

The Influence of Henry George's Ideas Upon Modern Japan

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I

THE SOCIAL IDEAS of Henry George (1839–1897), a land reformer of the United States of America, were introduced into Japan as one of the European and American systems of social thought which were imported during the early days of the Meiji period. It was a few years after the publication of his *Progress and Poverty* (1879). In the twentieth year of Meiji (1887), the name of Henry George appeared in a Japanese periodical. Before entering into the matter, let us state briefly the social conditions of Japan in those days.

The Meiji Restoration Government had a historical mission to abolish feudal systems and to promote rapid progress of capitalism in Japan. Abolishing the feudalistic possession of land, the government acknowledged private landownership. The sale, division, annexation, mortgage and tenancy of land were permitted. Consequently, private property in land became the sole means of capitalistic exploitation and fell into the hands of a small number of landowners. As the protection and aid of modern industries and modern preparedness for war, under the strong pressure of higher capitalism in foreign nations, made it necessary to solidify the financial basis of the country, the government, in 1873, revised the system of land taxation from the tax in kind (rice) in proportion to the annual yield to a 3 per cent tax in money on the assessed value of land.

This revision of the land tax system, with the rapid progress of money-economy, and especially with the unbalanced progress between urban and rural communities, facilitated the capitalization and concentration of land. The 0.5 per cent reduction in the land tax in 1877, and the inflation policy since the same year, favored the primitive accumulation of capital in the hands of landowners. The reduced amount was a gain to landowners, and an abnormal rise in the price of rice owing to the inflation of the currency added to the profits of landowners.

On the other hand, the independent farmers got nothing from the re-

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duction in the land tax and the abnormal rise in the price of rice, and were dealt a severe blow through the deflation policy since 1881. Accordingly, they lost many tracts of land, and most of them became independent and tenant farmers, or typical tenant farmers, and part of them, together with tenant farmers deprived of the right of cultivation, became proletarians.¹

Rich farmers and landowners at first began a movement calling for liberty and civil rights, but when it became revolutionary owing to the pressure of poor farmers and tenant farmers, they became reactionary, semi-feudalistic landowners. Small independent farmers desired the reduction of the heavy semi-feudalistic land tax; poor farmers wished to have the pressure of mortgage and usurer-capital taken away and to get more land; and semi-feudalistic tenant farmers wanted to attain the position of independent farmers by means of the reduction of farm rent and the cancellation of debt.²

Thus rural problems and the land question became very important, and with the approach of 1885, the time limit of the assessed value of land, a severe controversy was begun over the reassessment of land values and the reduction of the land tax.

Thus the social conditions in modern Japan were very favorable for the introduction of Henry George's ideas, and moreover, the importation and spread of the ideas of liberty and civil rights since the early part of the Meiji era facilitated the understanding of George's ideas. As in 1881 Herbert Spencer's *Social Statics* was published in Japanese, translated by Tsuyoshi Matsushima, Spencer's theory of common ownership of land, which had fairly influenced George himself, was known to the intellectual class in Japan.

II

NOW THE EARLIEST DOCUMENT in Japanese of Henry George's that I could locate is the Japanese version of "The Rights of Man" from Chapter X of George's *Social Problems* (1883), translated by Yoshiharu Ikemoto. It was published in the February and April, 1887, issues (Nos. 1 and 3) of the *Kokumin no Tomo* ("Friend of Nation") monthly journal, published by Ichiro (Soho) Tokutomi (1863-1957), who was a progressive democrat in those days, though he became a nationalist afterward. The translator did not mention the text, but wrote, before the

¹ Goro Hani and Kimio Izu, *The Institutional Changes in the Meiji Restoration* (contained in *The Series on the History of the Development of Capitalism in Japan*), Tokyo, 1932, pp. 24, 26.

² Yoshitaro Hirano, *The Structure of Capitalistic Society in Japan*, Tokyo, 1950, p. 189.

translated passages, that Mr. Henry George was a famous "socialist" in the United States who was the author of *Progress and Poverty*, *Social Problems*, and so on, that he created a sensation in teaching the truth of equality and in criticizing the abuses of society, and that he, in the translated chapter, discussed fittingly the cleavage between rich and poor, and the slow growth of civil rights.

At nearly the same time, the fourth and last part of Dwight Whitney Learned's *Keizai Shinron* ("Political Economy") was published in Osaka in March, 1887. Learned (1848-1944) came to Japan from the United States in 1875 and helped Jo Nijima (1843-1890) in founding The Doshisha³ in Kyoto. He lectured on economics as a professor of the Doshisha Ei-Gakko (Collegiate School), and the above-mentioned book was the Japanese translation⁴ of his lectures at the college by Tsuneteru Miyagawa. Later, in 1928, retiring from the Doshisha, he returned to the United States. In Section 245 of Chapter XVII, entitled "Progress and Poverty," in the last part of the book, Learned criticized George's *Progress and Poverty* and rejected his remedy. Learned wrote as follows:

Another theory is that the private ownership of land is the great cause of all poverty, because as industry advances, the rent of land advances and the land-owner gets all the advantage. This is a mistake, and the abolition of private ownership of land would be of no advantage to laborers.

This theory was advocated a few years ago by Mr. Henry George in a book called *Progress and Poverty* which has had a wide circulation and attracted much attention both in England and the United States. This book is written in a vigorous and interesting style, but is full of blunders, and its proposed remedy is ludicrously inadequate.⁵

According to Learned, George's ideas are false both in theory and fact. The progress of civilization somewhat increases the demand for land, but it increases the demand for labor still more, and by means of improvements in transportation things are brought from distant lands. The general tendency of all progress is to raise wages if laborers do not increase. In fact, in recent times the improvement in transportation and the reduction of the expense of bringing food from America have greatly reduced the rent and value of agricultural land in England, even though population has greatly increased. Except in and near cities, there are few places in any country where the rent of land is increasing. Those people who have of recent years made great wealth out of industrial progress are not

³ Doshisha was called "The Doshisha" at the time.

⁴ This translation was started in 1882, or the fifteenth year of Meiji. (Etsuji Sumiya, *A Phase of Japanese History of Economics*, Tokyo, 1948, p. 62.)

⁵ Learned, *Keizai Shinron*, pp. 611-2. I referred to Learned's MS. of the lecture written in 1885. The MS. is preserved in the Doshisha.

landowners, but manufacturers, mercants, bankers, and so forth.

In Learned's opinion, George's remedy is a wild dream. Even if the government would take from all land a tax equal to its rent, this would not "abolish poverty." It would make very little difference with the condition of men. It would neither reduce the price of land nor make it easier for men to get land. If it is said that the government would thus have a large income which it might use in improving the condition of workmen, there arises the important question whether it is just or not for the government to put such a burden upon landowners, and whether they would or would not submit to it; if no compensation were made to landowners, it would be an act of robbery, and they would probably not submit without war.

And also in the same year (1887), Ukichi Taguchi (1855–1905), who was one of the most prominent liberal economists in the era of Meiji, referred to Henry George in an editorial entitled "The Relation Between Land Tax and Commodity Prices" in No. 359 (March 19, 1887) of the *Tokyo Keizai Zasshi* ("Tokyo Economic Journal"), which was supervised by Taguchi himself for more than twenty years, and in the article entitled "A New School of Political Economy" in No. 393 (November 12, 1887) of the journal.

In the next year, 1888, or the twenty-first year of Meiji, "The Political and Social Conditions of the United States of America Today" was published in No. 14 (January 20, 1888) of the *Kokumin no Tomo*. That report took up Henry George's theory, paying special attention to his activity, but the writer rejected George's remedy. And in No. 437 (September 22, 1888) of the *Tokyo Keizai Zasshi*, one of the contributors wrote "The Criticism of George's Theory," in which George's *Our Land and Land Policy* and *Progress and Poverty* were mentioned (incidentally, the latter was cited as "Poverty and Progress"). This contributor was convinced of the injustice of private landownership, but he held that the Single Tax would only enrich the wealthy.

In the same year (1888), Yujiro Motora, who had got the degree of Ph.D. in the United States, gave a lecture on "The Nature of Property and Socialism" at the Tokyo Eiwa Gakko (Toyko English and Japanese School), which appeared in the December, 1888, issue and January, 1889, issue (Vol. I, No. 25, and Vol. II, No. 1) of the *Bun* ("the Humanities"). Among the "socialists," Dr. Motora mentioned the name of Henry George and rejected his proposals (Vol. II, No. 1).

In the February 7, 1891, issue (No. 558) of *Tokyo Keizai Zasshi* was printed Jinkichi Shiojima's speech on "The Reform of the Taxation Sys-

tem." He made it at a political meeting speaking against the reduction of the land tax and for tax reform and promotion of agriculture. He referred briefly to Henry George's theory.

III

IN MARCH, 1891, Sentaro Jo published in Tokyo a book entitled *Buzei Zempai Saisei Kigen* ("Plain Speaking for the Relief of the Poor by Means of Abolition of All Taxation"). It was the first book that went into Henry George's ideas at great length, doing so in 168 pages, octavo, with a five-page preface. The author is mentioned by Aizan Yamaji, a state socialist, in his "Present Social Problems and Socialists" which appeared in the May, 1908, issue (No. 3, 1908) of his journal, *Dokuritsu Hyoron* ("The Independent Review"), as follows:

After about 1892, the labor or social problems came to attract attention among the intellectuals. As one of them, Mr. Sentaro Jo introduced Henry George's ideas on land nationalization by writing a book entitled *Buzei Zempai Saisei Kigen*, in which he proposed the single tax on land as the means of land nationalization, at a time when the reduction of land tax was vigorously advocated. At the time Mr. Jo was already in his forties. . . . Previously he was opposed to the advocacy of war against Korea in 1873. He associated himself with Chomin Nakae (1847-1901), by whom he was recommended as an intellectual who understood socialism. He could read English well and was associated with Garst, a Single Taxer and missionary at Tsukiji, and so he might have had some knowledge about socialism in the United States of America.⁶ Jo himself said in his preface:

Mr. Henry George of the United States of America is a patriot and deplorer. As his opinion of common ownership of land attempts to realize its object by an indirect means, it is neither radical nor rough, and is more skillful and advantageous than socialism or communism. Reading George's *Social Problems* and *Progress and Poverty*, I responded to George's ideas, and so I selected and translated into Japanese passages from them in the spring of 1887, and furthermore, supplemented them in the summer of the next year. The Parliament has been established of late (1890), but some M.P.'s, though regularly asserting poor relief, advocate the reduction of the land tax. They do not know that it will benefit rich farmers and be detrimental to poor people, while, on the other hand, people do not understand its effects and blindly follow their advocacy. The reduction of the land tax will reestablish the feudal system and slavery. Being apprehensive as to the future of the nation, and desirous of arousing public opinion by writing a book, I rearranged my old manuscripts and added my opinion formed in reference to other books.

⁶ Contained in pp. 375-6 of Vol. 21, "Volume of Social Problems" of *Meiji Bunka Zenshu* ("Literatures in Meiji Era"), Tokyo, 1929.

This *Buzei Zempai Saisei Kigen* consists of sixteen chapters, and the relations of each chapter with George's *Progress and Poverty* and *Social Problems* are as follows:

SENTARO JO	HENRY GEORGE
Chap. I. Introduction	Almost the whole of Chap. I, "The Increasing Importance of Social Questions," of <i>Social Problems</i> .
Chap. II. Political Dangers	Almost the whole of Chap. II, "Political Dangers," of <i>Social Problems</i> .
Chap. III. Coming Increase of Social Pressure	Selected passages from Chap. III, "Coming Increase of Social Pressure," of <i>Social Problems</i> .
Chap. IV. Two Opposing Tendencies	Selected passages from Chap. IV, "Two Opposing Tendencies," of <i>Social Problems</i> .
Chap. V. The Concentration of Property	Selected passages from Chap. V, "The March of Concentration," of <i>Social Problems</i> , and Jo's opinion added in the last part that if patriots should neglect finance and economy, their advocacy of civil rights and liberty would be futile.
Chap. VI. On the Evils of the Time	Mainly selected passages from Chap. VI, "The Wrong in Existing Social Conditions," of <i>Social Problems</i> .
Chap. VII. That We All Might Be Rich	Mainly selected passages from Chap. VIII, "That We All Might Be Rich," of <i>Social Problems</i> .
Chap. VIII. A Cure for Social Sickness	A few passages from Chap. IX, "First Principles," of <i>Social Problems</i> .
Chap. IX. The Natural Rights of Man	Mainly selected passages from Chap. X, "The Rights of Man," of <i>Social Problems</i> .
Chap. X. Business Depression	The summary of Chap. XII, "Over-Production," and Chap. XIII, "Unemployed Labor," of <i>Social Problems</i> .
Chap. XI. The Effects of Machinery	Selected passages from Chap. XIV, "The Effects of Machinery," of <i>Social Problems</i> .
Chap. XII. Indirect Slavery	A few passages from Chap. XV, "Slavery and Slavery," of <i>Social Problems</i> .
Chap. XIII. Ill Effects of Public Debts and Indirect Taxation	Selected passages from Chap. XVI, "Public Debts and Indirect Taxation" of <i>Social Problems</i> .
Chap. XIV. On the Common Landownership and Abolition of All Taxation	Selected passages from Bk. VI, Chap. II; Bk. VII, Chap. IV (a few passages); Bk. VIII, Chaps. I, II and III of <i>Progress and Poverty</i> .
Chap. XV. Effects of the Great Reform of Taxation Law	Selected passages from Bk. IX, Chaps. I, II and III of <i>Progress and Poverty</i> .
Chap. XVI. Social Reform and Progress of Wisdom and Virtue	Selected passages from Bk. IX, Chap. IV of <i>Progress and Poverty</i> .

The April 3, 1891, issue (No. 114) of *Kokumin no Tomo*, reviewing the book, states that the question is not yet settled whether the remedy presented in this book is useful or not to rescuing society from inequality, and that it is, in any case, too early to insist on a prompt execution of this measure in our country, and that the author only intends to introduce George's strange theory to the Japanese for reference purposes. Thus the criticism entirely ignored Jo's enthusiasm; he had the people's welfare in mind.

IV

IN SEPTEMBER, 1891, Learned's new book, *Lectures on Economics at Doshisha Ei-Gakko*, was rendered into Japanese by Kazutami Ukita, and entitled *Keizaigaku no Genri*. The author criticized the Single Tax in Section 267, "The Plan for Nationalization of the Land," and Section 288, "Land Tax." But he did not mention the name of Henry George. According to Learned, it was impossible to abolish poverty in so simple and easy a method as this, and it was wrong to deprive the landowners of the benefits of land by means of taxation, and furthermore, it was difficult in practice to distinguish between the natural property of the soil and the result of man's work upon it. Learned stated:

It is argued by the advocate of this theory that government can easily get the advantage of land rent by simply abolishing all other taxes and putting a tax on land equal to its rent; according to this plan, there would be no revolution of society, but no man would make any gain by merely owning land, and government would have a large income and would be able to do many things to the advantage of society, while no one but landowners would need to pay any taxes. It is even argued that this would abolish all poverty and misery.

This last claim is plainly absurd; no such simple and easy method will do away with poverty.⁷

. . . I am inclined to think that this tax (land tax) as the sole tax is liable to oppress farmers. . . .

. . . some regard the private ownership of land as the great cause of the evils of society, and wish to have all other taxes abolished and a heavy tax put on land in order that society in general may gain the advantage of land rent. It may be good and right to put all taxes on land, and thus prevent evasion of taxes and avoid the expense of collecting many taxes, but to use taxation as a means of despoiling landowners of the advantage of their land is certainly wrong.

There is also the practical difficulty that it is very difficult in practice to distinguish how much of the value of land is the natural property of the soil, and how much is the result of man's work upon it.⁸

In April of the next year, 1892, Yukichi Fukuzawa (1835–1901), one of the leaders of advanced thought of the Meiji era, published *Chiso Ron*⁹ ("On the Land Tax"), in which he opposed those calling for the revision of land values and the reduction of the land tax. To make clear why a light land tax was favorable to large landowners and unfavorable to tenant farmers, he gave a survey of European and American books on economics

⁷ Learned, *Keizaigaku no Genri*, pp. 502–3. I referred to Learned's MS. of this lecture written in 1889. The MS. is preserved in the Doshisha.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 548–9.

⁹ Contained in Vol. VI of the *Complete Works of Fukuzawa*, Tokyo, 1926.

at the beginning of the work. But in my opinion, he devoted himself almost entirely to George's ideas without mentioning his name. Of course, he did not intend to put the Single Tax into execution. He thought that such a radical measure was unnecessary for Japan in those days.

In the same month of the year (April, 1892), the first half (Chaps. I–XII) of George's *Social Problems* was translated into Japanese by Sansei Eguchi, who was the chief editor of the *Ziyu* ("Liberty"), the Liberal Party organ. It was entitled *Shakai Mondai*. Taisuke Itagaki (1837–1919), President of the Liberal Party, and Tokusuke (Chomin) Nakae, one of the leading thinkers of the movement toward liberty and civil rights (mentioned above), wrote the prefaces to the translation. Afterward Eguchi was expelled from the paper because of his socialistic disposition. And in November of the same year, George's *Land Question* was put into Japanese under the title *Tochi Mondai* by Goichiro Kakuta, who was staying in the United States of America at the time.

When Henry George died on October 29, 1897, during the New York mayoralty campaign, the December 5 issue (Vol. 3, No. 24) of *Taiyo* ("The Sun") reported his death and printed sketches of his life, the titles of his books, and his principle, and stated that it was unjust to reject his ideas in a wholesale manner. Soon afterward Shoichi Ohara, who was staying in the United States, contributed to the December 25, 1897, issue (No. 908) of *Toyko Keizai Zasshi* "A Short Biography of Henry George, Single Taxer." The writer, according to the preface written by Ukichi Taguchi to Ohara's *Shakai Mondai* ("Social Problems"), published in the thirty-fifth year of Meiji (1902), had been staying in the United States for more than ten years, while he studied economics, sociology and statistics in several colleges. He pursued the study of social problems under Professors Warner, Ross, Jordan and Sumner. This short biography of Henry George in five pages with his portrait was perhaps the first one fairly well done. But unfortunately the titles and the dates of publication of George's books were considerably mistaken. Moreover, the January, 1898, issue (No. 23) of the *Sekai no Nihon* ("Japan in the World") contained, together with George's recent photograph, an article, "The Late Henry George, Single Taxer."

v

CHARLES E. GARST, who was born at Dayton, Ohio, on August 21, 1853, died in Tokyo on December 28, 1898. In 1883, or the sixteenth year of Meiji, he came to Japan with his wife for Christian missionary work and propagated Christianity in Akita and Tsuruoka. For the benefit of his

health he returned to his country with his wife and three children, born in Japan, in 1891. While in the United States he was attracted to Henry George's doctrines, and after he came again to Japan with his family in 1893 and established their home in Tokyo, he devoted himself to the advocacy of the Single Tax in the spare hours from his missionary work. Tanzei Taro was his Japanese pen name meaning Single Tax Taro (John). On December 22, 1898, a few days before his death of pleurisy, he read the news that the House of Representatives had passed the bill to levy an additional land tax in order to strengthen government finances after the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895). He was overjoyed, believing that the additional land tax was a step toward the Single Tax.

In No. 9 of the *Shakai Zasshi* ("Journal of Society") published in January, 1898, the year following George's death, Garst contributed a tribute to George's memory.

Kinji Ogawa, one of Garst's friends, to fulfill Garst's wish in his lifetime and to comply with Mrs. Garst's request, compiled a book, *Tazei Keizaigaku* ("Single Tax Economics"), in 1899 from Garst's mss. and published articles. The English title of the book was *A New Inquiry Based on Single Tax, into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, and on the reverse side of the title page the following dedication was printed: "In Memory of the Late Charles E. Garst, this Book is Respectfully Dedicated to the Friends of Single Tax in Japan by Mrs. Laura D. Garst."

The book, 200 pages in octavo, contained a short sketch of the life of Charles E. Garst by Takeshi Aoyagi, two prefaces, preparatory remarks, and an epilogue, together with Garst's picture at the beginning. Ukichi Taguchi, in his preface¹⁰ to the book, stated that he could not approve Single Tax, but his aim was the same as Single Taxers', for it was to increase the incomes of capitalists and laborers and improve the welfare of the nation by means of the abolition of the monopoly of rent in the hands of landowners.

The contents of the book were as follows:

PART I	
Chapter I	
General Remarks on Political Economy	
I. Definition of Political Economy	VI. Land
II. Wealth	VII. Property
III. Production	VIII. Wages
IV. Labor	IX. Interest
V. Capital	X. Rent

¹⁰ The December 16, 1899, issue (No. 1009) of *Tokyo Keizai Zasshi* published this preface before the publication of Garst's book.

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| XI. Distribution | XV. Money |
| XII. Single Tax | XVI. Demand |
| XIII. Exchange | XVII. Supply |
| XIV. Value | XVIII. Relation Between Economy and Morals |

Chapter II

Production and Distribution

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| I. Means of Production | VI. Theory of Interest |
| II. Land Is a Public Possession | VII. No Use for Land-Owners |
| III. What Is Private Property? | VIII. Economical Equation |
| IV. Theory of Wages | IX. Meaning of Single Tax |
| V. Theory of Rent | |

PART II

Chapter I

Taxation

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| I. Defects of the Present Tax System | |
| II. Principles of Taxation | |
| III. Things That Should Not Be Taxed | |
| (1) Production | (5) Money |
| (2) Exchange; Protective Trade and Free Trade | (6) Public Bonds |
| (3) Expending | (7) Evil Things |
| (4) Labor and Effects of Labor | (8) Income and Property |
| IV. Single Tax Is the Ideal Perfect Tax | |
| (1) Expedience in Collecting Taxes | (2) Rent Must Be Possessed by Society |

Chapter II

Single Tax

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| I. Origin of the Single Tax Theory | VI. Co-existence of Socialism and Individualism |
| II. Relation with Production | VII. Single Taxer Is No Radical |
| III. Relation to Labor | VIII. How to Return Land to Society |
| IV. Relation to City and Country | IX. Single Tax System Is Already Practiced |
| V. Relation to Farmers, Artisans and Merchants | X. Golden Age |

PART III

Chapter I

Present Social Evils

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| I. Evils of Monopoly | | | |
| (1) Monopoly of Land and Transportation | | | |
| (2) Monopoly of Issuing Paper Money | | | |
| II. Co-relation of Four Greatest Evils | | | |
| (1) Land-Owners | (2) Politicians | (3) Scholars | (4) Priests |
| III. Their Remedy | | | |

Chapter II

Miscellaneous Notes

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| I. Who Would Be Real Possessor of Formosa? |
| II. The Late Henry George |

The February, 1900, issue (Vol. II, No. XI) of *Shakai* ("The Society") reviewed the book and printed Garst's picture and sketches of his life as a frontispiece.

Before the publication of Garst's book, the February 20, 1898, issue (Vol. IV, No. IV) of *Taiyo* ("The Sun") published the Japanese translation of "Count Tolstoi's Letter," which Lyof N. Tolstoi (1828-1910) wrote to Fletcher, editor of the journal *New Age* in London. In the letter Tolstoi wrote that he was moved by George's ideas, especially by the Christian spirit which penetrated his thoughts.

Also in the same year, Francis Amasa Walker's *Political Economy* (Advanced Course, Third Edition, Revised and Enlarged) was rendered into Japanese (*Oshi Keizairon*) by Soji Kurita and Junkichi Yamamoto. Part VI of the book was entitled "Some Applications of Economic Principles," and in Chapter X of the part or the chapter entitled "Nationalization of the Land," "Mr. Henry George's Crusade" was stated and criticized.

VI

AS THE CAPITALISTIC SYSTEM was established and industries developed, the labor movement in urban communities progressed and socialistic documents appeared in considerable number, and various land-reform plans were also made public to solve before-mentioned rural problems. These works on land reform and socialism were, to a great extent, influenced by Henry George's ideas.

Yukichi Yasuoka contributed an article, "On the State Ownership of Land," to the March 20, 1897, issue (Vol. III, No. 6) of *Taiyo* ("The Sun"). His ideas in his preceding article, "Rise and Decline of Nations," in the March 5, 1897, issue (Vol. III, No. 5) of the same journal, may be summarized as follows:

Human progress is attributed to the growth and accumulation of intellectual power inherent in mankind. To increase the intellectual power we should decrease the amount of the power necessary for the maintenance of existence, and leave the surplus power of intellect. And to realize the purpose we must cause men to receive the fruit of labor without the curtailment of their liberty. By the way, as material progress goes on, the difference between rich and poor becomes remarkable. If this tendency is not stopped, the great amount of intellectual power of mankind will be spent on the maintenance of existence, and the surplus power for human progress will not be left, and finally the nations will begin to decline.

As the best remedy for this evil, Yasuoka proposed the state ownership of land.

In the article "On the State Ownership of Land," Yasuoka first argued the reason why the private ownership of land was originally unjust from the standpoint of natural law, and then, mainly from the economic standpoint, pointed out the evils of private landownership. As the increase of

labor and capital demands more land, rent increases and, contrarily, wages and interest decrease. Laborers and capitalists, as capital is largely the accumulation of fruits of past labor, have equal rights to gain the fruits of labor, but the private landowners have no right to receive rent, because it is the product of increased population and capital. Moreover, private landownership leads to land speculation and keeps people from productive use of land.

Yasuoka's ideas bear a striking resemblance to George's thoughts, especially the law of human progress underlying his thoughts, and his theory of common ownership of land from the standpoint of natural law and political economy. But Yasuoka was not a supporter of Single Tax. According to him, George's method, though Yasuoka does not mention the name of George, is a severe burden to a part of people, because the taxation of land is unfair on the ground that nominal land values do not correspond to real land values. And unlike George, Yasuoka thought it natural to compensate the private landowners from the viewpoint of practical convenience and ordinary human feeling; so he proposed to exempt the users of nationalized land—namely, the present private landowners—from the same amount of annual land tax as would equal the yearly installment of present nominal land values.

The July, 1899, issue (No. 222, pp. 56–60) of *Rikugo Zasshi* ("Journal of the Universe") contained Isoo Abe's "Socialism of Henry George," which was the summary of his lecture at the seventh regular meeting of the Shakaishugi Kenkyukai ("Society for the Study of Socialism")¹¹ held on May 28, 1899. In the lecture he said that George's *Progress and Poverty* was the Scripture for socialists, along with Marx's *Capital*. Aiming at the introduction of most important parts of George's ideas in *Progress and Poverty*, he first spoke of George's conclusion or Single Tax, and then of the steps to the conclusion; namely, progress followed by poverty, wages, population, rent and so on.

Also in Abe's *Shakaimondai Kaishakuho* ("Measures to Solve the Social Problem") published in 1901, he introduced Henry George's Single Tax and admitted that his theory of rent and his idea of attributing social poverty to private landownership were of very sound reasoning, though he

¹¹ The Shakaishugi Kenkyukai was established in October, 1898. Sen Katayama (1859–1933), Shusui Kotoku (1871–1911), Isoo Abe (1865–1949) and others were its members. It was arranged that at its third regular meeting Garst was to lecture on Single Tax, but death robbed us of his lecture. When the eleventh regular meeting was held in January, 1900, the Shakaishugi Kenkyukai was reorganized and its name was changed to the Shakaishugi Kyokai ("Socialist Society"), and Abe was elected president. In May, 1901, the Social Democratic Party was formed upon the basis of this society, but immediately after its birth it was suppressed by the authorities.

could not approve some part of George's theories. Abe's socialism, especially his theory of land nationalization, was much influenced by George's ideas.¹²

VII

IN 1899 JUNZO FUKUI published *Kinsei Shakaishugi* ("Modern Socialism," 523 pages, with an eight-page appendix). The author, graduate of Keio Gijuku, afterward an M.P., explained George's ideas in this book (pp. 511, 513-20).

In 1902 Shoichi Ohara, whom we have mentioned before, published *Shakai Mondai* ("Social Problems"), and in Chapter XVIII (pp. 223-40), entitled "On Single Tax," stated that the Single Tax was theoretically as well as practically a fallacy.

Kojiro Nishikawa, a socialist, cited George's words in his *Tochi Kokuyu Ron* ("On Land Nationalization") published in 1904. In the book we can recognize George's influence upon Nishikawa.

Tsunetaro Akimori, the author of *Tochi Kokuyu Ron* ("On Land Nationalization," 1920), had been influenced by George's ideas since about 1896. According to Akimori, as shown in the preface of his above-mentioned book, his opinion of land nationalization was formed as the result of his looking into lower strata of rural communities and of his reading of George's books, *Protection or Free Trade, Progress and Poverty* and *Social Problems*.

Tamizo Miyazaki (1865-1928) published *Tochi Kinkyō Finrui no Taiken* ("The Right of Man to Possess Land") in 1906. He advocated the equal distribution of land on the basis of the natural rights of man. He did not subscribe to the cause of Single Tax, but was without doubt influenced by George as well as by Garst, to whom he was introduced by Isoo Abe. And afterward, when Miyazaki went to the United States in 1897, he was influenced by American Single Taxers in San Francisco and Fairfield.

Tahachiro Nakamura (1868-1935), who was called the father of universal suffrage and land nationalization, had become an advocate of land nationalization about 1896 and was not a little influenced by George. Among the members of the *Shakaimondai Kenkyukai* ("Society for the Study of Social Problems"), established by Nakamura in 1897, we can find such names as Charles E. Garst, Sentaro Jo and Yukichi Yasuoka, who was intimate with Nakamura. Afterward he began a movement to

¹² In Abe's *Tochi Kokuyu Ron* ("On Land Nationalization"), Tokyo, 1924, and his article on the same title contained in *Shakai Mondai Koza* ("The Series on Social Problems"), 1926-1927, the name of Henry George is not mentioned.

present a petition for land nationalization in 1923 and established a society for the study of land nationalization in 1925 to call for interested persons.

The idea of public landownership was advanced by Shusui Kotoku, a socialist. It was stated in his critical article on Kiyoshi Enjoji's *Chiso Zempai Ron* ("Advocacy of Abolition of Land Tax") printed in *Yorozu Chobo*, a newspaper, and afterward, in 1903, published in book form with an appendix of critical articles. According to Kotoku, the poverty of small farmers and tenants was due to the unfair taxation on land, the monopoly of rent by landowners, the concentration of landownership, and the heavy burden of consumption taxation, and the measure to prevent poverty was to be found only in a revolutionary change in the method of taxation, which was to carry out a plan of public landownership. When Kotoku mentioned his circumstances and reading as the causes of his having grown up into a socialist, among the books which had led him to be an enthusiastic democrat and have a deep interest in social problems, he mentioned Henry George's *Social Problems* and *Progress and Poverty*. (The *Heimin Shim-bun* ["the Common People"], a weekly journal of socialist propaganda, No. 10, January 17, 1904.)

The above is a short history of the importation into modern Japan of Henry George's ideas and of their influence until about 1900. We hope to continue the investigation to disclose George's influence in the twentieth century.¹³

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¹³ The present writer's other main articles (in Japanese) about Henry George are as follows:

1. On Henry George's "Our Land and Land Policy." *Kokumin-Keizai Zasshi* ("Journal of Political Economy and Commercial Science"), Vol. 54, Nos. 5 & 6, 1933.
2. The Fundamental Theories of Henry George's Political Economy. *Kokumin-Keizai Zasshi*, Vol. 56, No. 3, 1934.
3. "Net Product" and "Rent." A Chapter of the Study of Henry George. *Dairen-Kosho Ronso* ("Journal of the Dairen College of Commerce"), No. 1, 1938.
4. George and Tolstoi (with a résumé in English). *Kokumin-Keizai Zasshi* ("Journal of Political Economy"), Vol. 83, No. 2, 1951.
5. A Short History of the United Labor Party in the United States of America. *Studies in Economics in Commemoration of the Semi-centennial Anniversary of the Foundation of Kobe University of Economics*, 1953.
6. Henry George, A Biography. *Shakai-Shiso Kenkyu* ("Study of Social Thoughts"), Vol. 6, No. 10, 1954.
7. A Study of Henry George's Theory of Poverty. *Kokumin-Keizai Zasshi* ("Journal of Economics & Business Administration"), Vol. 90, No. 6, 1954.
8. Land Reform and Socialism. A Controversy Between Flürscheim and Kautsky. *Keizaigaku-Kenkyu-Nembo* ("Annals of Economic Studies"), No. 1, 1954.
9. On Henry George's Theory of Population. *Keizaigaku-Kenkyu-Nembo*, No. 3, 1956.
10. Spencer and George. *Kokumin-Keizai Zasshi*, Vol. 96, No. 4 ("Yagi Commemorative Issue"), 1957.
11. On Henry George's Theory of Wages. *Kokumin-Keizai Zasshi*, Vol. 99, No. 2, 1959.