Kokutai, *Hataraku* and *Atarashi*: Reflections on Culture, Innovation and Development in Japan[1]

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Abstract

Japan's spectacular rise to pre-eminence in East Asia by the turn of the twentieth century has been analysed in the popular and scholarly literature. This essay, based on secondary sources and the author's lived experience, highlights three critical elements ingrained in Japanese culture and society that underpinned Japan's technological, economic and socio-political development in the aftermath of the Meiji Restoration of 1868. It provides a robust analysis of the many-layered fundamental concept of kokutai in different contexts, and demonstrates how a combination of patriotic devotion to the nation, a culture of hard work (hataraku), and a love for innovation (atarashi) drove the process leading to the country's political, economic and social development. The paper also highlights the social cost of Japanese development, and lessons for Nigeria and other countries of the Global South.

Keywords: *Atarashi, Culture, Development, Hataraku, Japan, Kokutai*

Introduction

This article is informed in part by a quarter-century engagement with Japan as a researcher and teacher of Japanese history. A key derivative of that engagement is the identification of culture, nationalism and innovation as key elements in the rise of Japan from the obscurity of East Asia, during the *Sakoku*, to global prominence by the turn of the twentieth century. This essay, therefore, dwells on what appear to have been the key drivers of Japan's rise to greatness: nationalism, hard work and innovation. The three elements are captured in the expressions *kokutai*, *hataraku* and *atarashi*, as discussed in the successive sections of this paper.

Kokutai: Embodiment of National Essence

Since its frontal encounter with the West in the 1850s, Japan has proven to be an enigma, which foreigners have endeavoured to unravel. How a country that faced the threat of China-type quasi-colonial domination by the Western powers, which carved out spheres of influence for themselves through "unequal treaties", rose to a great power status in half a century has always confounded observers. Students of "Japanese religion, culture and history", it has been noted, have "asserted … that the Japanese have a unique sense of significance regarding their National Community which is variously expressed as national character, national essence, national substance, state structure, national polity, or *kokutai*, which literally means 'national body'."[2] John Brownlee has described it as the "most original political idea ever developed in Japan."[3] The concept has been subjected to endless scrutiny and debates since the nineteenth century, as various scholars endeavoured to unpack it from their disciplinary and ideological perspectives. Hence, it is "a notoriously slippery term," which "might best be understood as those qualities that make the Japanese 'Japanese'."[4] Olga Yazovskaya also noted that "leading researchers of Japanese culture see it as a presentation of Japanese people's unity [;] .… a basic political principle of Japanese statehood and … an expression of Japanese nation's character as a whole."[5] The "ambiguity of translation" of *kokutai* as indicated above, "signified various things in various contexts, and these meanings changed over time." Nevertheless, the different interpretations suffered from the hallmark of Whig history, a teleological view of history, which assumes that "history is the realization of some hoped-for ideal over time."[6]

Motohiko Anzu, a Shinto scholar, provided a pithy description of *kokutai* as follows: "If you regard a State as a form or container, the contents that fill this form or container is the reality of a state, that is the *kokutai*."[7] In his conception, it was the imperial dynasty that represented the concept, which was coterminous with "an emperor state." Another scholar noted that, in the context of religious nationalism, *kokutai* referred to "the essential oneness of the emperor and the Japanese people" or the Japanese national community as defined by Kitagawa. "In short," she concluded, "kokutai embodies the idea of Japanese national unity."[8] Brownlee noted that it was "an inspiring and unifying ideology" which provided "the

national political framework" within which the Japanese constitutional and political systems functioned from the Meiji Restoration to 1945.[9]

Though acknowledged as "the most potent idea in the history of Japanese political thought," *kokutai* has also been seen as "a key element of extremist or 'ultra' nationalism." It "did much to inspire the Japanese people in wars of aggression and in their creation of a Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere."[10]

There are two perspectives on the usage and meaning of *kokutai*. One view regards it as immutable while the other posits that its meaning is contextual. Stalker, for example, argued that "*Kokutai* can further be described as the immutable, 'native' aspects of the Japanese polity based on history and culture focused on the imperial institution. It formed a contrast with *seitai*, or form of government, which was historically contingent."[11] This position was also endorsed by Williamson, who asserted that though "*seitai* may change, the *kokutai* remains fixed."[12]

The contrasting position that *kokutai* evolved in meaning and usage has several advocates. Klaus Antoni explained that the Japanese evolved "a comprehensive, religiously and politically based concept of government that postulated a uniquely Japanese 'national polity' (*kokutai*)." He added that up till 1945 and even afterwards, "this idea of the *kokutai*, which was centered on the idea of a divine emperor and based on political Shintô thought, formed the official and binding Japanese concept of the modern state, in which the institution of the emperor served as the metaphysical and mythical core of the national family."[13] Antoni's ideas were elaborated by Olga Yazovskaya, who stated that the Japanese national essence was founded on the militaristic tradition of bushido and "people-nation base." However, with the downfall of the samurai class from the onset of the Meiji period, that militaristic foundation lost its potency. Hence, the concept was redefined as "absolute unity of Emperor as a father of the nation, and nation itself." The concept was then "supported with citations of ancient mythological chronicles."[14]

The best exposition of the changing meanings of *kokutai* is the piece by Brownlee, which identified four stages in the evolution of the concept.[15] The first stage was represented by Seishisai Aizawa's 1825 work, *Shinron*

(*New Theses*), the first major exposition on the concept of *kokutai*. In short, he associated the concept with the idea of "national spiritual unity" founded on a blend of traditional myths about the origins of the people and the imperial dynasty and Confucian thought about government and society. Aizawa attributed the greatness of the Western powers to the unifying and motivating power of Christianity and argued that there had been in ancient Japan the unity of government and religion, *saisei itchi*. The national spiritual unity, based upon the people's affection for and trust in the Emperor, was the *kokutai* or national essence. Thus, *kokutai*, as "national essence" in its first usage had religious rather than political denotation.

The second stage in which Japanese thinkers grappled with the concept of kokutai was in the 1870s, the age of Civilization and Enlightenment (*Bunmei Kaika*). Hiroyuki Kato and Yukichi Fukuzawa were the best exponents of *kokutai*, subjecting it to intellectual scrutiny under the influence of Western liberal political thought. Kato, in his *Kokutai Shinron* (*New Theory of the National Essence*), published in 1874, initially advocated for a constitutional monarchy for Japan and political liberalism. He made the distinction between *kokutai* as national essence and *seitai* as a form of government. However, he later revised his position to support political authoritarianism towards the end of the Meiji period. Fukuzawa's seminal contribution was the idea that every nation had its national essence, which was tied to national sovereignty. He differed from previous thinkers in attributing the *kokutai* to national sovereignty rather than ancient myths and traditions, understandably because of his preoccupation with "the survival and progress of the Japanese nation." He duly acknowledged the imperial house as the "core of the National Essence," to the extent that it could be used to promote national sovereignty. Hence, the Emperor only had a functional role but did not constitute the *kokutai*.

The third stage coincided with the promulgation of the Meiji Constitution of 1889/90. This was a return to the first stage when the *kokutai* was traced to the ancient origins of the people and the imperial dynasty. The new interpretation, advanced by Eifu Motoda, a Confucian adviser to the Emperor, also adopted the distinction between *kokutai* and *seitai*. Brownlee stated that with the promulgation of the Constitution, "the Kokutai-seitai distinction became the underlying, widely accepted theory

of the state." The Emperor was declared sovereign, sacred and inviolable. There were dissenting voices, however, such as that of Tatsukichi Minobe of Tokyo Imperial University, who advanced the theory that the Emperor was "an organ of the state, bound by the constitution like the other organs such as the cabinet and the Diet."

The fourth stage was the era of militarism and ultra-nationalism in the 1930s, when the sovereignty of the nation became a passionate subject. Minobe's "Organ Theory" was discredited; he was declared a pariah, forced to resign from the House of Peers, and barely survived an assassination attempt. A Movement to Clarify the National Essence (*Kokutai meichô undô*) emerged and a committee of the leading Japanese intellectuals was constituted to expound on the *kokutai* for the education of students and the public. Its work, *Kokutai No Hongi*, published by the Ministry of Education in 1937, was designed to play a role in schools similar to the Imperial Rescript on Education and the portrait of the Emperor. During this fourth stage in the evolution of *kokutai*, the Japanese

> were no longer dealing with a concept to generate spiritual unity like Aizawa Seishisai in 1825, or with a political theory of Japan designed to accommodate modern institutions of government, like the 1889 Constitution. The committee of professors … sought to define the essential truths of Japan, which might be termed religious, or even metaphysical, because they required faith at the expense of logic and reason.[16]

In short, the *kokutai* was incarnate in the imperial house. This was a driving force in Japanese ultra-nationalism and militarism of the late 1930s leading to the Second World War.

Interestingly, Piers Williamson, arguing that the end of World War II "forced radical reinterpretations," identified "a 'fifth' stage," when *kokutai* denoted "a 'thin' notion of political symbolism along the lines of the British monarchy." Conceding that "the meaning of the '*kokutai*' has always been ambiguous and contested," he opted to "use it to refer loosely to a conservative logic of appropriateness for an imperial head of state."[17] In his support, he cited another scholar, Nagao, who defined *kokutai* as "the principle of traditional legitimacy; in reality, however, it is the

principle of legitimacy during a specific historical period, that is, from the Meiji Restoration to the end of World War II."[18]

The foregoing has tried to underscore the manifestations and definition of the Japanese national essence, which, was peculiarly Japanese. To be sure every nation has its variant of *kokutai*. Hence, each invents an ideology that captures its identity, national character and the perception of its role or place in the world. We may disagree with how the Japanese in our immediate context or other nations have invented and deployed theirs. What is clear is that it has aided the Japanese in facing off external threats to their existence and galvanised the people in prosecuting war and peace. There are lessons in this for non-Japanese, especially Africans. We next consider *hataraku*, another vent into Japanese culture and society.

Hataraku: The Culture of Hard Work
Anyone who has lived or worked with the Japanese would quickly notice the work ethic of the people. The words *hataraku* and *hatarikimasu* have their roots in history and convey the depth of the culture of dignity of labour and commitment. In the "purely Japanese kanji," the word for labour is *hataraku*. It comprises two Chinese characters for "person" and "move." So, by writing "a person moves," an author has explained, "we convey the meaning "to work." By this logic, activities such as using machines, vehicles, tools and other objects, or animals (such as horses pulling carts) do not come under the category of work (*hataraku*) in Japanese. "Work in Japanese," it is stressed, "is considered a condition in which a human being can move."[19] This linguistic clarification indicates how well ingrained the concept of work, indeed, hard work, is in the people's culture and tradition.

Foreigners have always admired the Japanese work ethic and scholars too have undertaken in-depth studies of the phenomenon. In one of the most illuminating studies by a foreigner, the Moroccan Zakaria Laroussi identified four elements in the cultural foundations of Japanese work ethic: *bushido* ("way of the warrior"), *ganbari* ("doing one's best"), the Japanese style of management, and Japanese rice cultivation. We shall explain these four elements in turn.

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Bushido, the code of the warrior instilled the values of "group loyalty, commitment to duty, honour and group harmony." This has been transferred to modern work ethic in the display of loyalty to employers (companies and bosses) both for the prosperity of the firm and to secure personal livelihood. Hence, mistakes by workers were viewed unfavourably by both colleagues and superiors. This places workers under obligation to discharge their duties in a manner that preserves their dignity. Accordingly, an individual took personal responsibility for letting down the firm, bosses and colleagues often by resigning or committing suicide in extreme cases. As Laroussi reported, this was expressed in a common adage: "Die rather than disgrace yourself."[20]

The second cultural dynamic, also related to bushido principles, is *ganbari*, meaning "doing one's best." This term, according to Roger Davies and Osamu Ikeno, "[c]onnotes high achievement, motivation, and orientation to good harmony. An everyday expression in Japan, *ganbari* demands of anyone doing one's utmost, going beyond the call of duty and contributing to national development. *Ganbari* is also rendered as *Gambatte*, which means "don't give up" or "do your best."[21] A related term is *Genki*, which means "energetic and industrious." The common greeting by Japanese, *Genki Desu Ka*?, implicitly asks after one's fitness for work.[22] Hence, a Japanese proverb states that "[t]he monk who does not work should not eat."[23] Other Japanese proverbs underscoring the virtue of hard work include the following:

- The harder we work the better life will be.
- Be not afraid of going slowly, be afraid of standing still.
- None of us is as smart as all of us.
- The day you decide to do it is your lucky day.
- If you try, you may succeed. If you don't try, you will not succeed. This is true for all things. Not succeeding is the result of not trying.[24]

The third dynamic is the Japanese style of management, which gives the worker a sense of belonging and promotes cooperation at work. The following are the features of the workplace culture: no one rushes home while colleagues are still battling to complete some tasks; no definite responsibilities are assigned to workers; anyone may be assigned to carry

out any task; workers are involved in decision making within the firm to promote a sense of belonging; and emphasis is on unity and zeal, high quality and the highest possible levels of productivity, while also seeking profits for the company.

The fourth cultural dynamic is the tradition of labour-intensive rice cultivation in a tough physical environment – only 15% of total land suitable for arable agriculture; availability of only simple tools and the requirement of payment of 40% tax of rice yields to the local lords (*daimyo*). Farmers not only worked long and hard, but they also engaged fellow farmers in cooperative labour to meet targets (a trait that is replicated in the modern work place). According to Laroussi, "Japanese people fully realised that hard work was the right choice for them to survive – an essential lesson they handed on to their progeny."[25]

Another author has added another cultural dynamic to the mix: the influence of Buddhism. A distinguished Japanese social commentator, Shichihei Yamamoto, is said to have traced the Japanese work ethic to Japan's strong Buddhist tradition. According to him, "the act of working is subconsciously accepted as a spiritual discipline, and Buddhahood, not economic gain, is the prize to be gained through selfless devotion to one's work."[26] This suggestion is open to debate that other Asian nations influenced by Buddhism have not replicated Japan's *hataraku*.

That said, Japanese work ethic has been admired by foreigners as a model for nation-building. During a visit to Japan in 2018, Malaysia's Prime Minister, Mahathir Muhammed, expressed his desire for Malaysians to emulate Japanese people's "work ethic, mind and value system."[27] He urged his people to, in spite of resentment of Japan's brutal colonial occupation, copy the Japanese attitude of feeling "embarrassed if they failed to perform their duties to expectations." This exhortation built upon the Look East Policy drafted in the 1980s, which focused as much on learning the Japanese work ethic and feeling ashamed if they failed to perform assigned tasks as attracting investments from and going to Japan on study tours. Malaysians also noted that apart from work ethic, the Japanese had retained and built upon the culture and values passed down the generations. Such values included respect for elders – and others – by bowing their heads in salutation; punctuality (epitomised by the arrival of

their trains and buses on schedule); cleanliness (demonstrated by efficient waste management); love and care for the environment, which is taught in schools; patriotism (instilled from the cradle to the grave); strengthening of the family institution and parenting skills, as a bulwark against social anomie; and building a more caring nation.[28]

However, the famed work ethic of the Japanese has "been undergoing significant change in recent years. While work is still held in high esteem, there has been considerable erosion on the motivation side. This is partly because the goals have become more elusive."[29] This change has been attributed to the global climate of low economic growth in which extra work did not always attract higher incomes. In addition, the ageing of the population has led to a shortage of top-level management positions. Furthermore, unlike during the Meiji period, greater affluence has made workers more individualistic, and the younger generation has developed other interests outside everyday work.[30]

 Meanwhile, the tradition of long working hours, averaging 12-14 hours per day, has led to reported deaths from overwork, for which the Japanese invented the term *karōshi*, or "death by overwork." So widespread is the phenomenon that there are official measures to tackle it: "a national karōshi hotline, a karōshi self-help book, and a karōshi law that provides financial help to the widow and children of the person who died of karōshi."[31]

Atarashi: Innovation and Love of Novelty

"It is Japanese culture," it has been observed, "to always pursue the latest thing; it's an energetic market that runs fast, so creators must run fast too."[32] The love of novelty has also bred a passion for innovation. This made the Japanese very creative and inventive. In a major study of Japan's innovation environment, the following observations were made by a group of international scholars. They stated that:

> The story of innovation in Japan is in large part a story of reinvention. It is a story of ideas, products, and services being reinvented in the process of being adopted to fit unique cultural, social, consumer, and household patterns, in the end redefining the meaning and utility of these ideas, products, and services.[33]

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Many Westerners mistakenly concluded that the Japanese merely borrow from others and imitate without creating new things of their own. They cite examples of Japanese imitations or adaptations of the Chinese script, Korean pottery and textiles, American corporate efficiency and popular culture, and French education. Yet, a diligent examination of these adaptations reveals that they were not merely adopted but reinvented to suit the local context. The authors concluded that:

> The Japanese are engaged in an ongoing creative synthesis and reinvention, combining exotic with domestic, modern with traditional, Western with Japanese. Concepts, ideas, and practices are reinvented in their encounter with Japan, and then often are returned to Western and other Asian countries as innovations.[34]

A foreign commentator admitted that many Westerners find it difficult to explain the success of Japanese firms in innovation and grudgingly concede that they were "'only' good at incremental innovation." Yet, though Japanese companies were indeed better at "incremental innovation than basic research or dramatic innovations, the cumulative effect of sustained incremental innovation is itself radical as we see in the audio-visual market." In the running of firms, the author noted that the Japanese have adopted two conjoined strategies to good effect: the "'bottom-up,' competency driven, 'let's try it out' approach," which harnesses the capacity of lower echelon, especially middle-ranking executives in the former, and cuts risks should the venture fail, in the latter. The Japanese, the writer concluded, "are successful innovators, even though their culture emphasises harmony rather than individual creativity."[35]

However, foreign impetus and stimuli are not the only driving forces behind innovation in Japan. A commentator remarked that indigenous traditions, practices, arts and culture also influenced innovation in Japan:

> artefacts from the Renaissance-like Edo Period (1603-1867) inspired many of the inventions synonymous with contemporary Japan. The compact cars of today are descendants of Edo-era handcrafted Palanquin sedan chairs. USB drives and mini music players have echoes of the portable lacquered boxes full of ink, brushes, and writing

paper that kept yesteryear's leisure classes occupied on their travels. Even the most sophisticated modern technological feats, robots, have a historical precedent in Japanese society of yore: *karakuri ningyo*, small mechanical dolls used to serve tea.[36]

Another endogenous influence on innovation in Japan is the culture of doggedness and persistence. "Japanese culture," it has been observed, "is focused on determined, consistent and painstaking effort." The Japanese believe in perfecting whatever they tackle. "Even a simple act like pouring tea," for example, "has been made into a perfect and beautiful ritual. Apply this attitude to solving problems (e.g. engineering problems) and you can understand where their innovation comes from."[37]

Another cultural dynamic behind innovation in Japan has been the country's adaptability to changes in the wider world. While, for example, the country adopted the *sakoku* (closed country or seclusion) for more than two centuries prior to the Meiji Restoration, it swiftly adopted the *kaikoku* (open country) policy from the mid-nineteenth century and never looked back. While in the previous period it imposed the death penalty on foreign travel, it now turned the entire world into "a vast classroom" from which it adopted and adapted whatever was good for the nation as it sought to match the West. Adopting a philosophy of "Eastern Morals, Western Technology," it deployed Western technology in its endeavour to escape the fate of India and China, which had fallen under Western domination.[38]

Conclusion: Learning from Japan
The spectacular rise of Japan from near-colonial status in the 1850s to a regional and global reckoning between 1868 and 1905, and its resurgence after the calamitous events of the 1930s and 1940s have no precedent in history. This feat has attracted the attention of many developing nations aiming to replicate it. Even nations that suffered under brutal Japanese occupation from the late 1930s up to 1945 – Malaysia, Singapore and South Korea - launched the "Learn From Japan" campaign in the late 1970s. They drew inspiration from the Meiji-era slogan of "Japanese Spirit, Western Technology."[39] It is worth noting that these countries numbered among the so-called Asian Tigers that successfully transcended their Third World status by the late 1980s. However, as a commentator remarked: "Culturally speaking, you can't be an exact replica of any

nation; for a culture to develop you need to have a supportive atmosphere." For the Japanese, he identified the following habits that could be emulated: hard work; dedication; discipline; vigour; diligence, socialisation and team spirit.[40]

Yet, we need to acknowledge the cost of the successes achieved by the Japanese. First, patriotism as epitomised by *kokutai* could lead to ultra-nationalism, which degenerated into fascism in Japan, Germany and Italy during the inter-war years. In the Japanese case, *kokutai* had evolved into an ideology of military expansionism, which resulted in the havoc of the 1930s and 1940s. In the end, the concept was modified to reflect the post-World War II reality. Second, the work culture of Japan, as good as it is, has its drawbacks. It has been observed that:

> Japan's work culture, which once assured its dominance in tech, has now hindered its ability to keep up. Whereas long hours, expertise in engineering, and an incredible drive for perfectionism were once perfectly suited to developing more and better tech products, now they only harm productivity and slow the pace of innovation.[41]

As indicated above, the stress of long hours at work and unremitting pressure to deliver results account for *karōshi* ("death by overwork") and a high suicide rate.

To be fair, the suicide rate in Japan, which has declined over the years, has been attributed to a combination of the following: social insecurity engendered by the economic stagnation of the 1990s; psychological barriers among workers, which, coupled with overwork, predisposed some to suicide; personal crises, such as inability to pay debts, children with mental or incurable diseases, making suicide an escape from shame and pain; a national history and culture that condoned suicide, especially "honourable death by suicide"; non-prohibition of suicide by Buddhism and Shinto, the most widely practised religions in Japan; and a national culture that views mistakes unfavourably and expects appropriate action to avert or deal with disgrace or dishonour.[42] It may be noted that honourable suicide is not peculiar to the Japanese. The Yoruba expression, *Ikú yá jẹsín*, which states that honourable suicide is preferable to a life of

shame, is based on time honoured practice, which has been documented in several scholarly studies.[43]

In the final analysis, some positive lessons can be drawn from the Japanese experience. The first is for every nation to discover or develop a national ideology that captures its *kokutai* or national essence. Myths, legends or actual historical circumstances may be conscripted into this project. No nation can develop without a galvanising ideology, no matter how artificial, behind its policies and endeavours. Germany's *Drang Nach Osten* ("Drive Towards the East") and America's "Manifest Destiny," though imperialistic, gave purpose and direction to those nations at critical junctures in their history.

Second, whatever may be said about Japanese work ethic, the high standards of performance, which any foreigner to Japan has never failed to observe and imbibe, constitutes the cornerstone of the great feats achieved by Japan in war and peace. To be fair, the virtue of hard work is acknowledged across cultures. The Yoruba capture this in two aphorisms: *Iṣẹ́ lòògùn ìṣẹ́* 'Hard work is the antidote to poverty' and *Àtẹ́wọ́ ẹni kì í tanni jẹ*, literally, 'The labour of your hands will not let you down'. We should emphasise, however, that the Japanese did not merely put in long hours or physical exertion. Otherwise, they would have been what the Yoruba call *alágbáramámèrò, baba ọ̀lẹ* 'a hardworking person without initiative, the father of sloths'. Rather, the Japanese have embedded in their work ethic the elements of flair, creativity, precision, a keen eye for detail, target-setting, commitment to the collective and an eye on the big picture.

Finally, whether the Japanese are inventors or imitators, the world has been a better place with their innovativeness captured in *atarashi*. If more nations, especially in the Global South, could replicate Japan's feats in engineering, and electronic and automobile industries, the world would be a richer and more equitable place for all. South Korea and Singapore have led the way. It is Africa's turn to do the same.

Endnotes

[1] This is an abridged and revised version of a Keynote Lecture delivered at the Society for Japanese Studies in Africa (SJSA) Conference, "History and Identity as Comparative Indices in Japanese Studies in Africa," Lead City University, Ibadan, 9 October 2019.

[2] Joseph M. Kitagawa, 'The Japanese "Kokutai" (National Community) History and Myth,' *History of Religions* 13(3), 1974, p.209. According to Bruce Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2005, p.181), the word "kokutai" combined "koku" (country) with "tai" ("ch'e" in Korean), meaning "basis (of philosophy) or essence, that is what makes Japan different from other countries." The literature on this concept is massive and only a few sources have been cited in this piece. Reviews and analyses of the evolution of the concept include: Olga Yazovskaya, "Concept of Kokutai as National Essence in the Foundation of Japan's Imperial Subjectness in Late XIX-First Half of XX Century," *IJASOS-International E-Journal of Advances in Social Sciences*, Vol. IV, Issue 11 (August 2018), pp.510-15; Klaus Antoni, *Kokutai- Political Shintô from Early-Modern to Contemporary Japan*, Tübingen: Eberhard Karls University, 2016; and John S. Brownlee, "Four Stages of the Japanese Kokutai (National Essence)," https://www.adilegian.com/PDF/brownlee.pdf, accessed on 6 September 2019.

[3] Brownlee, "Four Stages of the Japanese Kokutai," p.1.

[4] Asia for Educators, "Selections from The Kokutai No Hongi (Fundamentals of Our National Polity), 1937," p.1, http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/japan/kokutai/pdf, accessed on 11 September 2019.

[5] Yazovskaya, "Concept of Kokutai as National Essence," p.511.

[6] Louis G. Perez, "Kokutai and Ultra-nationalism," *Japan at War: An Encyclopedia*, ABC-CLIO, 2013, p.182.

[7] Cited in Kitagawa, 'The Japanese "Kokutai",' p.209.

[8] Kathryn Hill Major, "Religious Nationalism in India and Japan," Report of a Senior Study, International Studies, Maryville College, Fall Term, 2012, p.12.

[9] Brownlee, "Four Stages of the Japanese Kokutai," p.1.

[10] Perez, "Kokutai and Ultra-nationalism," p.182.

[11] Nancy K. Stalker, *Prophet Motive: Deguchi Onisaburo, Oomoto, and the Rise of New Religions in Imperial Japan*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008, p.231, note 56.

[12] Piers R. Williamson, *Risk and Securitization in Japan: 1945-60*, London: Routledge, 2013, p.74, note 1.

[13] Antoni, *Kokutai- Political Shintô*, p.14.

[14] Yazovskaya, "Concept of Kokutai as National Essence," p.514.

[15] Unless otherwise stated, the quotations in the following paragraphs derived from Brownlee, "Four States of the Japanese Kokutai."

[16] Brownlee, "Four States of the Japanese Kokutai."

[17] Williamson, *Risk and Securitization in Japan*, p. 74, note 1.

[18] Cited in Williamson, *Risk and Securitization in Japan*, p. 74, note 1.

[19] M. Kumashiro, "One View of the Japanese Work Ethic," *Occupational Medicine*, Vol. 43, 1993, p.9.

[20] Zakaria Laroussi, "Work Ethic in Japan," Research Report, In-Service Training for Foreign Teachers, Kyoto University of Education, March 2009, p. 8.

[21] Muhammad Abdullah Javed, "What are the best things about Japanese work culture that the rest of the world can learn from?", 25 March 2016, https://www.quora.com/What-are-the-best-things-about-Japanese-work-culture-that-the-rest-of-the-world-can-learn-from, accessed on 7 September 2019. My Japanese friend, Professor Takehiko Ochiai, once told me that if challenged to "try harder" ("gambatte"!), one should respond with "gambarimasu," ("I am doing or shall do my best"!).

[22] Javed, "What are the best things about Japanese work culture."

[23] Laroussi, "Work Ethic in Japan," p. 8.

[24] Javed, "What are the best things about Japanese work culture."

[25] Laroussi, "Work Ethic in Japan," p.13.

[26] "The Japanese Work Ethic," https://tokyoing.net/intro/japanese-work-ethic/, accessed on 7 September 2019.

[27] Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye, "Japanese work ethic can make us better nation," 22 June 2018, https://www.nst.com.my/opinion/letters/2018/06/382709/japanese-work-ethic-can-make-us-better-nation, accessed on 7 September 2019.

[28] Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye, "Japanese work ethic can make us better nation."

[29] "The Japanese Work Ethic," https://tokyoing.net/intro/japanese-work-ethic/, accessed on 7 September 2019.

[30] "The Japanese Work Ethic," https://tokyoing.net/intro/japanese-work-ethic/, accessed on 7 September 2019.

[31] Javed, "What are the best things about Japanese work culture."

[32] Kentaro Kimura, APAC co-chief creative officer at Hakuhodo, https://www.hakuhodo-global.com/news/why-japan-might-be-the-most-innovative-place-in-the-world.html, accessed on 6 September 2019.

[33] Marina Gorbis, Rod Falcon and Yasuyuki Motoyama, *Innovation Through Reinvention: An Exploration of Japan's Innovation Environment*, Menlo Park, CA: Institute for the Future, Global Innovations Forum, 2001, p. ix. Also cited in http://www.iftf.org/our-work/people-technology/technology-horizons/innovation-through-reinvention-japans-innovation-environment/, accessed on 6 September 2019.

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