn thought, Japan would not be able to compete with the West, and therefore would fail to survive. In this paper, I will examine three types or concepts of “national survival” that are relevant to Hearn and evolutionism. Since Hearn makes many contradictory remarks, I will not attempt to distinguish what is correct from what is not. Rather, I hope to juxtapose several views of Hearn in order to create a more complete picture and to understand in what sense he was an evolutionist.

### **The West as Necessity: The Survival of Japan**

It is not difficult to unearth negative remarks that demonstrate how much Hearn disliked modernizing Japan. In a letter to Basil Hall Chamberlain (1850-1935) in 1893, he says that “I detest with unspeakable detestation the frank selfishness, the apathetic vanity, the shallow vulgar scepticism of the New Japan”.<sup>22</sup> Needless to say, this is the sort of remark for which Hearn is well known.

It is, however, just as easy to find positive remarks on Japan’s modernization that show that Hearn was a supporter of evolutionism. For example, in his posthumously published *Japan: An Attempt at Interpretation* (1904), he notes: “Evidently the only chance of being able to face Western power would be through the patient study of Western science: and the survival of the [Japanese] empire depended upon the Europeanization of society.”<sup>23</sup> Although there is a gap in the time when these remarks were made, an ambiguous attitude to modernization can be seen from the first to the last days of his long sojourn in Japan (1890-1904). How then should we understand these seemingly incompatible remarks? As noted above, Watanabe depicts this question as a matter of “a disjunction between emotion and reason”.<sup>24</sup> Although Watanabe does not deny the general notion that Hearn loved traditional Japan, he rejects the view that Hearn’s love was anything more than a question of emotion. That is, it was based on a soft-hearted *emotion*, while his acceptance of modernization was based on a hard-headed evolutionist *reason*.

According to Watanabe, there are two types of societies in the philosophy of Spencer: one is a society which has reached a state of “equilibrium” after evolution, and the other is a society of “dissolution” that is in the process of evolution. The former is the state of “Nirvana”,

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<sup>22</sup> Lafcadio Hearn, letter to Basil Hall Chamberlain, dated 17 January 1893, in Elizabeth Bisland ed., *The Japanese Letters of Lafcadio Hearn*, Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1910, pp. 35-38, at p. 38.

<sup>23</sup> Hearn, *Japan*, p. 358.

<sup>24</sup> Watanabe, “Supensā shokku to Meiji no chisei (1)”, p. 35.

represented in Hearn's mind by Old Japan where "ethics and the social system are complete and people live in peace", while the latter is the state of "karma", represented by New Japan where the "equilibrium" has been destroyed by an external force (in this case Western imperialism) and the survival game starts again.<sup>25</sup> Needless to say, for modern Japan, "survival" meant the maintenance of national independence and the realization of economic competitiveness.

According to Watanabe, Hearn's love for pre-industrial Japan and the literary works that emerged from this love were nothing more than a diversion. The "private" and therefore "real" Hearn exists in his letters.<sup>26</sup> In letters to his students, Hearn repeatedly encourages them to study practical subjects in order to be able to survive in the modern era.<sup>27</sup> As Watanabe notes, Hearn does not say "Japan is a beautiful country, so please take good care to preserve its culture".<sup>28</sup> By emphasizing that Hearn knew that traditional Japan was destined to perish, Watanabe depicts Hearn as an individual who was emotionally attached to the past but who knew that modernization was necessary to survive.

Watanabe's essay was perhaps inspired by Allen E. Tuttle's paper, "Lafcadio Hearn and the Ethics beyond Evolution" (1949). Tuttle argues that Hearn treated Old Japan as "Nirvana", and viewed tradition as something to be abandoned for the sake of survival. Of course, according to Tuttle, "Hearn recoiled (...) at the brutality, the ugliness, and the seeming immorality of the evolutionary struggle", but at the same time realized that Japan would have to depend on "the least amiable qualities of her character" to survive.<sup>29</sup> For "law would have to supplant custom; individualism would have to replace the old self-effacement" and, in Hearn's terms, "he who follows the old code

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<sup>25</sup> Watanabe, "Supensā shokku to Meiji no chisei (1)", pp. 30-31.

<sup>26</sup> Watanabe, "Supensā shokku to Meiji no chisei (1)", p. 34.

<sup>27</sup> Letters from Hearn to Ōtani Masanobu, dated 4 March 1895 and 28 June 1896. Cited in Ōtani Masanobu, "Kojin to shite no Koizumi Yakumo sensei" (Mr. Koizumi Yakumo as an Individual), *Teikoku bungaku* (Imperial Literature), vol. 10, no. 11, pp. 84-108, at pp. 102, 103. For instance, at pages 102 to 103 Hearn writes as follows (italics in the original):

I think you ought to study what would not be *practical* use to you in after-life. I am always glad to hear of a student studying engineering, architecture, medicine (– if he has the particular moral character which medicine requires), or any branch of applied science.

Don't forget at least to *think* about my advice to take a scientific course *if you can* (...) Japan, for at least fifty years to come, must turn all her talents to practical matters,—even her arts. It will be like America before the present century. The practical man—botanist, chemist, engineer, architect, will always be independent.

<sup>28</sup> Watanabe, "Supensā shokku to Meiji no chisei (1)", pp. 34-35.

<sup>29</sup> Allen E. Tuttle, "Lafcadio Hearn and the Ethics beyond Evolution", *English Poetry*, no. 2, December 1949, pp. 17-21, at p. 21.

must fail”.<sup>30</sup> Tuttle’s Hearn realized that those who won the battle for survival were not always “good” or “moral”, and also understood that moral criticism did not provide for any solution. Tuttle makes this point, citing Hearn: “It is not enough to be good if you are weak. You must try to be both good and strong. But if humanity has to choose between being good and being strong, then it is better to be strong. The goodness will come later on. But it will never come to the weak.”<sup>31</sup> What was needed was strength. This was the only way for Japan to regain the peaceful state of Old Japan, the ethical “Nirvana” that is to come “when competition ends”.<sup>32</sup>

Watanabe and Tuttle agree in their understanding of Hearn as a hard-headed and practical evolutionist who was emotionally attached to the virtues of traditional Japan, yet who also realized the necessity of modernization for the sake of survival. They both depict Hearn as someone who accepted the “ugly” aspects of the evolutionary process as a necessary evil, but who is still hopeful about the realization of a future “Nirvana”.

Tadokoro Mitsuo agrees with Watanabe and Tuttle that Hearn was aware of the necessity of Westernization for the sake of survival. However, he rejects the view that Hearn was an unconditional admirer of pre-industrial Japan. Of course, he is well aware of Hearn’s admiration for it—Old Japan, after all, was an ideal that Hearn once called “the domain of a morally superior humanity” filled with “the sentiment of reverence, the sentiment of loyalty, the spirit of self-sacrifice, and the spirit of patriotism”.<sup>33</sup> However, Tadokoro’s Hearn realized that this “ethical” state was the product of feudal oppression. In his essay on Hearn and evolutionism, Tadokoro introduces Hearn’s major criticism of traditional Japan, the lack of individual freedom which threatens fundamental human happiness. He depicts Hearn as a “Western ‘modern’ intellectual” who rejected “despotic” societies including that of Old Japan.<sup>34</sup> Tadokoro cites Hearn as follows: “[t]he [Japanese] ancestral cult permitted no individual freedom: nobody could live according to his or her pleasure; every one had to live according to rule” and “no mind developed by modern civilization could find happiness” in such a society.<sup>35</sup> Here, the West (understood as the embodiment of modern individual

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<sup>30</sup> Tuttle, “Lafcadio Hearn and the Ethics beyond Evolution”, p. 20. Lafcadio Hearn, letter to Chamberlain, dated 1894, in Bisland ed., *The Japanese Letters of Lafcadio Hearn*, pp. 325-27, at p. 326.

<sup>31</sup> Lafcadio Hearn, a lecture on Meredith, cited in Tuttle, “Lafcadio Hearn and the Ethics beyond Evolution”, p. 18.

<sup>32</sup> Lafcadio Hearn, letter to Chamberlain, dated 1894, in Bisland ed., *The Japanese Letters of Lafcadio Hearn*, p. 327.

<sup>33</sup> Hearn, *Japan*, pp. 15, 49-50.

<sup>34</sup> Tadokoro Mitsuo, “Hān no risō shakai—Supensā to Fesuteru do Kūranju o koete” (Hearn’s Utopia: Beyond Spencer and Fustel de Coulanges), *Hikaku bungaku kenkyū* (Studies on Comparative Literature), no. 47, April 1985, pp. 54-73, at p. 62.

<sup>35</sup> Hearn, *Japan*, pp. 77, 17, cited in Tadokoro, “Hān no risō shakai”, p. 63.



freedom) is depicted as a positive force to be adopted for the betterment of society. In other words, the West is necessary *not despite* its modernity, but *because* of it. This modernity, according to Tadokoro, promises to save Japan from destruction. As cited by Tadokoro, Hearn notes:

Now the absence of individual freedom in modern Japan would certainly appear to be nothing less than a national danger. For those very habits of unquestioning obedience and loyalty, and the respect for authority, which made feudal society possible, are likely to render a true democratic regime impossible and tend to bring about a state of anarchy.<sup>36</sup>

Thus, Tadokoro depicts Hearn as an evolutionist who advocated a positive and fundamental adoption of modern Western civilization. Tadokoro's Hearn resembles Fukuzawa Yukichi (1834-1901), who advocated Westernization not only because of its material (or technical) benefits but also its spiritual benefits. Nevertheless, Tadokoro shares with Watanabe and Tuttle the belief that Hearn was an evolutionist who was emotionally attached to Old Japan, yet believed that a move away was necessary for modern Japan to survive.

### **Tradition as Necessity: The Survival of Japan**

Unlike Watanabe, Tuttle and Tadokoro, who insisted on Hearn's belief in the necessity of discarding Old Japan for the sake of survival, some depict Hearn as an evolutionist who treated tradition as necessary for Japan's survival. Benchong Yu, for example, argues that Hearn disapproved not of modernization itself, but rather of "the general course" adopted by modern Japan, that is an overly hasty and unselective absorption of Western civilization.<sup>37</sup> Yu says: "By the virtues of the old school Hearn meant the importance of a sense of tradition which alone could successfully guide the new generation. He could foresee the future disaster into which the rising generation, with no sense of the past, would eventually plunge."<sup>38</sup>

There were two major reasons behind Hearn's decision to encourage Japan to be "conservative". One is his belief that a rapid intake of foreign (Western) civilization would destroy the native social system and undermine its independence. In "Jiu-jutsu" (1895), Hearn quotes Spencer with approval: "as soon as it [Japan] received an impact from European civilization (...) this

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<sup>36</sup> Hearn, *Japan*, pp. 428-29, cited in Tadokoro, *Hān no risō shakai*", p. 63.

<sup>37</sup> Yu, *An Ape of Gods*, p. 184.

<sup>38</sup> Yu, *An Ape of Gods*, p. 192.

fabric [of the Japanese society] began to fall to pieces”.<sup>39</sup> It was clear to Hearn that “the future of Japan must depend upon the maintenance of” native traditions,<sup>40</sup> for he believed that “[w]here Japan has remained true to her old moral ideals she has done nobly and well: where she has needlessly departed from them, sorrow and trouble have been the natural consequences”.<sup>41</sup> Hearn was concerned that the “premature opening” of Japan’s interior to foreign settlement “would condemn her to the fate of Hawaii”. That is: “That her land would pass into alien ownership, that her politics would regulated by foreign influence, that her independence would become only nominal, [and] that her ancient empire would eventually become transformed into a cosmopolitan industrial republic.”<sup>42</sup>

His anti-missionary attitude can be explained in this context. Hearn believed that the introduction of Christianity “necessitates the destruction not only of the native faith but of the native social system as well”.<sup>43</sup> Of course, he realized that Japan had imported Buddhism in the past, which is also a foreign religion. However, according to Hearn, Buddhism is more open and tolerant than Christianity, which he claimed to be “essentially intolerant, incorporating nothing and zealous to supplant everything”.<sup>44</sup> What Hearn meant here was that, unlike Buddhism, Christianity cannot co-exist with the ancestor worship that he viewed as being deeply rooted in Japanese (and East Asian) culture. To have to deny ancestor worship, in fact, proved a great deterrence for many Japanese in converting to Christianity.<sup>45</sup> For Hearn, a nation’s religion “is the synthesis of the whole ethical experience of a race” and it “cannot possibly be replaced in any natural manner by the ethical and social experience of a totally alien religion”.<sup>46</sup> If Japan was to avoid “the fate of Hawaii”, “the national course” should “not be controlled by statecraft only”, but should “be directed by something much less liable to error—the Race-Instinct”.<sup>47</sup>

In the appendix of his last work, *Japan*, Hearn introduces Spencer’s advice to a Japanese statesman “concerning the policy by which the Empire might be able to preserve its independence”. Spencer’s advice can be

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<sup>39</sup> Herbert Spencer, *First Principles*. Cited in Lafcadio Hearn, “Jiujutsu” in *Out of East: Reveries and Studies in New Japan*, Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1895, reprinted in Elizabeth Bisland ed., *The Writings of Lafcadio Hearn*, vol. 7, Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1922, pp. 141-85, at p. 167.

<sup>40</sup> Hearn, *Japan*, p. 286.

<sup>41</sup> Hearn, *Japan*, p. 418.

<sup>42</sup> Hearn, “Jiujutsu”, p. 169.

<sup>43</sup> Hearn, “Jiujutsu”, p. 160.

<sup>44</sup> Hearn, “Jiujutsu”, p. 160.

<sup>45</sup> On this issue, see Morioka Kiyomi, *Meiji Kirisuto kyōkai keisei no shakaishi* (A Social History of the Formation of Meiji Christian Churches), Tokyo: Tokyo daigaku shuppankai, 2005.

<sup>46</sup> Hearn, “Jiujutsu”, p. 159.

<sup>47</sup> Hearn, “Jiujutsu”, p. 166.

summarized in his own terms as “*keeping Americans and Europeans as much as possible at arm’s length*”.<sup>48</sup> In the last line of his appendix, Hearn concludes, “for the time being, her [Japan’s] conservatism is her salvation”.<sup>49</sup>

The second insight which led Hearn to advocate conservatism is related to a perceived weakness of the West, “[t]he wastefulness of Western life.” Since this is the main issue of the next section, I will only briefly mention it here. A short story, “A Conservative” (1896), depicts the process and determination of a young Japanese intellectual who, after his study in the West, realized the true worth and strength of his own country: “The wastefulness of Western life had impressed him more than its greed of pleasure and its capacity for pain: in the clean poverty of his own land he saw the strength; in her unselfish thrift, the sole chance of competing with the Occident.”<sup>50</sup>

In a lecture, “The Future of the Far East” (1894), Hearn again emphasizes the importance of preserving the old Japanese “love of what is plain and good and simple, and the hatred of useless luxury and extravagance”.<sup>51</sup> Hearn believed the Western way of living was too costly to be maintained, and the West obviously was *not* “the fittest to survive”.<sup>52</sup>

Japan ought to retain its traditional thrift because that was “the sole chance of competing with the West”. As Yu says, Hearn was convinced that “the future course of New Japan should be guided by the traditional principle”.<sup>53</sup> Yu attributes “the tragedy of modern Japan” to “the failure to unite science and tradition”.<sup>54</sup> Yu’s Hearn is an adherent of evolutionism who sees both tradition and Western science as crucial for survival. Unlike Watanabe and Tuttle, this Hearn sees the evolutionary process as a test of morality as well as of strength. For in Yu’s view, one cannot truly survive if one is not moral. Unfortunately, as Yu suggests, modern Japan has not always been moral.

### **East as Necessity: The Survival of the West**

Although Hearn is sometimes regarded as an “enemy of the West” (there is even a well-known essay titled “An Enemy of the West: Lafcadio Hearn” by

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<sup>48</sup> Hearn, *Japan*, pp. 459-64. Italics in original.

<sup>49</sup> Hearn, *Japan*, p. 464.

<sup>50</sup> Hearn, “A Conservative”, p. 420.

<sup>51</sup> Lafcadio Hearn, “The Future of the Far East”, a speech given at Kumamoto Daini High School on 27 January 1894, available at [http://www.kumamotokokufu-h.ed.jp/kumamoto/bungaku/y\\_future.html](http://www.kumamotokokufu-h.ed.jp/kumamoto/bungaku/y_future.html).

<sup>52</sup> Hearn, “Jiu-jutsu”, p. 184.

<sup>53</sup> Yu, *An Ape of Gods*, p. 192.

<sup>54</sup> Yu, *An Ape of Gods*, p. 193.

Matthew Josephson),<sup>55</sup> there is evidence that Hearn was also concerned for the survival of the West. Hearn's insistence on the decline of the West and the rise of the East can even be read as a version of the Yellow Peril. It is in fact not impossible to find remarks that imply that a superior race was threatened by an inferior race. In "Jiu-jutsu", he notes: "To the query, 'Are we [Westerners] not the Superior Race?' we may emphatically answer 'Yes'; but this affirmative will not satisfactorily answer a still more important question, 'Are we the fittest to survive?'"<sup>56</sup>

Hearn's answer to the second question was negative. It is in this context that Iikura Akira in his work on the Yellow Peril asks whether or not Hearn was a "'Yellow Peril' Theorist".<sup>57</sup> Perhaps unsurprisingly, however, critics, including Iikura himself, Hashimoto Yorimitsu and Satomi Shigemi, reject this view of Hearn.<sup>58</sup> Hashimoto, for example, stresses the difference between Hearn's arguments and Charles Pearson's (1830-1894) Yellow Peril on which Hearn's position was based. According to Hashimoto, Pearson developed his theory of the Yellow Peril on the preposition that Eastern nations are inferior and therefore that the decline of the West (and the rise of the East) meant a decline in civilization. Hearn, on the other hand, assumes that the peoples of Far Eastern nations, including Japan and China, are just as intelligent and are capable of inheriting (Western) knowledge. The decline of the West therefore does not necessarily mean the decline of civilization.<sup>59</sup> In a letter to Chamberlain (1893), he notes: "I think it highly probable that the white races, after having bequeathed all their knowledge to the Orient, will

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<sup>55</sup> Matthew Josephson, "An Enemy of the West: Lafcadio Hearn", in Matthew Josephson, *Portrait of the Artist as American*, New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1930, pp. 199-231. Ikeno explains that because of Hearn's excessive praise for Old Japan, Hearn's works came to be regarded as "enemy literature" (*tekisei bungaku*) in England and America. Ikeno Makoto, *Koizumi Yakumo to Matsue jidai* (Koizumi Yakumo and the Matsue Period), Tokyo: Chūsekisha, 2004, p. 290.

<sup>56</sup> Hearn, "Jiu-jutsu", p. 184.

<sup>57</sup> Iikura Akira, *Ierō periru no shinwa—Teikoku Nihon to "kōka" no gyakusetsu* (The Myth of the Yellow Peril: The Japanese Empire and the Paradox of the "Yellow Peril"), Tokyo: Sairyūsha, 2004, Chapter 7.

<sup>58</sup> Hashimoto Yorimitsu, "TōA mirai ron—Chāruzu Piason no kōka ron to Rafukadio Hān ni okeru sono hen'yō" (On the Future of the Far East: Charles Pearson's Yellow Peril and its Transmission in Lafcadio Hearn), *Hikakku bungaku* (Comparative Literature), vol. 42, 2000, pp. 75-89. Also see Hashimoto Yorimitsu, "Rafukadio Hān to kōka ron—Hān no jiji hihyō to sono juyō o megutte" (Lafcadio Hearn and the Yellow Peril: On Hearn's Political Essays and their Reception), *Herun* (Lafcadio Hearn), 2004 extra edition, pp. 50-52. Satomi Shigemi, "Lafcadio Hearn to Herbert Spencer—'The Future of the Far East' o chūshin ni" (Lafcadio Hearn and Herbert Spencer: On "The Future of the Far East"), *Bungakubu ronsō* (Literary Criticism), vol. 59, March, 1998, pp. 53-68.

<sup>59</sup> Hashimoto, "TōA mirai ron", p. 83.

ultimately disappear, just as the ichthyosaurus and other marvellous creatures have disappeared,—simply because of the cost of their structure.”<sup>60</sup>

Why then did Hearn think the West would fail in competition with Far Eastern nations? First, the West does not have, in Hearn’s terms, the “powers of self-adaptation”. According to Hearn, unlike Western nations, Far Eastern nations have “immeasurable capacities of assimilation” and the “powers of self-adaptation to almost any environment between the Arctic and Antarctic Circles”.<sup>61</sup>

Second, as noted earlier, the East is free from “[t]he wastefulness of Western life”. While “the Occidental cannot even live except at a cost sufficient for the maintenance of twenty Oriental lives” and “[o]ur [Western] physical machinery requires a fuel too costly to pay for the running of it”, the “Oriental” can live on a “simple” diet of rice.<sup>62</sup> Now facing an “enormous increase” in population, the West which “cannot feed itself” is “striving to spread themselves [itself] all over the world” with the help of “the wonderful inventions in science, in art, in industry”.<sup>63</sup> The West had already experienced “various natural obstacles”, but when it first encountered China “its further advance was opposed by something very different from natural obstacles”, that is, “an intelligence of which the West had previously no suspicion”. If “all the intelligence is on one side”, the intelligent race will emerge victorious, but “when the two races are equal as to intelligence, while differing greatly in power of endurance and in economical capacity, the more enduring and economical race must win”.<sup>64</sup>

If Hearn were truly the “enemy of the West”, he might have simply rejoiced in the decline of the West and the rise of the East. Yu, however, insists that Hearn’s concern for survival was directed not only to Japan but also to the West. That is, Hearn thought that the West needed to learn from the East in order to survive.

Citing Hearn, Yu notes that Hearn saw a danger to the West in its “overemphasis on the individual” and the “unbridled expansion of the individual”.<sup>65</sup> According to Yu, this is what makes the West “a mere aggregate of individuals, each striving to expand his own individuality at the expense of that of everyone else”.<sup>66</sup> Tadokoro too, despite (or because of) his insistence on individual freedom, is aware of the shortcomings of the West, which “has become the slave of its own insatiable pursuit of freedom”.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Lafcadio Hearn, letter to Chamberlain, dated 16 September 1893, in Bisland ed., *The Japanese Letters of Lafcadio Hearn*, pp. 166-68, at p. 167.

<sup>61</sup> Hearn, “Jiu-jutsu”, p. 182.

<sup>62</sup> Hearn, “Jiu-jutsu”, pp. 184-85.

<sup>63</sup> Hearn, “The Future of the Far East”.

<sup>64</sup> Hearn, “The Future of the Far East”.

<sup>65</sup> Yu, *An Ape of Gods*, pp. 238, 227.

<sup>66</sup> Yu, *An Ape of Gods*, pp. 226-27.

<sup>67</sup> Tadokoro, “Hān no risō shakai”, p. 70.

This is also the cause of “wastefulness”, for what the West is doing in the name of the struggle for existence has more to do with gluttony and luxury than with necessity. The struggle for survival has “lost its own justification”,<sup>68</sup> and the modern West “has turned into a shambles named egoistic survival”.<sup>69</sup>

Clearly some restraint on individuality is required and here, Hearn thought, the West needs the East. For Hearn, the East represents the individual “as a part of a larger framework”.<sup>70</sup> The East views an individual as a “member of the family, of society, of the universe”.<sup>71</sup> As Yu notes, Old Japan symbolized this.<sup>72</sup> Hearn discovered a communitarian (or new liberal) solution or “the possibilities of some higher future” in “the ideals of Old Japan”, that is, “instinctive unselfishness, a common desire to find the joy of life in making happiness for others, a universal sense of moral beauty”.<sup>73</sup> What was celebrated in traditional Japan was self-sacrifice, and what Hearn most admired was that this was “to a great extent voluntary”.<sup>74</sup> Voluntary self-sacrifice, he thought, was “the highest possible morality from any religious standpoint”.<sup>75</sup>

In hindsight, it is clear that Hearn’s ideas have much in common with Japan’s position during the Second World War. He was in fact mobilized in pursuit of the goals of wartime militarism and nationalism. Japan’s self-imposed mission (at least officially) was to save the world from the “shambles” caused by a Western (Anglo-Saxon) liberalism.<sup>76</sup> Japan fought against Western liberalism and advocated a Japanese altruism that was distinguished from other forms of collectivism such as socialism because of its “voluntary” nature. Thus, it was perhaps inevitable that Hearn’s works were used for the wartime propaganda to promote altruism. (After the war, however, Koizumi Kazuo, his eldest son, criticized the wartime “distortion” of his father’s works.<sup>77</sup>)

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<sup>68</sup> Yu, *An Ape of Gods*, p. 227.

<sup>69</sup> Tadokoro, “Hān no risō shakai”, p. 70.

<sup>70</sup> Yu, *An Ape of Gods*, p. 238.

<sup>71</sup> Charles A. Moore, “Comparative Philosophies of Life”, in Charles A. Moore ed., *Philosophy—East and West*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1946, p. 307, cited in Yu, *An Ape of Gods*, p. 238

<sup>72</sup> Yu, *An Ape of Gods*, p. 238.

<sup>73</sup> Hearn, *Japan*, p. 438.

<sup>74</sup> Yu, *An Ape of Gods*, p. 225.

<sup>75</sup> Lafcadio Hearn, letter to Chamberlain, dated 14 January 1893, included in Bisland ed., *The Japanese Letters of Lafcadio Hearn*, pp. 30-33, at p. 32. Cited in Yu, *An Ape of Gods*, p. 225.

<sup>76</sup> Eizawa Kōji, “*Dai tōa kyōeiken*” no shisō (The Philosophy of “The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere”), Tokyo: Kōdansha gendai shinsho, 1995.

<sup>77</sup> Koizumi Kazuo, *Chichi Koizumi Yakumo* (My Father, Koizumi Yakumo), Tokyo: Koyama shoten, 1950.

In fact, as Yu notes, Hearn questions the validity of his attachment to pre-modern Japan.<sup>78</sup> Hearn says: “Are we really charmed by the results of a social discipline that refused to recognize the individual?—enamored of a cult that exacted the suppression of personality?” The answer with which Hearn responds is “No”.<sup>79</sup> For, as seen in Tadokoro’s depiction of him, Hearn sides with “individual freedom”. Yu also emphasizes Hearn’s insistence on Japan’s need for (more) “individual freedom”. Hearn claims that “the ideals of Old Japan” present “the possibilities of some higher future” or the creation of a *real* Utopia. (This is where Yu, and Tadokoro, differ from Watanabe and Tuttle who view Old Japan *itself* as a Utopia.)

It is not difficult to see why Hearn’s idealization of Japan’s pre-modern past has been viewed (and critically derided) as a simplistic Romanticism. On the other hand, there was a historical context which explains why Hearn perceived traditional Japan as he did. Watabnabe Kyōji explains the psychology of those Westerners (including Hearn) who idealized Old Japan as follows:

I do not care whether or not Old Japan deserves the label of “paradise”, whether or not Old Japan is just an illusion glimpsed by foreigners (...) What is important is that Old Japan appeared as a cultural shock in the eyes of foreigners. In their idealization of Old Japan can be found the significance of modern society—or more precisely industrial society—as human experience. This explains how pre-industrialized Japan appeared from the viewpoint of the industrialized West.<sup>80</sup>

The pre-industrialized nature of Old Japan, of course, does explain why Japan was *idealized*, and fails to explain why *Japan*, of all non-industrial societies, was idealized. Earl Miner, a noted American Japanologist, tries to address this question by attributing the idealization to Japan’s combination of a “high degree of civilization” with “the additional grace for world weary

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<sup>78</sup> Yu, *An Ape of Gods*, p. 239.

<sup>79</sup> Hearn, *Japan*, p. 438.

<sup>80</sup> Watabnabe Kyōji, *Yukishi yo no omokage* (Reminiscences of a Vanished Past), Tokyo: Ashi shobō, 1998, p. 73. Hearn’s view of Old Japan as a “paradise” and his antagonism to industrialism is clearly expressed in the following:

Perhaps it will be only when our blind aggressive industrialism has wasted and sterilized their [Japanese] paradise—substituting everywhere for beauty the utilitarian, the conventional, the vulgar, the utterly hideous—that we shall begin with remorseful amazement to comprehend the charm of that which we destroyed.

Lafcadio Hearn, “Insect-Musicians”, first published in Lafcadio Hearn, *Exotics and Retrospectives*, Boston: Little Brown Co., 1898, reprinted in Elizabeth Bisland ed., *The Writings of Lafcadio Hearn*, vol. 9, Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1922, pp. 30-63, at p. 63.

Westerners of new and idealized forms of behavior and art”.<sup>81</sup> (In this sense, Watanabe and Tuttle’s interpretation of Old Japan as an “equilibrium” may not necessarily be far-fetched.)

Hearn’s idealization represents “a dilemma which profoundly disturbed many thinkers in the Victorian world”. As Yu notes, this dilemma was “the moral basis of modern industrial and commercial society”.<sup>82</sup> The “moral beauty” that was self-sacrifice was viewed as the antithesis of the selfishness of industrial society. Indeed, in the works of contemporaries such as Oscar Wilde’s *The Happy Prince* (1888) and Charles Dickens’s *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859), self-sacrifice is extolled as a virtue.

Unlike many of his contemporaries who questioned the direction of the modern West, Hearn felt no sympathy with communism or socialism. This was because socialism’s “basic doctrine of equalization is ‘to do away with necessity’, the mother of invention in industry, sciences and arts, and thus it disregards individual ability, capacity, desires and so forth”.<sup>83</sup> Here, Hearn again remains true to Herbert Spencer and sides with “individual freedom”, rejecting the notion that anti-liberalism could be a solution. As mentioned above, his works were used for wartime propaganda and in the wartime edition of *Japan*, the chapter in which he stressed individual freedom was deleted.<sup>84</sup>

Hearn believed that the West needed to implement a greater regulation of the individual. The West needs the East as much as the East needs the West. Thus, he found his solution in “the ideals of Old Japan” that could save the West as well as the New Japan which was modelled on the West.

## Conclusion

In his *Supensā to Nihon kindai* (Spencer and Modern Japan) published in 1983, Yamashita introduces the diversity of the various receptions of Herbert Spencer in early Meiji Japan. At the time, Herbert Spencer was highly influential, and was read by both radical and conservative intellectuals. Indeed, Spencer’s philosophy was used by members of the radical “Freedom

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<sup>81</sup> Earl Miner, *The Japanese Tradition in British and American Literature*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1958, p. 270.

<sup>82</sup> Yu, *An Ape of Gods*, p. 226.

<sup>83</sup> Lafcadio Hearn, “Communism”, *Item*, 17 August 1878, pp. 128-30. Cited in Yu, *An Ape of Gods*, p. 232.

<sup>84</sup> The wartime versions of *Japan: An Attempt at Interpretation* were published in 1938 and 1942 from Daiichi shobō. In both versions, the chapter “Industrial Danger” in which Hearn stressed the necessity of individual freedom to compete with British and American capitalism was omitted. See Ikehashi Tatsuo, “Hān no mita hyakunen mae no Nihon, Ajia, Ōbei soshite genzai” (Japan, Asia, and the West that Hearn Witnessed a Century Ago and Today), *Herun* (Lafcadio Hearn), 2004 extra edition, pp. 41-44, at pp. 42-43.



and People's Rights Movement" (*jiyū minken undō*) and by members of the conservative government which suppressed this movement—and it was used by both to justify their respective positions. The former stressed Spencer's "individual freedom" and "laissez-faire", while the latter emphasized the importance of "social organism" in his thought.<sup>85</sup>

Interpretations of Hearn as an evolutionist are just as diverse as interpretations of his "teacher", Spencer. As we have seen here, Watanabe and Tuttle read Spencer's evolutionism as the cycle of "dissolution" represented by New Japan and "equilibrium" represented by Old Japan. They depict Hearn as a hard-headed evolutionist who understood the necessity of New Japan's movement away from the Old Japan to which he was so emotionally attached.

As was the case in Watanabe and Tuttle, Tadokoro's Hearn is emotionally attached to traditional Japan, but at the same time realizes its ethical state was the product of an absence of "individual freedom". Such interpretation of Hearn insists that modern Japan ought to move away from traditional Japan because "individual freedom" is necessary for survival. Yu focuses on the conservative "social organism" aspect of Hearn's evolutionism. Unlike Watanabe, Tuttle and Tadokoro, Yu understands Hearn's attachment to tradition as based on something more than emotion. Because he viewed society as an organic whole, Yu's Hearn foresees the danger of modern Japan falling apart if it rejects completely its own native traditions. Moreover, Yu's Hearn understands that evolution co-exists with ethics. Unlike Watanabe and Tuttle, who thought that ethics could only be achieved in a state of "equilibrium", the peaceful state that is achieved only after an ugly survival race, Yu (and perhaps Tadokoro too) stressed the ethical nature of the evolutionary process. One has to be good to survive. This is why Yu's Hearn directs his concern not only to Japan but also to the West on which modern Japan modelled itself. What New Japan and the West needed to learn from Old Japan is the ethic of the "simple life" and the idea of the individual "as a part of a larger framework".

Since he makes many contradictory remarks, Hearn has been interpreted in diverse ways. He is sometimes seen as a Romantic author, and at other times as an apologist for wartime militarism. As we have seen above, the same thing can be said even if we narrow the focus to Hearn as a supporter of evolutionism. (Though in this case, the diversity may be related not only to his contradictory remarks but also to the diversity of the receptions of Spencer's thought.)

What is interesting here is that the diversity in the receptions of Spencer and Hearn as theorists of evolutionism originates from the same source—the conflict between modernization and tradition faced by modern

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<sup>85</sup> Yamashita, *Supensā to Nihon kindai*.

Japan. As was also the case with Spencer, Hearn too has been used to discuss which direction Japan ought to take. Hearn reflects the paradoxical nature of modern Japan and this is why Hearn is still so important in Japan. Through the receptions of Hearn, we can learn not only about Hearn himself but the socio-political realities faced by modern Japan. This remains one of the greatest attractions of Hearn studies.