

## The Early Intellectual Orientation of Takahashi Toru: The Pre-Chosŏn Period

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This article explores the historical and educational background of Takahashi Toru (1868–1967), a pioneering scholar in the history of Chosŏn Confucianism. Previous research on Takahashi’s colonial historiography has focused mainly on his personal characteristics, whereas this article looks at the period in his life which most influenced his worldview and subsequent scholarship. To do this, it focuses on two articles he published in the year he graduated from the Department of Chinese Studies at Tokyo Imperial University. By looking at the professors who influenced him and their scholarly orientations, it is possible to identify the origins of his intellectual outlook. Shigeno Yasutsugu, a textual critic, taught him positivistic source critique, while Ludwig Riess, a Rankean, inspired Takahashi’s tendency to view nations as the main actors in history and to describe them in terms of national characteristics. In addition, Inoue Tetsujiro, an Orientalist scholar, implanted in Takahashi his own understanding of the history of Chinese philosophy. This viewpoint prioritizes philosophy over Chinese exegesis, and endorses the superiority of socially engaged Confucianism. This article shows that Takahashi’s later view that “*Zhuzixue* is monotonous” is a result of his acceptance of Inoue’s Orientalist approach to Chinese philosophy. I argue that the scholarly framework on the history of philosophy presented in the two Takahashi articles was the foundation for his later research on the history of Chosŏn Confucianism. He adopted a positivistic research approach based on the preconception that *Zhuzixue* was simplistic. At the same time, he endeavored to uncover distinctive national characteristics of the Chosŏn people.

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\* This work was supported by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea and the National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF-2023S1A5A2A 01078700).

**Keywords:** Takahashi Toru, textual criticism, Rankean historiography, Oriental Studies, Inoue Tetsujiro

## Introduction

Takahashi Toru 高橋亨 (1878–1967) was a renowned scholar of Chosŏn Confucianism who propagated the stereotypical notions of Confucianism and the character of the Chosŏn people as essentially “stagnant” and “dependent.”<sup>1</sup> Korean scholars, both at the time and since, have offered multiple critiques of his views on Chosŏn Confucianism, but his influence is still prevalent.<sup>2</sup> Many of these critiques argue, unsurprisingly, that his views merely reflected a colonialist perspective of history. That said, it is difficult to find an alternative perspective on the history of Chosŏn Confucianism which provides a decisive theoretical rebuttal of Takahashi. Contemporaries such as Chang Chiyŏn 張志淵 (1864–1921) and Chŏng Inbo 鄭寅普 (1893–1950) each wrote histories of Chosŏn Confucianism which emphasized its autonomous qualities. Both Chang and Chŏng criticized the dogmatic neo-Confucian literati of Chosŏn, while identifying the genuine quality of Chosŏn Confucianism as the ideal type of *Zhuḡixue* 朱子學 or *Yangmingxue* 陽明學. That is, their portrayals of the essence of Chosŏn Confucianism—Chang depicted it as the ideal type of *Zhuḡixue*, while Chŏng saw it as *Yangmingxue* 陽明學—are akin to the characteristics of *Sirhak* 實學.<sup>3</sup> Given that both were critical of the dogmatic neo-Confucianism of Chosŏn, however, they did not object to Takahashi’s criticism that Chosŏn society was under the unyielding domination of *Zhuḡixue*. Modern Korean academics have disagreed with Takahashi’s stance on the factionalism of Confucian scholars and suggested that academic discussions and political factions belonged to distinctive segments of Chosŏn society. However, their rebuttals uphold the binary framework of the *churi* 主理 and *chugi* 主氣 schools of thought through which Takahashi characterized Chosŏn Confucianism.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Takahashi repeatedly argued the following in his work: “In terms of the ideological characteristics of the Chosŏn people, there is a noticeable tendency towards stagnancy and dependency. Stagnancy refers to the inclination to adhere to an ideology once it has been accepted and to remain stagnant without being influenced, regardless of the introduction of new ideologies. Dependency, on the other hand, signifies that they never generated any independent or innovative ideologies apart from adopting Chinese thought. Consequently, Chosŏn Confucianism essentially equates to *Zhuḡixue*. The history of Chosŏn Confucianism is essentially the history of *Zhuḡixue*.” Takahashi Toru, *Chŏsen shisŏshi taikēi 1: Richōbukyō* (Osaka Hobunkan, 1929), 13.

<sup>2</sup> His analysis used the *churi* 主理 - *chugi* 主氣 framework, made up of the Yŏngnam 嶺南 school, which upheld *churi*, and the Kiho 畿湖 school, which upheld *chugi*. A compromise between the two was the Nongam 農巖 school. Contemporary Korean scholars who study Chosŏn Confucianism continue to embrace this perspective. Takahashi Toru, “Richō jugakushi niokeru shuri shukiha no hattatsu (1929),” in Takahashi Toru Chŏsen jugaku ronshū, ed. and trans. Kawahara Hideki and Kim Kwangnae (Tōkyō: Chisen Shokan, 2011), 175–350.

<sup>3</sup> See Chang Chiyŏn, *Chŏsen yugyo yŏnwŏn* (Kyŏngsŏng: Hoedong Sŏgwān, 1922); and Chŏng Inbo, “Yangmyŏnghak yŏllon,” *Tonga Ilbo* September 8–December 17, 1933.

<sup>4</sup> Kim Kyŏngnae provides a comprehensive summary of the *churi-chugi* framework and attempts to overcome this binary, in “Tak’ahasi Toru ū Chosŏn yŏn’gu wa sadaejuū ron,” *Sabak yŏn’gu* 145 (2022): 298n3. Kim T’aenyŏn’s attempts to transcend this binary by seeing *Zhuḡixue* as encompassing not only a theoretical system but also a

In Japanese academia, on the other hand, the status of Takahashi as a seminal scholar of Chosŏn Confucianism remains undisputed. Uno Tetsuto 宇野哲人 (1875–1974), a senior alumnus of Takahashi and a professor of Chinese philosophy at the Imperial University of Tokyo, lauded Takahashi: “The most accomplished scholar of Chosŏn Confucianism since the mid-Meiji period is Dr. Takahashi Toru, a former professor at Keijō Imperial University (Keijō Teikoku Daigaku 京城帝國大學校), who applied Western methods of studying philosophy and the history of philosophy to Oriental philosophy.”<sup>5</sup> Kawahara Hideki gushes that Takahashi’s research on Chosŏn Confucianism is not only “marked by a keen and accurate analysis of the philosophy and a firm logical consistency,” but also is “unsurpassed by any previous works on the history of intellectual ideas in his discussion on the profundity of the idea, let alone any works of social history and bibliography.”<sup>6</sup>

Despite their radically different responses to Takahashi, Korean and Japanese scholars agree on some essential facts. First, Takahashi assembled a vast array of primary sources on Chosŏn religion and folklore, including on Buddhism, as well as on his main field of Chosŏn Confucianism.<sup>7</sup> In addition, he scrutinized these sources with great thoroughness, and it was he who produced the first modern account of the history of Chosŏn Confucianism.

During his undergraduate years, Takahashi was predominantly interested in ancient Chinese philosophy, particularly in *The Book of Changes* (*Yijing* 易經). His Tokyo University undergraduate dissertation was entitled “Understanding Dr. Nemoto’s Interpretation of *The Book of Changes* through a Critique of the Han Dynasty Reception of *The Book of Changes*” (漢易を難して根本博士の易説に及ぶ).<sup>8</sup> He had planned to continue writing about *The Book of Changes*,<sup>9</sup> but instead he ended up moving to Chosŏn.<sup>10</sup> He then changed the focus of his research to Chosŏn during his stay in the country, as did Fujitsuka Chikashi 藤塚隣 (1879–1948) and Abe Yoshio 阿部吉雄 (1905–78), both professors of Chinese philosophy who taught at Keijō Imperial University.<sup>11</sup>

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practical guide, whereas Takahashi focused solely on philosophical metaphysics. See Kim T’aenyŏn, “Hak an esŏ ch’ŏrhaksa ro - Chosŏn yugyosa sŏsul ūi kwanjŏm kwa pangsik e taehan kŏmt’o,” *Han’gukhak yŏn’gu* 23 (2010): 53–59.

<sup>5</sup> Uno Tech’ūt’o, “Ilbon e issŏsŏ ūi i t’oegye yŏn’gu,” trans. Yi In’gi, *T’oegye hakpo* 1(1973): 24.

<sup>6</sup> Kawahara Hideki, “Exposition,” in *Takahashi Toru Chōsen jugaku ronshū*, ed. and trans. Kawahara Hideki and Kim Kwangnae (Tōkyō: Chisen Shokan, 2011), 439.

<sup>7</sup> Takashi was able to gather both privately owned books and those from religious institutions due to his authority as a deputy investigator of the Governor-General of Chōsen. When he was initially appointed as the first Deputy Religion Investigator of the Governor-General of Chōsen, he advised Governor-General Terauchi 寺内 to acquire and catalogue Chosŏn literature. “Takahashi sensei nenpuryaku,” *Chōsen gakuhō* 14 (1959): 4.

<sup>8</sup> He published this over several issues in *Tetsugaku zasshi*. Takahashi Toru, “Kaneki o nanshite nemoto hakase no ekisetsu ni oyobu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 189 (November 1902), 190 (December 1902), and 193 (March 1903).

<sup>9</sup> “I would like to discuss more details in my humble work *Philosophy of The Book of Changes* 易哲學 which will be published in the near future.” Takahashi Toru, “Kaneki o nanshite nemoto hakase no ekisetsu ni oyobu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 190 (December 1902): 52.

<sup>10</sup> After he returned to Japan in 1945, he opened a fortune telling business named Junsui Ekidan 純粹易斷, which used *The Book of Changes*, “Takahashi sensei nenpuryaku,” 11.

<sup>11</sup> Hujitsuka, who taught Chinese philosophy at Keijō Imperial University between 1928 and 1940, had initially studied Qing textual criticism in Japan. After moving to Chosŏn, however, he explored the spread of Qing dynasty

This article argues that Takahashi was a product of his time, and that his research was shaped within the context of Oriental studies during the early twentieth century. Academic research on Takahashi as conducted by Korean scholars has so far “placed excessive emphasis on condemning the individual researcher [Takahashi] for promoting a ‘negative’ view of Chosŏn, while overlooking critical perspectives on the structural aspects of the academic system that may have influenced his biases.”<sup>12</sup> This article, therefore, investigates the background of Japanese Oriental studies against which Takahashi developed his intellectual perspective. To this end, it examines his earliest scholarly works, including his undergraduate dissertation and another article, “A Review of the *Philosophy of Yang Zhu and Mozi* by Mr. Takase, B.A.” (高瀬文學士著楊墨哲學を評す).<sup>13</sup> These early works have not received a great deal of attention. However, they are, in fact, historical sources of great import which allow us to understand Takahashi as a product of his time.

The primary focus of this article will therefore be to conduct a detailed analysis of the early works of Takahashi and to delve into the influences that shaped his academic orientations, rather than on criticizing his arguments. This article is thus intended to serve as a roadmap for investigating how his research on Chosŏn was influenced by his time at the University of Tokyo, and how it subsequently evolved throughout his academic career.

## Takahashi’s Education at the Imperial University of Tokyo

When the University of Tokyo opened in 1877, the Faculty of Letters had two divisions. The first comprised the departments of history, philosophy, and political science, and the second was the department of Chinese and Japanese Classics (*wakan bungaku* 和漢文學). Since the University of Tokyo was created by the merger of Kaisei 開成 Academy and the Tokyo Medical School, it inherited the principal goal of the previous institutions, which had sought to master Western science and technology using foreign instructors.<sup>14</sup> In fact, the Faculty of Letters came about primarily due to the efforts and vision of Kato Hiroyuki

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textual criticism to Chosŏn. Abe Yoshio, who succeeded Hujitsuka, studied Xunzi in Japan. Nevertheless, his research focus shifted to Yi Hwang and his philosophical relationship with Japanese *Zhuixue*. These decisions reflected the expectation that Keijō Imperial University would function as an imperial university within the colony, striving to excel in Orientalist studies. For the research orientation of Hujitsuka and Abe, see Chōng Chunyōng, “Kuksa wa tongyanghak sai ūi chobūn t’ūm: Kyōngsōng Cheguk Tachak kwa singminji ūi ‘tongyang munhwa yōn’gu,” *Yōksa munje yōn’gu* 41 (2019): 289–339.

<sup>12</sup> Mitsui Tak’asi, “Ch’ōnhwangje wa ‘kūndae yōksahak’ kwa ūi t’ūmsae: Tongyang sahakcha Sirat’ori Kurak’ich’i ūi saron/siron kwa kū nonbōp,” in *Singminjuūi yōksabak kwa cheguk: T’alsingminjuūi yōksabak yōn’gu rŭl wibayō*, edited by Yun Haedong and Yi Sōngsi (Sōul: Ch’aek kwa Hamkke, 2016), 162. Mitsui did not refer to Takahashi. Instead, he pointed out a general trend of criticism in Japan after World War II regarding the “modern history that produced the colonial view.”

<sup>13</sup> Published in two installments. Takahashi Toru, “Takase bungakushi cho yōbokutetsugaku o hyōsu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 186 (August 1902) and 187 (September 1902).

<sup>14</sup> Tōkyō Daigaku hyakunenshi henshū iinkai, *Tōkyō Daigaku hyakunenshi bukyokushi ichi* (Tōkyō: Tōkyō Daigaku, 1986), 502.

加藤弘之 (1836–1916), the first president of the Faculties of Law, Science, and Letters. In particular, the Department of Chinese and Japanese Classics was established in response to the concern that “proper Oriental culture” would be overlooked and that “the lineage of Confucian scholarship” would be discontinued as new cultural and academic trends became fashionable.<sup>15</sup> Kato’s concern was not unfounded, given that the Department of Chinese and Japanese Classics had only two graduates up to 1886, when the University of Tokyo was renamed Tokyo Imperial University (Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku 東京帝國大學).<sup>16</sup> Both divisions of the Faculty of Letters had the same goal, of “nurturing ideologues who can participate in the progress of sociopolitical reality.”<sup>17</sup> As such, the college was expected to serve the practical goals of the nation. In particular, the first division, which was focused on Western academic knowledge, was to “learn the ways of living and the epistemological approach of Anglo-American societies and nations, and thus embody an international perspective,” whereas the second division was to “critically review the cultural heritage of Japan, to inspire students to develop a new national perspective.”<sup>18</sup>

Immediately before the university became Tokyo Imperial University, the Department of Chinese and Japanese Classics split into the Department of Japanese Classics (Wabun Gakka 和文學科) and the Department of Chinese Classics (Kambun Gakka 漢文學科). This meant that the Department of Chinese Classics became focused on the teaching of the Chinese classical cannon (*jing shi zhi ji* 經史子集). When the Department of Japanese National History was established in 1889, the departments of Japanese Classics and Chinese Classics were renamed the Department of the National Literature (Kokubun-ka 國文科) and the Department of Chinese Studies (Kangaku-ka 漢學科). In 1897, the Department of Chinese Studies created major courses in canonical studies, historical studies, and literary studies. In 1904, another reorganization integrated all the departments in the Faculty of Letters into three streams: philosophy, history and literature. As a result, the Department of Chinese Studies was divided into the three separate departments in Chinese Philosophy, Chinese History, and Chinese Literature.<sup>19</sup> Takahashi enrolled in the department in September 1898, which meant that he attended the university when the division between canonical, historical, and literary studies was in force in the Department of Chinese Studies. He chose to major in historical studies.<sup>20</sup>

There is limited information available about Takahashi’s life prior to his enrollment in university. However, his father was a Chinese studies teacher. Born in a small town in Niigata 新潟, he attended several different elementary schools, changing schools every time his father moved to a new school. He later attended Niigata Prefectural Middle School and ultimately

<sup>15</sup> Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku, *Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku gojūnenshi jō* (Tōkyō: Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku, 1932), 685–86.

<sup>16</sup> Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku, *Teikoku Daigaku ichiran: Meiji 28 nen–Meiji 29 nen* (Tōkyō: Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku, 1895), 467–69.

<sup>17</sup> Tōkyō Daigaku hyakunenshi henshū iinkai, *Tōkyō Daigaku hyakunenshi bukyōkushi ichi*, 503.

<sup>18</sup> Tōkyō Daigaku hyakunenshi henshū iinkai, *Tōkyō Daigaku hyakunenshi bukyōkushi ichi*, 502–03.

<sup>19</sup> Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku, *Teikoku Daigaku ichiran*, 363–64.

<sup>20</sup> Tōkyō Daigaku hyakunenshi henshū iinkai, *Tōkyō Daigaku hyakunenshi bukyōkushi ichi*, 509.

graduated from the 4th High School with a specialization in Chinese studies. Under the tutelage of his father, he acquired substantial knowledge of Chinese studies even before his enrollment at Tokyo Imperial University.<sup>21</sup>

During his time in the Department of Chinese Studies, he also had to study English, Western history, and Western philosophy. This was to avoid “the danger of becoming a reactionary by only reading Chinese and Japanese classics.”<sup>22</sup> As an undergraduate between September 1898 and July 1902, in addition to majoring in the Chinese canon and Chinese history and literature, he also received a comprehensive liberal arts education in Western languages, Oriental and Western philosophy, and history.<sup>23</sup>

Initially, Takahashi learned Classical Chinese and Chinese linguistics from Shigeno Yasutsugu 重野安繹 (1827–1910). Shigeno had previously led the national historiography project of the Japanese government, and in 1888, when this was transferred to the Imperial University of Tokyo, he became a professor in the Faculty of Letters, while also serving on the editorial committee of the national historiography project.<sup>24</sup> Shigeno is renowned as a pioneer among modern Japanese historians for being the first Japanese academic to make use of a positivist historical methodology. An expert in Qing-dynasty textual criticism of the Classical Chinese canon (*Kōshōgaku* 考證學), Shigeno argued that modern Western inductive methods were consistent with the textual criticism of Classical Chinese.<sup>25</sup>

The second professor to teach Takahashi was Nemoto Michiaki 根本通明 (1822–1906), the oldest member of the Imperial University of Tokyo faculty. His focus in his teaching was primarily on the translation and interpretation of *The Book of Changes*.<sup>26</sup> He dedicated most his classes to achieving a holistic comprehension of this work. Nemoto belonged to the last generation of traditional Confucian literati and was the last dean of the Confucian academy (*bankō* 藩校) at Akita 秋田. Beyond his academic pursuits, he had also served as a soldier, receiving the prestigious First-Grade Military Merit Award for his contributions to the anti-shogunate movement (*tōbaku* 討幕). This movement played a significant role in consolidating the power of the emperor after the turbulent civil war between anti-shogunate and pro-shogunate (*sabaku* 佐幕) factions. Nemoto’s philosophical views aligned with his support for the imperial regime. He asserted, “Confucius and the Duke of Zhou disliked revolutions. The emperor has a single lineage, and the most important and fixed principle is that the line

<sup>21</sup> “Takahashi sensei nenpuryaku,” 1–2.

<sup>22</sup> Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku, *Teikoku Daigaku ichiran*, 686.

<sup>23</sup> I gained knowledge from *gakakatei* 學科課程 of *Teikoku Daigaku ichiran* 帝國大學一覽 between 1898 and 1902 regarding the classes Takahashi was required to take at that time.

<sup>24</sup> Tōkyō Daigaku hyakunenshi henshū iinkai, *Tōkyō Daigaku hyakunenshi bukyōkushi ichi*, 509.

<sup>25</sup> Shigeno is well known for arguing that “in Western scholarship, they divide scholarly methods into deductive reasoning and inductive reasoning, with the method of textual criticism falling under inductive reasoning... I believe that all scholarship in the world will ultimately be grounded in inductive reasoning, namely, in textual criticism.” Shigeno Yasutsugu, “Gakumon wa tsuini kōshō ni kisu,” *Tōkyō gakushikaiin zasshi* 12, no. 5 (1890): 197–98.

<sup>26</sup> Tōkyō Daigaku hyakunenshi henshū iinkai, *Tōkyō Daigaku hyakunenshi bukyōkushi ichi*, 509.

of the emperor remains unchanged.”<sup>27</sup> In his unique reading of *The Book of Changes*, the continuity of the royal lineage was of the utmost significance, and he insisted that there exists only one imperial lineage (*Kōtō ikkei* 皇統一系).

Inoue Tetsujiro 井上哲次郎 (1855–1944) taught the history of Oriental philosophy. His area of expertise was initially Western philosophy, but he taught the history of Oriental philosophy between 1883 and 1884 as an assistant professor at the University of Tokyo. After finishing his studies in Germany, he gained employment as a tenured professor at the Imperial University of Tokyo, and between 1891 and 1897, he taught comparative religion and Oriental philosophy, which included Indian philosophy and Buddhism. From 1897, he also taught the history of Confucianism during the Edo period.

When the university first opened, the Department of History was part of the first division of the Faculty of Letters, but it soon closed due to difficulties in hiring qualified staff. In 1887, however, the department reopened with the recruitment of Ludwig Riess (1861–1928), who had studied under the renowned Leopold von Ranke (1795–1886). The Japanese government brought Riess in as a contract lecturer under its program to hire foreign advisors (*oyatoi gaikokujin* 御雇い外国人). He taught at the Imperial University of Tokyo until 1902 and “fostered a distinctive scholarly ethos within the department of Oriental history, setting it apart from the traditional study of classical Chinese literature.”<sup>28</sup> Riess also suggested establishing an academic society within the college, following in the European tradition of learned societies. On his recommendation, the Historical Society of Japan (*Shigakukai* 史學會) was founded in 1889, accompanied by the launch of its monthly *Journal of the Historical Scholarship Association* (*Shigakukai zasshi* 史學會雜誌).

The academic backgrounds of the core faculty members of the Department of Chinese Studies aptly represent the complex characteristics of Japanese academia during the transitional period to modernity. Nemoto was a traditional Confucian scholar. Although he read *The Book of Changes* from a Japanese perspective, his identity as a Confucian literatus remained unshaken. In contrast, Shigeno took a very different approach by breaking with the traditional conventions of historiography which had served Confucian moral principles and didacticism. As a historian in the transitional period, he still carried out the premodern role of the traditional Chinese dynastic historian, working with the government to compile an official Japanese national history.<sup>29</sup> However, his orientation toward modern historiography diverged significantly from that of Nemoto. He firmly believed that a historiography should “describe the world as it is,”<sup>30</sup> and that the historian must avoid being influenced by normative moral principles. He was eager to learn from and apply modern Western historical methods to reform the Japanese system of historiography.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Sasaki Hitomi, “Bushū gakusha Nemoto Michiaki,” *Akita kenritsu hakubutsukan kenkyō boukoku* 34 (2009): 49–54.

<sup>28</sup> Tōkyō Daigaku hyakunenshi henshū iinkai, *Tōkyō Daigaku hyakunenshi bukyōkushi ichi*, 627.

<sup>29</sup> Nagahara Keiji, *20-segi ilbon ūi yōksabak*, trans. Ha Chongmun (Sōul: Samch’ōlli), 30.

<sup>30</sup> Shigeno Yasutsugo, “Shigaku ni jūji suru mono wa sonokokoro shikōshihei narazarubekarazu,” *Shigakukai zasshi* 1 (1889): 3.

<sup>31</sup> Shigeno Yasutsugo, “Kokushi hensan no hōhō o ronzu,” *Tōkyō gakushikaiin zasshi* 1, no. 8 (1880): 163–80.

During his tenure as an executive editor of the *Chronological History of Great Japan* (*Dai Nihon bennenshi* 大日本編年史),<sup>32</sup> a government-sponsored national history project, he was also involved in the completion of the *History of Great Japan* (*Dai Nihonshi* 大日本史).<sup>33</sup> As the precursor to the new *Compiled History of Great Japan*, the *History of Great Japan* was a significant work, but Shigeno was sharply critical of its argument that the Southern Court (*Nanchō* 南朝) was the source of the authentic lineage of Japanese emperors, dismissing it as “the private view of one local house, and a prejudice.”<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, he argued that Kojima Takanori 兒島高德 (1312-1382), a figure recognized as a faithful retainer of the Southern Court, was actually a fictional character derived from a 14th-century historical epic, *Chronicle of Great Peace* (*Taiheiiki* 太平記). This argument led to Shigeno earning the nickname “Dr. Destroyer.”<sup>35</sup> The Meiji government saw the goal of the national historiography project to be the propagation of “the moral values of heaven and earth”<sup>36</sup> to the public. Shigeno’s views did not align with such a purpose, making him an unfit choice for his position.<sup>37</sup> In fact, there was an ongoing conflict between a group of positivist historians, led by Shigeno, and a group of nationalist historians within the national history project. As a consequence, the project was paused, downsized, and ultimately halted completely following a legal dispute and scandal arising from an article by a positivist historian which dismissed the uniqueness of Shinto.<sup>38</sup>

Unlike Shigeno, who prioritized his academic integrity over the demands of the government, Inoue consistently served as an ideologue of the Meiji government. One of his first tasks after returning from his studies in Germany was composing the official

<sup>32</sup> Konishi Ichu 小西惟沖 edit, *Dai Nihon bennenshi* 大日本編年史, Fujie Takuzō 藤江卓藏 et al. 1883.

<sup>33</sup> Tokugawa Mitsukuni 徳川光圀 et al. edit, *Dai Nihonshi* 大日本史, Publisher unknown, Publication year unknown.

<sup>34</sup> Shigeno Yasutsugo, “Dai Nihonshi o ronji rekishi no teisai ni oyobu,” Hyōdō Hiromi, “Rekishi kenkyū niokeru kindai no seiritsu: Bungaku to shigaku no aida,” *Seijō kokubun ronshū* 25 (1997): 259.

<sup>35</sup> Hyōdō Hiromi, “Rekishi kenkyū niokeru kindai no seiritsu: Bungaku to shigaku no aida,” *Seijō kokubun ronshū* 25 (1997): 258.

<sup>36</sup> Meiji tenno, “Shintan Satasho,” 1869, held by Tokyo Daigaku shiryō hensansho.

<sup>37</sup> Hyōdō, *Rekishi kenkyū niokeru kindai no seiritsu*, 262-65.

<sup>38</sup> The national historical compilation headquarters (*Kokusshi hensan shūshikyoku* 國史編纂修史局) was dominated by advocates of evidential and positivist historiography, with Shigeno as the leader of this group. There was also a minority group, however, who upheld Shinto and a nationalist historiography and insisted on the uniqueness and superiority of Japan. These two groups were in constant conflict. One of the positivist scholars, Kume Kunitake 久米 邦武, published an article titled “Shinto, A Vestige of Sky-Worship” (神道ハ祭天ノ古俗) arguing that Shinto was “the kind of harvest ceremony which can be found in any nation.” This view led to a severe backlash from the nationalist group, which believed that discussing Shinto and anything related to the royal family was blasphemous, and that the goal of historiography was to celebrate the eternity of the royal lineage. In response to this criticism, the Meiji government, which was already displeased with the positivist scholars, expelled Kume from the university, halted the publication of *Shigakukai zasshi*, abolished the national historiography edition headquarters, removed Shigeno from his position as executive editor, and in 1893, indefinitely suspended the *Compiled History of Great Japan* project. For more information about the conflict and division surrounding the compilation of Japanese national history, see Margaret Mehl, *History and the State in Nineteenth-Century Japan* (London: Macmillan, 1998), 133–47. For more on the Kume Kunitake incident, see John S. Brownlee, *Japanese Historians and the National Myths, 1600-1945: The Age of the Gods and Emperor Jimmu* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1997).



public commentary on the *Imperial Rescript on Education* (*Kyōiku chokugo* 教育敕語).<sup>39</sup> Over the following years, he provided significant support to a variety of government policies. This support included criticisms of Christianity, writing histories of Edo Confucianism, developing a national idealist philosophy termed identity-realism (*Genshō soku jitsuzai-ron* 現象即實在論),<sup>40</sup> and advocating the establishment of a national moral code.<sup>41</sup> He organized his lectures on Edo Confucianism into three volumes, covering *Yangmingxue*, *Kogaku* 古學, and *Zhuzixue*. In particular, he highlighted the conflict between *Yangmingxue* and *Zhuzixue*, claiming that *Yangmingxue* represented the people and a free spirit, while *Zhuzixue* leaned towards governmental authority and a conventional spirit. In addition, he compared Japanese and Chinese interpretations of *Yangmingxue*, arguing that the Japanese version had a practical quality, while the Chinese one was more reflective. In line with these ideas, he interpreted the history of Japanese *Yangmingxue* during the Edo period as a logical precursor to Japanese modernity. He claimed that Japan was the only East Asian nation which had successfully transitioned to modernity because of the practical spirit of *Yangmingxue* during that era. He contrasted this with China's failure to modernize, attributing this to the dominance of *Zhuzixue* there and emphasizing how it promoted conventional and abstract ways of thinking.<sup>42</sup> Inoue also demonstrated a clear understanding of Oriental studies as an apparatus of empire. For example, he stated that the field of Oriental studies was “not only immensely important academically, it also closely relates to our political strategy in Asia and to colonial tactics. Hence, being well-versed in Oriental Studies is essential, regardless of the circumstances.”<sup>43</sup>

It is generally accepted that Ludwig Riess introduced Rankean historiography to Japanese academia during his time at the Imperial University of Tokyo, marking the beginning of modern Japanese academic history. Recent arguments, however, suggest that the adoption of this methodology during that period was superficial, lacking a deep understanding of

<sup>39</sup> Emperor Meiji, “Kyōiku chokugo 教育敕語 [Imperial Rescript on Education],” 1890. National Archives of Japan.

<sup>40</sup> Inoue Tetsujiro, “Genshō soku jitsuzairon no yōryō,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 13, no. 123 (May 1987): 377–96. Inoue himself translated “Genshō soku jitsuzairon” into German. See Inoue Tetsujiro, “Genshō soku jitsuzairon no yōryō,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 13, no. 123 (May 1987): 378.

<sup>41</sup> For Inoue's support for Japanese nationalism, see Kenneth B. Pyle, *The New Generation in Meiji Japan: Problems of Cultural Identity, 1885-1895* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969), 191–94; Yushi Ito, “Conflicting Views of Japan's Mission in the World and National Moral Education: Yamaji Aizan and His Opponent Inoue Tetsujiro,” *Japan Forum* 22, no. 3/4 (2010): 307–30.

<sup>42</sup> Inoue refuted the critique of Fukuzawa Yukichi 福澤諭吉 (1835–1901) regarding Confucianism, and distinguished *Zhuzixue* from *Yangmingxue*, characterizing the former as premodern thought and the latter as a specifically Japanese spirit which facilitated modernity. see Yi Hyegyōng, “Chujahak i chōn'gūndae ūi 'taep'yo inyōm i toegi kkaji: Huk'ujawa Yuk'ich'i wa Inoue Tessūjiro ūi yuhak ūl tullōssan kongbang,” *Tongyang 'ch'ōrhak yōn'gu* 108 (2021): 335–72.

<sup>43</sup> Writing about a meeting held in September and October 1886 in Vienna, Austria, Inoue remarked: “The Congress of Orientalists was established to study the languages, cultures, histories, philosophies, and religions of various nations in the Orient, including Japan, China, India, Arabia, Egypt, and Persia. This holds immense academic significance and is also closely tied to political strategies for colonization in Asia. Both from an academic and strategic perspective, it was imperative for the Japanese people to participate in this Congress and represent Japan.” Inoue Tetsujiro, “Bankoku tōyōgakukai keikyō,” *Tetsugakukai zasshi* 1, no. 3 (1887): 123.

its philosophical foundations. In essence, it was used exclusively as a scientific method for critiquing sources and utilizing corroborative evidence in historical research.<sup>44</sup> Recent scholarship has also noted the lack of any prior discussions regarding the role of Rankean historiography in justifying the legitimacy of the nation-state.<sup>45</sup> In his teachings, Riess presented Rankean historiography as a method which aimed to describe individual historical facts as they truly occurred, following the principle of “*wie es eigentlich gewesen*” (as it actually was). It should not be forgotten, however, that Ranke also advocated for historical theology, asserting that historians have a responsibility to decipher the sacred hieroglyphs engraved in human history by God. In addition, he believed that each nation possesses its own essential qualities, and that world history unfolds through the collision, rise, and fall of these nations with their unique identities.<sup>46</sup> As a devoted student of Ranke, it should be no surprise that Riess was deeply interested in discovering the distinct national characteristics of the Chinese and Japanese peoples.<sup>47</sup>

## Takahashi’s Intellectual Orientation in Two of His Early Essays

### Beyond Textual Criticism, Emphasizing Philosophy

Shigeno played a significant role in Takahashi’s education. Under his guidance, Takahashi honed his skills in rigorous historical investigation and the textual criticism of classical texts. While studying the ancient period, he demonstrated a keen ability to discern *isho* 緯書, apocryphal writings from the Han dynasty used in divination, and he also came to recognize the authority of textual criticism scholars from the Qing dynasty and to respect their perspectives.<sup>48</sup> His primary focus when assessing modern interpretations of Chinese classical texts thus became to see whether they were “consistent with the meanings at the time when the text was written.”<sup>49</sup>

Takahashi did not, however, aspire to become a scholar of textual criticism himself. In his study of ancient scholarly theories, he strove to avoid what he saw as the pitfalls of objectivism and subjectivism. For him, objective methods involved “strict investigations

<sup>44</sup> Nishikawa Yoichi, “Tōkyō to berurin ni okeru Rutobihī Risu,” Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo hen, *Rekishigaku to Shiryō Kenkyū*, Yamakawa Shuppansha, 2003, 210-11.

<sup>45</sup> Māgaretto Mēru, “Meiji no okeru Doitsu no eikyō: Doretei igi aru eikyō datta no ka?,” Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo hen, *Rekishigaku to Shiryō Kenkyū*, Yamakawa Shuppansha, 2003, 195-96.

<sup>46</sup> Brownlee, *Japanese Historians and the National Myths*, 73-74.

<sup>47</sup> Mitsui discusses the theory of national characteristics as proposed by Riess and his pupil Shiratori Kurakichi. Missū, “Ch’ōnhwangje wa ‘kūndae yōksahak’ kwa ūi t’ūmsae,” 180-87.

<sup>48</sup> For example, he cited the work of a Qing scholar, *Kaixinlu* 考信錄 by Shu Cui 崔述, to support his argument. Takahashi Toru, “Takase bungakushi cho yōbokutetsugaku o hyōsu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 186 (August 1902): 22-23. He later added a Qing Confucianist view when judging the authenticity of a text. Takahashi Toru, “Kaneki o nanshite nemoto hakase no ekisetsu ni oyobu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 190 (December 1902): 37.

<sup>49</sup> For example, see Takahashi, “Kaneki o nanshite nemoto hakase no ekisetsu ni oyobu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 190 (December 1902): 60.

based solely on the original text, without incorporating a scholar's own views or thoughts" to the extent that one was "not able to finish reading an academic essay from beginning to end since it was entirely concerned with past discourses."<sup>50</sup> Takahashi was also critical of classical Chinese exegetics, claiming, "People who meticulously examine the text and its detailed sentences, phrases, and words are buried in outmoded Chinese exegetics."<sup>51</sup> He also said, "It is impossible to illuminate the way of *The Book of Changes* only through Chinese exegetics, which examines only the meanings of individual words."<sup>52</sup>

In his undergraduate dissertation, Takahashi argued that during the Later Zhou, the period when Confucius was active, the "principles of *The Book of Changes*" were "studied rationally and philosophically." Over time, however, the study of *The Book of Changes* degenerated, devolving into a "bizarre life philosophy" and a "superstition."<sup>53</sup> In his view, this decline happened when the Theory of Five Elements (*gogyō*, 五行) and the Theory of Extraordinary Phenomena (*zaiyishuo* 災異說), based on the resonance between Heaven and humanity (*tianren ganying* 天人感應), were combined with *The Book of Changes*, which occurred during the Qin and Han dynasties. Takahashi also questioned whether Professor Nemoto's interpretation of *The Book of Changes* could be considered rational, since Nemoto had accepted the Han dynasty's image-number system (*xiangshuxue* 象數學).<sup>54</sup> Takahashi, on the other hand, pursued a scholarly approach in his dissertation, and paid close attention to what was rational and philosophical. For Takahashi, concepts such as *yin* and *yang* and the eight trigrams (*bagua* 八卦) were formal in nature, whereas the five elements (fire, water, wood, metal, and earth) existed (*shizhi* 實質). He therefore argued that there was "no rational reason" to seek a correspondence between *yin* and *yang* and the five elements when interpreting *The Book of Changes*,<sup>55</sup> strongly favoring rational and logical explanations. In a similar vein, he criticized Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (179–104 BCE) for incorporating the five elements and ideas from the *Gongyang Commentary on the Spring and Autumn Annals* (*Gongyang chunqiu* 公羊春秋) into *The Book of Changes*, and then presenting this amalgamation as truth. He argued, "It is a shame that he [Dong Zhongshu] did not realize he was wrong, even after ruining his family name and reputation by following his own misguided principles."<sup>56</sup>

There were some earlier scholars, however, that Takahashi held in high esteem as is evident from his evaluation of Jia Yi 賈誼 (200–169 BCE):

<sup>50</sup> Takahashi, "Takase bungakushi cho yōbokutetsugaku o hyōsu," *Tetsugaku zasshi* 186 (August 1902): 21.

<sup>51</sup> Takahashi Toru, "Kaneki o nanshite nemoto hakase no ekisetsu ni oyobu," *Tetsugaku zasshi* 189 (November 1902): 46.

<sup>52</sup> Takahashi Toru, "Kaneki o nanshite nemoto hakase no ekisetsu ni oyobu," *Tetsugaku zasshi* 190 (December 1902): 36.

<sup>53</sup> Takahashi, "Kaneki o nanshite nemoto hakase no ekisetsu ni oyobu," *Tetsugaku zasshi* 189 (November 1902): 38.

<sup>54</sup> Takahashi Toru, "Kaneki o nanshite nemoto hakase no ekisetsu ni oyobu," *Tetsugaku zasshi* 193 (March 1903): 96–98.

<sup>55</sup> Takahashi, "Kaneki o nanshite nemoto hakase no ekisetsu ni oyobu," *Tetsugaku zasshi* 190 (December 1902): 42–43.

<sup>56</sup> Takahashi, "Kaneki o nanshite nemoto hakase no ekisetsu ni oyobu," *Tetsugaku zasshi* 189 (November 1902): 49.

Certainly, Jia Yi was the most talented scholar of the Han dynasty, with insights of such grandeur that he foresaw forthcoming developments across ten future generations. Hence, his scholarship remains a living scholarship (*katsugaku* 活學), in contrast to the many eggheads who are entombed in outdated Chinese exegetics. His *Xinshu* 新書 exudes a majestic spirit and contains profound writings which cast light upon the nature of the world. Within this book, he explores the very core of politics and emphasizes the importance of continuous learning of the Way.<sup>57</sup>

Takahashi here contrasts scholarship “entombed in outdated Chinese exegetics” with “a living scholarship,” seeing the former as dead scholarship. “Living scholarship” is that which illuminates our understanding of the world through historical discernment and which also engages with ethics and politics. Takahashi took a fundamentally philosophical approach and believed that since “mankind is never merely an instinctive animal ... individuals cannot attain mental satisfaction unless they turn their focus toward that which is metaphysical and intellectual.”<sup>58</sup>

### **Takahashi’s Understanding of the History of Chinese Philosophy**

During his time at the Imperial University of Tokyo, Takahashi had to enroll in Oriental philosophy courses every year, and he was also required to take the history of Oriental philosophy during his sophomore and junior years. At that time, Inoue taught both of these subjects. In the history of Oriental philosophy class, he gave lectures on the philosophy of Japanese *Yangmingxue* and *Kogaku*, publishing his lecture notes immediately after each lecture.<sup>59</sup> In the Oriental philosophy class, he lectured on ancient Chinese philosophy. Before Inoue, Shimada Chōrē 島田重礼 (1838–98), had taught Chinese philosophy in a traditional manner, introducing the lives of significant scholars and their writings from the perspective of the history of scholarship.<sup>60</sup> He described Inoue’s *History of Chinese Philosophy* as an attempt to produce a grand new narrative of Chinese thought, using examples from the history of philosophy.<sup>61</sup>

Inoue did indeed present a grand narrative centered around the rise and fall of philosophy from the pre-Confucian period through to the Qing dynasty. For him, the germination of philosophy took place during the pre-Confucian period, and it was during the subsequent

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<sup>57</sup> Takahashi, “Kaneki o nanshite nemoto hakase no ekisetsu ni oyobu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 189 (November 1902): 46. All translations by the author unless otherwise noted.

<sup>58</sup> Takahashi, “Kaneki o nanshite nemoto hakase no ekisetsu ni oyobu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 189 (November 1902): 36-37.

<sup>59</sup> These include Inoue Tetsujiro, *Nihon yōmeigakuba no tetsugaku* (Tōkyō: Fuzanbō, 1900); *Nihon kogakuba no tetsugaku* (Tōkyō: Fuzanbō, 1902); *Nihon shishigakuba no tetsugaku* (Tōkyō: Fuzanbō, 1905).

<sup>60</sup> Machi Senjuro, “Bakumatsu Meiji ni okeru gakujutsu·kyōgaku no keisei to kangaku,” *Nihon kanbungaku kenkyū* 11 (2016): 144.

<sup>61</sup> Sang Bing, “Jindai Zhongguo zhexue fayuan,” *Xueshu yu jiaoyu* 11 (2010): 4.

era, when Confucius and the Hundred Schools of Thought were active, that philosophy fully bloomed. However, the Qin dynasty was marked by book burnings and the burial of scholars, while during the Han dynasty, Confucianism excluded all other thought. Inoue considered both periods to have witnessed the dwindling of philosophy, whereas the Song and Ming dynasties saw the emergence of a new wave of philosophy influenced by Buddhism. Later, during the Qing dynasty and thereafter, textual criticism of past texts became dominant, and there were no new developments in philosophy.<sup>62</sup> As a result, Inoue focused his narrative on the history of Confucianism. Since he held speculative philosophy in higher esteem than scholarship which concentrated on accurately interpreting each phrase, such as the textual criticism or Chinese exegetics of the Han and Qing dynasties, he concluded that “The Confucianism of the Song and Ming dynasties encompasses profound purposes, and is significantly more developed than that of Confucius and Mencius.”<sup>63</sup>

The following is an excerpt from Inoue’s lecture notes of the history of Chinese philosophy:<sup>64</sup>

Laozi is reactionary, while Confucius is progressive. Laozi leaves things to nature, whereas Confucius artificially cultivates the body. Confucius engages in contemporary politics, but Laozi does not. Confucius loves the populace by upholding the virtue of humanness [仁], while Laozi abandons humanness and looks on the populace as if they were bits of straw. Confucius remains in the secular world and is grounded in the needs of the people, whereas Laozi escapes from the secular world and seeks the integrity of an untroubled mind.<sup>65</sup>

Inoue criticized Laozi for believing that “human nature is naturally beautiful,” implying that “he wants to return to the natural state as it was in the past, which is a reactionary stance.”<sup>66</sup> Inoue also considered Laozi’s political ideas to be “contradictory to reality and contrary to the theory of evolution.”<sup>67</sup> Inoue used Laozi to draw comparisons with and highlight how he was different from Confucius. He saw Confucius as a philosopher of “progress,” political engagement, and worldliness, while he categorized Laozi and Buddhist thought together under the same philosophical umbrella, suggesting that “Laozi’s teachings share similarities

<sup>62</sup> Mizuno Hirota, “Takane Sankichi ikou naka no Inoue Tetsujirō tōyō tetsugakushi kōgi,” *Tōkyō daigaku bunshokan kijō* 36 (2018): 28(57).

<sup>63</sup> Inoue Tetsujirō, *Nihon kogaku no tetsugaku* (Tōkyō: Fuzanbō, 1902), 119.

<sup>64</sup> There are no extant copies of Inoue’s *History of Oriental Philosophy*, which essentially focused on the history of Chinese philosophy. However, it is possible to reconstruct an outline of its content based on a few surviving lecture notes. The following reprints include three sets of lecture notes: Mizuno, “Takane Sankichi ikou naka no Inoue Tetsujirō tōyō tetsugakushi kōgi”; Miura Setsuo, “Inoue Tetsujirō kōjutsu tōyō tetsugakushi no honkoku: Inoue Enryō no Tōkyō Daigaku bungakubu ninensei no chōkō noto,” *Inoue Enryō sentanenpō* (2019): 27; Suzuki Takuya, “Inoue Tetsujirō ‘Shina tetsugakushi’ o tōshite miru Natsume Sōseki ‘Rōshi no tetsugaku’ no tokuchō,” *Nishōgaku shadaigaku Higashijia gakujutsu sogō kenkyūjoshūkan* 52 (2022): 43–70.

<sup>65</sup> Mizuno, “Takane Sankichi ikou naka no Inoue Tetsujirō tōyō tetsugakushi kōgi,” 27(58).

<sup>66</sup> Suzuki, “Inoue Tetsujirō ‘shina tetsugakushi’ o tōshite miru Natsume Sōseki ‘Rōshi no tetsugaku’ no tokuchō,” 68.

<sup>67</sup> Suzuki, “Inoue Tetsujirō ‘shina tetsugakushi’ o tōshite miru Natsume Sōseki ‘Rōshi no tetsugaku’ no tokuchō,” 68.

with those of Buddha.”<sup>68</sup> In particular, Laozi’s concept of “no-name” (*wuming* 無名) was similar to Buddhist “thusness” (*zhenru* 真如), while his “no-action” (*wuwei* 無為) was akin to nirvana. For Inoue, Laozi exhibited regressive tendencies which were similar to the Buddhist teaching of dispelling delusions and maintaining serenity.”<sup>69</sup> This categorization of Laozi and Buddhism together representing the antithesis of Confucius was logical considering that Inoue saw Confucius as a heroic figure who embodied a practical, worldly orientation and a commitment to political involvement.

It is evident that Takahashi derived his views on the history of Chinese philosophy from Inoue. For example, Takahashi made the following statement about the origin of Chinese philosophy:

Upon closely examining the realm of Chinese thought, two distinct and enduring original streams become evident. One is the cosmology of quietness and loneliness attributed to Laozi, while the other is the cosmology of vitality associated with Confucius. The quietists argue that no-action is the essence of the universe, while the vitalists contend that nurturing and enlivening constitute the universe’s grand virtues. The former stance emphasizes individualism, whereas the latter embodies social and nationalist aspects. The former leans towards naturalism, whereas the latter embraces developmentalism.<sup>70</sup>

This assessment closely corresponds with Inoue’s characterization of Confucius and Laozi. Furthermore, Takahashi placed Daoism and Theravada Buddhism within the same category, stating, “Later Theravada Buddhists and the followers of Laozi and Zhangzi are akin, since both pursue the extinction of desire,”<sup>71</sup> a perspective which is also present in the works of Inoue.

Takahashi regarded true scholarship as engaging with ethics and politics to provide guidance, and referred to it as “living scholarship.” He saw Confucianism as the embodiment of living scholarship within Chinese philosophy. In particular, the ideas of Confucius and Mencius, and also Neo-Confucianism, qualified as living scholarship. Takahashi saw Confucian scholarship as vibrant, socially-conscious, nationalist, and progressive, which perfectly aligned with his conception of living scholarship. Again, this is very similar to Inoue, who valued the philosophies of Confucius, Mencius, and the Song and Ming dynasties, in contrast to the Chinese exegetics which prevailed between the Han and Tang dynasties or the textual criticism of the Qing dynasty.

In explaining the Han dynasty reception of *The Book of Changes*, Takahashi remarked: “They were able to fuse the prognostication theory, based on the yin-yang theory of extraordinary phenomena, with *The Book of Changes* since they did not have a clear understanding of the *yi* principle (*yili* 易理). If they had possessed a correct understanding

<sup>68</sup> Mizuno, “Takane Sankichi ikou naka no Inoue Tetsujirō tōyō tetsugakushi kōgi,” 26(59).

<sup>69</sup> Mizuno, “Takane Sankichi ikou naka no Inoue Tetsujirō tōyō tetsugakushi kōgi,” 26(59).

<sup>70</sup> Takahashi, “Takase bungakushi cho yōbokutetsugaku o hyōsu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 186 (August 1902): 26–27.

<sup>71</sup> Takahashi, “Takase bungakushi cho yōbokutetsugaku o hyōsu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 187 (September 1902): 28.

of the *yi* principle, such a far-fetched theory could never have become established.”<sup>72</sup> Takahashi thus based his judgment of a theory on whether it was rational. He also pointed out that the cosmologies of the philosophical luminaries of the Song dynasty, for example, Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤 (1017–73), Zhang Zai 張載 (1020–77), and Shao Kāngjie 邵康節 (1011–77), drew on the prognostication theory, which had been passed down from the Han dynasty. He commented, “Even those scholars who attained the most astute and rigorous mastery of thought did not realize the discord originating with the initial principle [from the Han dynasty], which is unfortunate.”<sup>73</sup> This view again shows his preference for neo-Confucian scholarship, and clearly explains why he lamented what he considered the errors of the neo-Confucian scholars.

It is clear that Takahashi’s perspective on the history of philosophy was rooted in the ideas of Inoue. Both scholars shared the belief that the speculative philosophical inquiries of the Song and Ming periods held a position of eminence, surpassing the significance of textual criticism. Both also preferred the philosophy of Confucius, which they characterize as actively engaging with society, over Daoist ideologies, which they interpreted as tending towards an antisocial stance or presenting a critical commentary on social matters.

Among the philosophies of the Song and Ming, Inoue focused on the *Yangmingxue*, which he saw as a representation of the Japanese spirit that had persisted into Japanese modernity and facilitated it. In contrast, he characterized *Zhuzixue* as an ideology of dull uniformity, and he constructed a narrative suggesting that when it had become the orthodox ideology of China, the country had stagnated.<sup>74</sup> During his pre-Chosŏn period, Takahashi did not explicitly mention this perspective, but it seems likely that his subsequent bias against *Zhuzixue*,<sup>75</sup> which he called a “monotonous ideology”<sup>76</sup> in his study of the history of Chosŏn Confucianism,<sup>77</sup> was due to the influence of Inoue.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Takahashi, “Kaneki o nanshite nemoto hakase no ekisetsu ni oyobu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 190 (December 1902): 37.

<sup>73</sup> Takahashi, “Kaneki o nanshite nemoto hakase no ekisetsu ni oyobu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 190 (December 1902): 43.

<sup>74</sup> See Yi Hyegyŏng, “Chujahak i chŏn’gŭndae ūi taep’yo inyŏm i toegi kkaji,” 356-367.

<sup>75</sup> Employing *Zhuzixue* as the ruling political ideology, the Chosŏn dynasty endured for more than five hundred years, an unusual length of time. A neutral perspective would surely have focused on the role of *Zhuzixue* in sustaining this remarkable longevity. In direct contradiction to Takahashi, Miyajima Hiroshi has argued that *Zhuzixue* played a crucial role in fostering modernity in Asia by enabling the establishment of the bureaucracy and the centralization of governmental power. See Miyajima Hiroshi, *Ilbon ūi yŏksagwan ūl pip’an banda*, (P’aju: Ch’angbi, 2013). The perception of a monotonous *Zhuzixue* is thus far from universally accepted, and I believe that this biased idea emerged within the context of Japanese Oriental studies, and more directly from Inoue’s influence.

<sup>76</sup> Takahashi, “Chōsen Jugaku Taikan”(1927) in Takahashi Toru Chōsen jugaku ronshū, 48.

<sup>77</sup> Takahashi, “Richō jugakushi niokeru shuri shikiha no hattatsu (1929),” 48.

<sup>78</sup> Takahashi remarked, “Although *Zhuzixue* is so moderate and square, the Chosŏn people were still content with such a monotonous ideology.” Exactly these adjectives, “moderate” and “square,” had been used earlier by Inoue. Inoue Tetsujiro, *Nibon shushigaku no tetsugaku* (Tōkyō: Fuzanbō, 1905), 2.

## National Characteristics Discourse and Positivist Historiography

In “A Review of the *Philosophy of Yang Zhu and Mozi* by Mr. Takase, B.A.,” Takahashi delivered a biting critique of Takase for rejecting the theory of evolution. Takase had asserted that evolution pertains solely to the physical body, not the mind, and had also argued that the interpretation of an event as either evolution or devolution is subjective. He therefore considered evolution a product of the imagination. Takahashi deemed this rejection of evolution to be a “crude idea” inconceivable for someone possessing even a modicum of modern knowledge. He went further, criticizing Takase’s argument as “such rubbish one could not utter it even in dreams.”<sup>79</sup> He also defended Kato Hiroyuki 加藤弘之 (1836–1916), whose pro-evolution book had been the target of criticism by Takase, stating that “anybody who carefully reads [Kato’s] book with any sense of fairness ... would understand the crudeness of [Takase’s] discussion.”<sup>80</sup> Takahashi was an advocate not just of evolution per se, but also of Social Darwinism and the progressive nature of history, which he saw as self-evident truths that required no further elucidation. Rankean history is epitomized by evolutionist historiography, but even before the arrival of Reiss, such views held a predominant position at the University of Tokyo. From its inception, both Japanese and non-Japanese professors and instructors, including Edward Morse (1838–1925), Toyama Masakazu 外山正一 (1848–1900), and Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908), had championed evolutionism and imparted this ideology at the university. Anti-evolutionist opinions like those of Takase were thus a minority viewpoint.<sup>81</sup>

Another notable characteristic of the two early articles by Takahashi was his keenness to attribute essential qualities to various groups, including the people of China, Asia, the Orient, and the West. This tendency aligns with Rankean historical methodology. The following quote is indicative of this:

Indian thought encompasses not only religious elements but also the pursuit of self-perception, aiming to grasp the reality of the Universe. Conversely, Jewish thought seeks to apprehend the Universe through God. As a result, the former evolved into a mind-only ideology, ultimately giving rise to Buddhism. The latter, in contrast, evolved into advanced theism, giving birth to Christianity. Chinese thought, however, stood between these two opposing philosophies, resulting in the emergence of Confucianism and achieving a grandeur akin to three mountains, resembling the three legs of a

<sup>79</sup> Takahashi, “Takase bungakushi cho yōbokutetsugaku o hyōsu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 186 (August 1902): 31.

<sup>80</sup> Takahashi, “Takase bungakushi cho yōbokutetsugaku o hyōsu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 186 (August 1902): 32.

<sup>81</sup> As Takahashi pointed out, Takase’s *Philosophy of Yang Zhu and Mozi* would have been more accurately titled *A Critique of Yang Zhu and Mozi*. In his book, Takase compared Yang Zhu to Christianity and Mozi to egoism. Since Mencius had set a goal for Confucianism to critique Yang Zhu and Mozi, Takase thought that attacking Christianity and egoism was a way to defend Confucianism. Takahashi, “Takase bungakushi cho yōbokutetsugaku o hyōsu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 186 (August 1902): 20. For Takase Takejiro, see Yi Hyegyōng, “Kūndae Ilbon ūi yuhak chōnyu wa Chungguk ch’ōrhaksa sōsul ūi panghyang: Tak’ase Tak’ejiro rūl chungsim ūro,” *Ch’ōrhak sasang* 74 (2019): 29–62.



tripod [*kanai* 鼎]. Upon delving into Chinese thought ... one eventually encounters the Great Unity [*datong* 大同], which perceives politics, philosophy, ethics, and religion as interconnected; where the four are unified and the one simultaneously represents the four. This paradigm stands superior to any other philosophies, whether from the East or the West.<sup>82</sup>

Here, Takahashi defines the attributes of Indian, Jewish, and Chinese thought and synthesizes them, while also providing an outline of Oriental thought. His tendency to label the characteristics of a culture also appears in the following remarks on Confucian and Daoist philosophy:

If one assumes that Indian and Jewish thought are polar opposites, then Chinese thought resides right in the middle of the two. When the center point of a circumference is elevated, the entire circle can easily be lifted. Consequently, Confucius does not offer prayers to Heaven [*ten* 天] when he is ill. Also, in Daoist texts, Heaven as an object of belief remains elusive. In both approaches, Heaven is revered solely as the origin of The Way. This demonstrates a unique and subtle characteristic of Chinese thought, setting a precedent for contemporary religious reformers impartially unaffiliated with any religion, even if such an example was not deliberately intended.<sup>83</sup>

For Takahashi, the characteristics of Chinese thought shared by Confucian and Daoist philosophies involved their attempt to elucidate the world through the concept of The Way (*dao* 道), to him a rational principle. He contrasted this with the Indian notion of mind-only solipsism and the Jewish declaration of an omnipotent God.

However, Takahashi tended to overgeneralize in an attempt to define the essential characteristics of a nation or a people and subsumed heterogeneous elements within his fixed framework. In the quote above, he argues that Chinese thought was not inherently religious, but Mozi was an exception, since he attributed volition to Heaven. In the *Philosophy of Yang Zhu and Mozi*, Takase had categorized Mozi as a religious philosopher, stating, “Mozi entirely thinks in a way that a religious thinker would, and he established his thought through a process akin to religious enlightenment.”<sup>84</sup> For Mozi and his disciples, Heaven included volition, unlike other Chinese schools of thought, so Takase categorized him as belonging to the “Mixed school” (*zajia* 雜家).<sup>85</sup>

<sup>82</sup> Takahashi, “Takase bungakushi cho yōbokutetsugaku o hyōsu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 187 (September 1902): 42.

<sup>83</sup> Takahashi, “Takase bungakushi cho yōbokutetsugaku o hyōsu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 187 (September 1902): 43–44.

<sup>84</sup> Takahashi, “Takase bungakushi cho yōbokutetsugaku o hyōsu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 187 (September 1902): 42.

<sup>85</sup> Takahashi, “Takase bungakushi cho yōbokutetsugaku o hyōsu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 187 (September 1902): 40. The term ‘*zajia*’ 雜家 is typically associated with the Syncretist School, also known as the Mixed School. This eclectic philosophical tradition amalgamates elements from a variety of schools of thought, including Confucianism, Taoism, Mohism, and Legalism. Its texts encompass works such as the *Huainanzi* 淮南子, *Lushi Chunqiu* 呂氏春秋, and the *Shizi* 尸子. Prominent figures within this tradition include Liu An 劉安 (179–122 BC), the author of the *Huainanzi*, and Lu Buwei 呂不韋 (291–235 BC), the compiler of the *Lushi Chunqiu*.

Takahashi divided Chinese philosophy into two groups: the Confucian group and the Daoist group, assigning all Chinese thinkers to one or the other.<sup>86</sup> Within his system, he classified Yang Zhu as “a variation of the Daoist group which conforms to the world and undergoes secular development.” He placed Mozi in the Confucian group because it would “appear more fitting in organizing the genealogy of Chinese philosophy ... to categorize Mozi in the lineage of Confucian scholars who uphold concepts of humanness and justice.”<sup>87</sup> He argued that Mozi resembled the Amitābha of Jōdo Shinshū 浄土真宗 in his attempt to help laypeople with the lowest inherent ability.

For instance, Mozi’s theory may initially appear to revolve around the fundamental concept of heavenly will (*tianzhi* 天志) and the resulting universal love, yet I believe this structure is essentially analogous to Jōdo Shinshū’s teachings centered on Amitābha. For this reason, I am inclined to maintain that categorizing Mozi outside the realm of Chinese philosophy is not warranted. Even if Mozi had previously formulated religious doctrines from the broader perspective of the comprehensive Chinese philosophy I have discussed so far, the principal concept—the fundamental idea—should be humanness, specifically unconditional and impartial love, which appears to be the primary derivative concept. To educate the populace, [Mozi] leveraged religious sentiments, attaching the notion of heavenly will prior to universal love, thereby resonating with people, especially enlightening the common masses, and ultimately swaying the world for a period. As an analogy, if we liken Confucianism to the “greater wheel” of Mahayana Buddhism, then Mozi could be compared to the “smaller wheel” of Hinayana Buddhism.<sup>88</sup>

Interpreting the most significant concept as universal love rather than heavenly will does not weaken or negate the importance of heavenly will within Mozi’s framework. Takahashi seems to have been ultimately concerned with the establishment of his “Organizing of the Lineage of Chinese Philosophy,”<sup>89</sup> meaning that an accurate exposition of Mozi’s philosophical system was much less important. This inclination to distill and define the characteristics of peoples or nations, a tendency stemming from Rankean historiography, is also discernible in Inoue, who had a definite mission to pursue the study of the Orient for the betterment of the Japanese Empire.

### Takahashi’s Use of Names in Derogatory Articles

Around the time of his graduation, Takahashi wrote a series of essays in *Philosophy Magazine* (*Tetsugaku zasshi* 哲學雜誌), which was published by the alumni of the Department of

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<sup>86</sup> See Section 3-2 of this article.

<sup>87</sup> Takahashi, “Takase bungakushi cho yōbokutetsugaku o hyōsu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 187 (September 1902): 40–41.

<sup>88</sup> Takahashi, “Takase bungakushi cho yōbokutetsugaku o hyōsu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 187 (September 1902): 44–45.

<sup>89</sup> Takahashi, “Takase bungakushi cho yōbokutetsugaku o hyōsu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 187 (September 1902): 41.

Philosophy. These essays dealt with the work of two of his contemporaries, Takase Takejiro and Dr. Nemoto Michiaki. Takase had graduated from the Department of Chinese Studies in 1898, the same year Takahashi joined the department, and Dr. Nemoto had taught Takahashi. At the time, it was unheard of to publish articles whose titles included the names of fellow academics. Takahashi's essays were all the more remarkable since they contained scathing critiques of the work of these individuals.

In a society which had only recently emerged from the premodern class system, Takahashi critiquing his professor was a bold move. In his essay on Dr. Nemoto, he first noted that the availability of Han-period texts on *The Book of Changes* was largely due to the efforts of Qing dynasty textual criticism and evidential scholarship, since a significant portion of such Han dynasty writings had been thought lost. He thus acknowledged the contributions of Qing dynasty scholars, especially Hui Dong 惠棟 (1697–1758), stating:

Hui Dong's *The Book of Changes* was passed down to Jiao Xun 焦循, and this reading of *The Book of Changes* supplanted the moral-principle reading promoted by Wang Bi 王弼 and by Song and Ming dynasty scholars. Dr. Nemoto's theory of *The Book of Changes* is largely based on this Qing dynasty tradition; it requires significant attention.<sup>90</sup>

However, the platitudes ended there. Takahashi was an advocate of a moral-principle reading of *The Book of Changes* (*yiliyi* 義理易), refuting the contrasting emblem-numerology view, which combined the Theory of the Five Elements with *The Book of Changes* and later also incorporated the sexagenary cycle and the eight trigrams, a view championed by Nemoto. According to Takahashi, these combinations did not align with “the original meaning” nor with rational choices. He claimed, “[Dr. Nemoto's] theory cannot alter its emblem-numerological meanings since it relies on fifty years of refinement and orthodox theory for eternity. However, I wonder if it was the text's original meaning to allocate the sexagenary cycle to the eight trigrams.” He also criticized Nemoto indirectly, suggesting that the reason why the emblem-numerological readings were “so arcane is because later scholars of *The Book of Changes* sometimes unreasonably attempt to interpret the text in a profound and esoteric manner.”<sup>91</sup>

Takahashi agreed with the interpretation of Wang Fuzhi 王夫之 (1619–92), which was in opposition to the views of Hui Dong and Nemoto, regarding the blending of the sexagenary cycle with the eight trigrams for divination.

I have been quite skeptical about whether the allocation of the sexagenary cycle to the eight trigrams is consistent with the original meaning of *The Book of Changes*. Instead, I believe that this particular way of understanding *The Book of Changes* was invented during the Han dynasty period, as seen in the *yi-wei* [易緯]

<sup>90</sup> Takahashi, “Kaneki o nanshite nemoto hakase no ekisetsu ni oyobu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 193 (March 1903): 88.

<sup>91</sup> Takahashi, “Kaneki o nanshite nemoto hakase no ekisetsu ni oyobu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 190 (December 1902): 60.

texts. Ultimately, however, this approach cannot provide a proper understanding of *The Book of Changes*. Recently, I read *Interpretation on the Images of The Book of Changes* [*Zhouyi daxingjie* 周易大象解] and *Expository Comments on The Book of Changes* [*Zhouyi bishu* 周易禘疏], both written by Wang Fuzhi. The interpretations and discussions in these works align closely with my own understanding. I am not arguing necessarily that Dr. Nemoto's theory is wrong, but I am confident that Wang Fuzhi's analysis presents another valuable method for understanding *The Book of Changes*. Wang Fuzhi provides much clarity by distinguishing between theories concerned with portents and the authentic canon, while also dispensing with the use of the sexagenary cycle and the eight trigrams. He thus establishes a theory distinct from that of the Han dynasty Confucians.<sup>92</sup>

He went on to justify his evaluation of the interpretations of Wang Fuzhi:

The main point here is that [Wang Fuzhi] did not adhere to the theory of Chen Tuan 陳搏 nor to the method of Jing Fang 京坊. He also endeavored to refute *Xiantiantu* 先天圖, the literature concerned with portents, and miscellaneous other theories which needlessly delve into the esoteric subjects discussed by Laozi and Zhuangzi. Consequently, his words were consistently grounded in reality, and their meaning was always in line with the *li* 理. He presented the most logical sense of understanding among the recent commentators on *The Book of Changes*.<sup>93</sup>

For Takahashi, Wang Fuzhi “grasped the broader perspective, studied the structure, and explored the historical aspects of *The Book of Changes* ... [and] it was gratifying to discover that this earlier Confucian scholar, who lived two hundred years ago in a foreign land, shared a similar understanding to my own.”<sup>94</sup> He was thus able to use the ideas of Wang Fuzhi as a basis for critiquing Dr. Nemoto.

Given his willingness to criticize one of his professors, it is not surprising that Takahashi had even fewer reservations critiquing a senior peer. In *Philosophy of Yang Zhu and Mozi*, Takase Takejiro had attacked both of these scholars and Kato Hiroyuki and Christianity, which he considered their contemporary equivalents. Takahashi pointed out that the title of the book did not accurately represent its content and criticized Takase for failing to present his own views on ethical theories, despite presenting the book as a critique of Yang Zhu and Mozi.<sup>95</sup>

Takahashi was deeply condescending about Takase's rejection of the theory of evolution. Although he acknowledged that “Since the author has politely translated the works of these two masters [Yang Zhu and Mozi] into Japanese for the first time, this book holds some

<sup>92</sup> Takahashi, “Kaneki o nanshite nemoto hakase no ekisetsu ni oyobu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 190 (December 1902): 61–62.

<sup>93</sup> Takahashi, “Kaneki o nanshite nemoto hakase no ekisetsu ni oyobu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 190 (December 1902): 62.

<sup>94</sup> Takahashi, “Kaneki o nanshite nemoto hakase no ekisetsu ni oyobu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 190 (December 1902): 62.

<sup>95</sup> Takahashi, “Takase bungakushi cho yōbokutetsugaku o hyōsu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 186 (August 1902): 19–20.

utility,” he also argued that it “diverges [from the central discourse] and remains incomplete in its approach to providing perspectives on the history of philosophy.”<sup>96</sup> One reason why he found fault with the historical philosophical perspective of Takase’s work was the place he assigned Mozi in the history of Chinese philosophy. Takase classified Mozi as a religious thinker, placing him within the Mixed School category. Takahashi, on the other hand, categorized Mozi within the Confucian group but with Hinayana characteristics. According to Takahashi, Takase had failed to grasp the nuanced historical positioning of Mozi, which marked his work as an inadequate contribution to the history of philosophy.<sup>97</sup>

Although Takahashi had less experience in researching the history of Chinese philosophy than Takase, he had no problem roundly criticizing his book. Indeed, he demonstrated a remarkable degree of confidence, which is made very clear in the conclusion of the article we have been examining, “Understanding Dr. Nemoto’s Interpretation of *The Book of Changes* through a Critique of the Han Dynasty Reception of *The Book of Changes*.”

This is indeed a novel cosmology, rarely found in either the East or the West, which was formulated during the Qin and Han dynasty period. It would be very interesting to research how the concept of number, which is thoroughly formal, could be taken as the basis of a cosmology, even though this idea is undoubtedly erroneous. Personally, through my own observations, I have finally developed *a unique perspective* [yijiajian 一家見] on this matter, and I am daring to share it with my fellow scholars. Moreover, this concept can be applied more broadly, to Pythagoras in Greece and also to Indian mathematics.<sup>98</sup>

The expression Takahashi uses in this passage, “a unique perspective” (*yijiajian* 一家見), is typically employed when a scholar has developed an entirely original concept. The fact that Takahashi uses it, despite having only recently graduated, shows just how confident he was in his own ideas.

Takahashi, an ardent reader of literature from classical to contemporary, exhibited commendable academic fervor, unreservedly critiquing his mentors and predecessors. His critique can be appraised as grounded in scholarly rationality, and his readiness to extend this critique even to those in close proximity to him underscores the thoroughness of his critical spirit. It invites contemplation whether this rational critique ethos was later reflected in his Joseon Confucianism studies. That said, the degree to which Takahashi’s critical thoroughness and rationality informed his studies of Joseon Confucianism remains to be rigorously assessed.

<sup>96</sup> Takahashi, “Takase bungakushi cho yōbokutetsugaku o hyōsu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 187 (September 1902): 47.

<sup>97</sup> Takahashi, “Takase bungakushi cho yōbokutetsugaku o hyōsu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 187 (September 1902): 47.

<sup>98</sup> Takahashi, “Kaneki o nanshite nemoto hakase no ekisetsu ni oyobu,” *Tetsugaku zasshi* 190 (December 1902): 68.

## Conclusion

Takahashi pursued a philosophical approach which shed light on the understanding of history and contemporary reality. The two articles examined here demonstrate the vast amount of information he had already absorbed during his undergraduate studies. His willingness to openly criticize both his teacher and one of his senior peers demonstrates his maverick personality. Despite writing these sensational articles, or perhaps because of them, Takahashi did not enroll in graduate school. Immediately after graduating, he secured a position at Kyushu Nippo 九州日報 thanks to a recommendation from Takebe Dongo 建部遯吾 (1871–1945), who was also from Nigata and a sociology professor at the Imperial University of Tokyo.<sup>99</sup> Two years later, in 1904, Takahashi traveled to Korea as a foreign teacher at the Imperial Korean Middle School. Shortly after this, he was appointed deputy investigator under the Governor-General of Chōsen during the Japanese occupation of Korea. Subsequently, he held a professorial position at Keijō Imperial University until his return to Japan in 1945. His doctoral dissertation, “Politics, Religion, and the Enlightenment of Chosŏn” (朝鮮の教化と政教, 1919),<sup>100</sup> was a substantial work, providing a comprehensive account of Buddhism and Confucianism from the Three Kingdoms period through to the Chosŏn dynasty.<sup>101</sup> This scholarly endeavor came about from his exploration of rare books in Chosŏn temples throughout the country. He continued his research into the history of Chosŏn Confucianism after assuming his position at Keijō Imperial University.

Takahashi was the first to conduct a study on the history of Chosŏn Confucianism. Throughout his exploration of this subject, he applied a recognizable framework on the history of ideas, and this pattern is identifiable in the two early articles discussed in this paper. In particular, he utilized a positivistic research approach, underpinned by the idea that *Zhubuzixue* was monotonous, while at the same time attempting to describe the distinctive national characteristics of the Chosŏn people.

Takahashi did not hesitate to criticize what he saw as the irrationality of premodern scholarship, and not even his superiors were spared his scrutiny. As an admirer of rationality and speculative philosophical thought, he had at one point held a generally favorable view of *Zhubuzixue*. However, during his time in Chosŏn, he came to believe that “*Zhubuzixue* is monotonous” and that Chosŏn *Zhubuzixue* in particular was “stagnant.” This shift in perspective does not seem consistent with a progressive and evolutionary view of history, nor does it seem to be a rational critique. However, it can be understood in terms of the person who had the most profound influence on Takahashi, Inoue Tetsujiro, who studied Eastern philosophy

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<sup>99</sup> Takabe also arranged Takahashi’s marriage, and was a member of Takahashi’s 1919 doctoral thesis committee. See “Takahashi sensei nenpuryaku,” 11.

<sup>100</sup> The information regarding his doctoral thesis is sourced from “Takahashi Sensei Nenpuryaku,” *Chōsen Gakubō* 14 (1959): 6. However, the existence of the actual thesis remains unconfirmed at this juncture.

<sup>101</sup> Regarding the contents of Takahashi’s dissertation, see Anonymous, “Chosŏn kyohwa chōnggyo: Kogyohyōngssi tam 朝鮮教化政教: 高橋亨氏談,” *Maeil sinbo* 毎日申報, December 8, 1919.

as part of Oriental studies. Takahashi addressed Inoue as *sensei* 先生,<sup>102</sup> a term reserved for those who have genuinely contributed to the intellectual growth of a student, and he did not critique the overt Orientalist tendencies exhibited by Inoue.

Essentially, it seems that Takahashi's acute and unwavering critical spirit was gradually eroded by his training in Oriental studies under the Japanese Empire. He was a talented burgeoning scholar, but more notably, a manifestation of his epoch. During his undergraduate years, he received training in Oriental studies, which was expected to contribute to imperial administration, formulating his maturation as a scholar. This observation extends to other professors such as Fujitsuka Chikashi 藤塚隣 and Abe Yoshio 阿部吉雄, who, after graduating from Tokyo Imperial University, instructed Korean Studies and Chinese Studies at Keijo Imperial University. Their activities and influences in colonial Korea need to be thoroughly scrutinized from a postcolonial perspective. Considering that Korean scholars, mentored by Japanese professors including Takahashi, established an academic discipline in Korean or Oriental philosophy in post-liberation Korea, it is vital to assess the impact of Imperial Japan's Oriental studies on the development of modern Korean academia, rather than solely attributing it to Takahashi.

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<sup>102</sup>Takahashi, "Takase bungakushi cho yōbokutetsugaku o hyōsu," *Tetsugaku zasshi* 187 (September 1902): 47.

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