Transnational Voices or Self-serving Activists?:

The Portrayal and Legitimation of Public Intellectuals in Japanese Newspapers

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ABSTRACT

The primary concern of this study was to analyze how the Japanese print media portray modern-day public intellectuals, and subsequently treat them as legitimate or illegitimate. Furthermore, I examined the underlying factors that affect this portrayal. After selecting four case studies of present-day public figures/groups (Murakami Haruki, Miyazaki Hayao, Chim↑Pom and Aida Makoto), I collected primary data from the news coverage of recent events involving these figures in three leading Japanese newspapers: the Asahi Shimbun, the Yomiuri Shimbun and the Sankei Shimbun. A theoretical framework based on the concept of legitimacy, the media's role as legitimators and the intellectual's perceived role was used to analyze the data by discourse analysis. The analysis found that the newspapers' ideological stance influenced underlying moral ideas of "the proper intellectual", these ideas being mutually exclusive across the studied media. Furthermore, an ideological divide significantly influenced the portrayal of public intellectuals discussing topics relating to Japan's unresolved wartime history.

Keywords: Public intellectuals, Discourse, Japanese newspapers, Legitimacy, Ideology

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This thesis marks the end of a long, at times seemingly endless, academic journey.

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research background and relevance

If asked to name a public intellectual, who might spring to mind? Many would no doubt be able to name at least a few, such as Edward Said, Noam Chomsky or Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Others might name Gloria Steinem, Barack Obama or even John Lennon. Chances are, these lists would show quite a bit of individual variety.

Despite laments over their recent decline (perhaps most notably put forward by Richard Posner) or even disappearance, public intellectuals are arguably proliferating these days. In an increasingly mediatized society where more and more people log onto social media to interact, critique, comment and share, or onto their personal blog, it seems that almost anyone can be a public intellectual these days. Various lists and rankings, such as Prospect Magazines and Foreign Policy's top 100 public intellectuals and TIME Magazine's list of the 100 most influential people, further underline this impression. How exactly, then, are public intellectuals defined, and what is that seemingly fuzzy line that separates intellectual from commoner?

What about the situation in Japan? How do public intellectuals operate there, and how are their various statements and activities received, in a country widely known for its supposedly weak civil society and consensus-centered public sphere and communicative culture? Following the 2011 Tohoku earthquake and the nuclear crisis after the tsunami, as well as in pressing political issues in East Asia (including a rising China and an increasingly active North Korea), Japan is, in one way or another, often a central topic of discussion in international media and academic circles.

In these discussions and debates one thing often seems to be missing, however, and that is the voice of the Japanese intellectual. Who is the Japanese public intellectual today? In this thesis I probe into the topic of the Japanese public intellectual, seeking to not only offer insight into who the public intellectual is in present-day Japan but also to discuss the role of the public intellectual in contemporary Japanese society.

This subject is interesting precisely for the reason that the Japanese public intellectual is still somewhat of a shadowy figure on the international stage: who has been and is considered a public intellectual in Japan, and what activities do they seek to undertake in Japan's civil society and political landscape? How do the mass media (with a focus on the print media) view Japanese public intellectuals as they engage, challenge and co-produce the flow of public discourse on contested political issues?

1.2   Research questions

This thesis aims to understand how the Japanese print media portrays modern-day public intellectuals, and how such media treatment relates to issues of intellectuals' legitimacy or illegitimacy. Through an analysis of the discourse on public intellectuals, I analyze the discourse in the Japanese print media regarding contemporary public intellectuals who discuss contested topics in today's society. I pose this research question: *How does the Japanese print media portray Japanese public intellectuals, and subsequently deliver them as legitimate or illegitimate voices on contested topics?*

1.3   Disposition

The *Introduction* (chapter 1) briefly presents the background of this thesis, its research questions and disposition. It also provides some important initial reflections, including a definition of public intellectuals and a number of arguments for why the key figures in the case studies I have chosen to analyze can, and should be, considered public intellectuals. In addition, I offer a brief overview of the Japanese newspapers that my data comes from and their respective ideological stance. The *Literature Review* (chapter 2) provides an overview of previous research on public intellectuals and intellectuals, as well as elaborates on the relationship between the public sphere, the media and the state in Japan. In the *Method* chapter (chapter 3), I present the fundamental assumptions of this research, as well as the methods I chose to carry out this study and a short presentation of the data selection process and criteria. The *Theory* chapter (chapter 4) present the theoretical framework, which draws upon important discussions and conceptualizations of the role of intellectuals and the relationship between the mass media and public intellectuals. This framework draws upon a selection of influential theories in mass media studies. In the *Analysis* chapter

(chapter 5), I apply the theoretical framework in a discourse analysis of the selected data. Finally, the findings of the study are summarized and presented in the *Conclusion* (chapter 6).

1.4   Defining the contemporary public intellectual

While many scholars tend to use the term 'public intellectual' without a proper definition, I feel that it is necessary to properly define the term here and explain why I consider the selected public figures to be public intellectuals. Defining such an elusive term comes with its own set of problems, for as it turns out there seem to be as many understandings of who and what public intellectuals are as there are studies on them. Therefore, I do not attempt to present every definition that is out there, not only because there is limited space but also because too many contradictory definitions would only be counter-effective.

Within Western research on contemporary public intellectuals, ideas about the state of the public intellectual generally fall into one of two rough categories: either one sees the role of the intellectual as in decline (or even having disappeared), or suggests that the role of the intellectual has fundamentally changed from what it used to be. One of the most well-known, and debated, arguments for the decline of (American) public intellectuals is Posner's (2001, pp. 1-7), who notes that whereas the traditional intellectuals operated mainly outside academia and had a wide and general knowledge base, modern-day intellectuals tend to be characterized by specialization. This implies that there are now fewer public intellectuals as more intellectuals become experts, often within universities, prioritizing career advancement over public intellectual impact (Baert and Shipman, 2013, pp. 27-42). It can also result in the intellectual's knowledge and focus becoming increasingly focused within his field of expertise (Said, 1994, p. 20). These opinions, on the other hand, are countered by arguments that 'declinists' romanticize the intellectuals of the past, failing to see the emergence of new types of intellectuals alongside the traditional one (Baert and Shipman, 2013, pp. 28).

Introducing the concept of public intellectuals into a Japanese context has certain difficulties, as well: The public intellectual is largely a European traditional figure. This is not to say that public intellectuals do not exist in Japan but rather that they have had a far more limited international impact. Suggested reasons for this include the language barrier (Eldridge, 2014, pp. 81-82) and a

preferred focus on the part of Japanese public intellectuals on domestic issues. However, both of these reasons seem more closely related to the practice of the more traditional intellectual, for the public intellectuals I feature in this thesis have all had their message conveyed in the international media as well.

To add some notes on terminology, in Japanese there exist a few different terms that can be used to refer to the public intellectual, such as *chishikijin* (lit., "a person of knowledge") *interi* (from the Russian/Polish "intelligentsia") and *bunkajin* (lit. "a person of culture") (Müller, 2015, p. 12). Athertron (2015, p. 2), however, notes that these terms generally focus on the intellectual part and overlook the public part.

1.5   The definition of public intellectuals in this thesis

Given the very large amount of definitions in existing literature, my own definition in this thesis is neither completely exhaustive nor final. In general, however, public intellectuals are defined according to three aspects: their role, their public and their message.

Firstly, the public intellectual has a specific role in society. For Said (1994, p. xvi, 59-61) the public intellectual is someone who exists as an outsider, in the interim, and it is this specific position that allows him a unique point of view. By "outsider" Said (1994, p. xvi, 76-83) means that the intellectual should seek independence from what he calls "pressures", including power and authority establishments, but also specialization and area-specific expertise. He later notes, however, that no intellectual can completely rid himself of his collective ties, yet he must not let them pull him in and cloud his judgements (Said, 1994, pp. 40–41). Said (1994, p. xvi) suggests that the intellectual be guided by universality that goes beyond the collective ties that define him. For Chomsky (as cited in Atherton, 2015, p. 10) this dissident figure is the only true public intellectual, although, as he notes, the conformist ones have been sung the most praises throughout history.

Said (1994, p. 11) further emphasizes that the role of the intellectual is by no means an easy one, as the one who occupies it must be ready to speak publicly about uncomfortable and otherwise ignored topics in order to upset the existing status quo, all the while keeping his distance to

governments and corporations. It is also important to note that the role of a public intellectual is by no means locked to specific individuals (Etzioni, 2006, p. 4-5). While some choose, or feel compelled, to perform the role throughout most of their lives, others simply fade out and eventually abandon the role (ibid.). Therefore, while the public figures I present in this paper may be public intellectuals at the moment that does not mean that they will necessarily remain so; the role is bound to a certain position in society, not to particular individuals or professions.

Secondly, an intellectual must of course be able to reach a public in order to become a public intellectual (Atherton, 2015, p. 11). Said (1994) sees the intellectual's engagement with the public as a crucial aspect, and defines an intellectual as someone who conveys "(…) a message, a view, an attitude, philosophy or opinion *to, as well as for*, a public" (p. 11, emphasis added), even at the risk of upsetting it with controversial opinions or sensitive topics. The size of the public that the intellectual addresses is subject to variation. Etzioni (2006, p. 5) suggest that a public intellectual may enjoy significant success within a limited section of the public without ever reaching the general, wider population. In this thesis and the cases it analyzes, as well, a divide exists between the domestic Japanese and the wider international public.

Finally, the intellectual must convey a message. In doing so, the intellectual strives to convince other rhetorically, which entails knowing when and how to best use language (Said, 1994, p. 20). Having something to convey is, however, not enough, as the message must also be one that resonates with the general public, and, at the very least, be one that it can reasonably comprehend in order to be able to discuss it in the public sphere (Atherton, 2015, pp. 11-12). However, this is less a question of the quality of the message than one of accessibility (ibid). Chomsky (as cited in Atherton, 2015, p. 12) is particularly critical of academic intellectuals who keep their messages closed off without seeking to involve the general public. For him, speaking merely within a limited sphere (here, academia) is like living in a closed-off cocoon.

1.6   Why are the key figures in these case studies public intellectuals?

The public figures I have chosen as case studies in this thesis perform their role in certain ways that qualify them as public intellectuals. While many public intellectuals start out in universities

and build a steady academic career before they gain recognition as intellectuals, all individuals presented here have risen to prominence for activities unrelated to academia.

Author Murakami Haruki is probably the most typical example of a public intellectual, both internationally and in Japan. Translated into more than 50 languages, his most notable works include the best-selling novel *Norwegian Wood* ("*Noruwei no Mori*", 1987), *Kafka on the Shore* ("*Umibe no Kafuka*", 2002) and *1Q84* (2009-2010). The author enjoys wide international fame and popularity and will upon making pointed statements quite easily find coverage in both foreign and domestic mass media. He has spoken out about various issues, both domestic and international, including Japan's maritime territorial disputes with South Korea and China, Japanese war crimes and the Boston terror attacks. Murakami is often labeled an "outsider" in Japanese literary circles and has himself stated that he feels awkward about being labeled a "Japanese author" (Asahi, 1st November, 2013).

Miyazaki Hayao is a renowned animation film director and one of the founders of the Studio Ghibli Inc., an animation industry heavyweight. Miyazaki has gathered a large following both in Japan and abroad for his animated movies. In 2002 Miyazaki's film *Spirited Away* ("*Sen to Chihiro no kamikakushi*") won an Academy Award (Oscar) for best animated feature film, and in 2014 he was awarded an Academy Honorary Award for lifetime achievement. Where Murakami articulates his opinions through his writing, Miyazaki famously showcases his views on various societal issues through the medium of his animated movies. While sustaining an element of fantasy, Miyazaki's work intertwines societal critique on topics such as environmental depredation as a result of human greed and industrialization, as in *Princess Mononoke* ("*Mononoke-hime*", 1997) and *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* ("*Kaze no Tani no Naushika*", 1984) as well as the futility of war in *Porco Rosso* ("*Kurenai no buta*", 1992) and *Howl's Moving Castle* ("*Hauru no ugoku shiro*", 2004). While his work has given the public a glimpse of his personal views, the director long abstained from making any political statements in public. Nevertheless, in 2013 he published an essay critical of the notion of and ideological moves towards amending the pacifist article in Japan's postwar constitution (discussed further in the analysis section), garnering much attention from both domestic and international mass media.

While the two above figures are individuals, Chim↑Pom is a group. Formed in 2005, the six-member artist collective first gained attention in 2006 when they displayed taxidermied rats painted as Pikachu (a yellow rodent character featured in the Japanese Pokémon franchise) in the streets of hip Tokyo neighborhood Shibuya after group member Ellie had observed the jarring juxtaposition of dirty rats crawling around the fashionable and cute youth district. The group uses videos, performances and installations to comment on social and political issues in contemporary Japan. With its sometimes controversial methods, Chim↑Pom is certainly an opinion divider. The group has in recent years, however, gained increasing support and attention both domestically and internationally.

Contemporary artist Aida Makoto is the fourth example of a public intellectual that I cover in this thesis. Known for his controversial and thought-provoking artwork, one of his exhibitions was criticized in 2013 for featuring provocative and violent drawings of school girls. Aida uses a variety of media such as video, painting and photography to unearth and comment on problems and issues in the everyday life of Japanese society that tend to be overlooked.

1.7   Japanese newspapers and the ideological divide

As my source material is primarily drawn from original Japanese-language news media coverage, it is important to provide here a brief overview of the general ideological orientation of each studied newspaper. As a newspaper's political stance may change or adjust over time, I address here only the respective editorial attitudes towards the contemporary political issues relevant to this thesis, i.e. the question of nuclear power (a domestic issue), maritime territorial disputes (involving Japan, the Republic of Korea and the People's Republic of China) and the idea of and moves towards constitutional amendment (a domestic as well as an international issue).

I have collected the sources for this project from three major national dailies: the Asahi Shimbun, the Yomiuri Shimbun, and the Sankei Shimbun. Out of the three, the Asahi is considered the most liberal. Takekawa (as cited in Takekawa, 2016, p. 80) found Asahi to be an anti-state liberalist paper that argues against amending the constitution and in favor of Japan maintaining a non-militarist role. Asahi also takes a strong anti-nuclear stance (Media Watch Japan, n.d.). In contrast, the Yomiuri carries a state-centered and conservative opinion (Takekawa as cited in Takekawa,

2016, p. 80). Situated to the far right is the Sankei, a nationalist newspaper re-established in the 1950s as an ally of big corporations (ibid.). It is supportive of the current Abe government and takes a pro-nuclear and pro-remilitarization/pro-amendment stance.

War memories remain an integral part of contemporary domestic and international politics in Japan (Takekawa, 2016, pp. 79-80). While these problems cause repeated confrontations between Japan and its regional neighbors (especially China and South Korea), they are also an ongoing domestic issue that sees the country divided into a liberal and conservative side unable, or unwilling, to reach an agreement (Takekawa, 2016, p. 79, 91). While liberals (as represented by the Asahi) take pride in Japan's present-day constitutional pacifism, liberal democracy and regional cooperation, the conservative side (represented here by the Yomiuri) argues that Japan has already compensated sufficiently for its wrongful actions during the war. Far-right Sankei represents the nationalist idea that Japan did little wrong in the past, and it tends to readily lend both space and legitimacy to vocal advocates of strengthened national pride in an ethnocentric Japanese community. The liberal side, in contrast, usually identifies an intellectual as someone who critiques the establishment.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter offers a background to the research topic and a look at previous studies. As no previous published research in English has comprehensively or systematically covered legitimization processes of Japanese public intellectuals in and by the news media, I have chosen to draw my literature base from different related and adjoining areas of research. Those areas are Japanese civil society, the (print) media landscape of Japan, as well as Japanese public intellectuals and their role in the public sphere. Of main interest is the way in which civil society, public intellectuals, the mass media and the state interact in Japan, and how this interaction influences the role and practice of public intellectuals. Finally, I consider the possible contributions of this thesis to previous research.

2.1 Overview

The aim of this literature review is not only to offer an overview of previous relevant studies but also to provide the necessary background knowledge, as well as to identify possible gaps in previous research on Japanese public intellectuals. This thesis deals with contemporary twenty-first century Japan and with present-day public intellectuals. I have, therefore, chosen to mainly focus my literature study on very recent research publications, although I do occasionally refer to older influential studies, as well. I begin by looking at Japanese civil society and then move on to an overview of the Japanese mass media landscape. Finally, I offer some reflections on aspects insufficiently addressed in the literature and how this thesis can contribute to previous research. While I do not specifically focus on civil society in this thesis, I consider it necessary to provide a brief overview of the relationship between Japanese civil society, the state and the mass media.

2.2 Civil society and the public sphere in Japan

While the state's influential role in Japan's civil society is generally acknowledged, opinions are divided on the scope and nature of this influence. Schwartz (2002, pp. 198-204) identifies three factors that arguably counter the full development of a Japanese civil society: traditional values, the market occupying any free space left by the state, and state intervention. Traditional values include a reluctance to oppose authority and a hesitance to "stick out", while the salary-man ideal and identities shaped in corporate communities have seen labor unions struggle to gain much

ground in civil society (ibid.). The role of the state is, as Schwartz (2003, p. 6) has noted, arguably the most discussed factor. Stretching back to the 1867 Meiji Restoration and continuing through the prewar period, the period saw the centralization of state power and the citizens increasingly organized and mobilized according to the state's agenda (He, 2010, pp. 269–270). Studies have often traced this historical development to explain the success of the postwar Allied occupation authorities in establishing democracy on the foundation of existing state-centric power structures that effectively enabled a new constitutional state paradigm to unfold without fundamentally uprooting the previous political norms and social structure (He, 2010, pp. 276–280). He (ibid.), quoting Herzog, notes that rather than seeking to share with the public, the elite remained in a paternalistic role over a mostly compliant public.

Schwartz (2002, pp. 204–210) challenges this general understanding by also identifying phenomena that support the further development of civil society. Firstly, the beginning of the twenty-first century saw the emergence of professional associations willing to cooperate with the state in order to reach their goals (ibid.). Officials have sometimes sought to further state policies by mobilizing these associations, causing the state and civil society to become increasingly connected and often difficult to separate analytically (ibid.). Secondly, the general sociopolitical development in Japan over the past few decades has strengthened civil society (ibid.). Some have suggested that the state, despite its previous influence, lost power during the 1990s following economic and structural problems, numerous scandals and failed policies (Mullins and Nakano, 2016, pp. 11-13; Schwartz, 2002, p. 207). In addition, the 1995 and 2011 natural disasters served to invigorate volunteer activism (Mullins and Nakano, 2016, pp. 11-13). Schwartz (2002, pp. 207-209) notes that such activities were often an effect of the state's tendency to withdraw after a crisis, unable to intervene efficiently due to bureaucratic red tape and restrictive regulation. However, while crises may have spurred volunteer activism, researchers have remained skeptical as to whether it has also led to an increase in political awareness, noting that public participation in social movements is often attributed to group influence, even when the actual reasons behind the movement are insufficiently elaborated (Saga as cited in Ducke, 2007, p. 36). Civic groups, likewise, tend to communicatively downplay their political aims and focus instead on local, rather than society-wide, benefits and improvements (Holdgrün and Holthus, 2016, p. 261).

It has also been suggested that Western conceptions of civil society are inadequate to analyze or assess the success or failure of Japanese social development or civic activities (Ducke, 2007, pp. 31-32). The reason for such skepticism is usually given as a perceived failure in the Western preoccupation with volunteer movements and NGOs to adequately capture and account for the larger picture and specific expression of Japanese civil-society practice and recent development.

2.3   Japanese mass media and the public sphere

It is generally assumed that in a democracy the media should work with the public to provide a space for public intellectuals to reach, cultivate and connect with an audience (Dahlgren, 2012, pp. 98–100; Brouwer and Squires, 2006, p. 36; Freeman, 2003, p. 236). The media, Dahlgren (2012, p. 99) says, provides information and functions as a forum for discussion and analysis, constituting the cornerstone of the public sphere.

Research on the Japanese mass media often portray the close relationship between the Japanese mass media and government as unique in terms of its level of formal organization. In her extensive research on the Japanese media, Freeman (2003, p. 240-242) concludes that this relationship produces numerous constraining effects on journalism, including operative notions in the media system such as information having more credence the higher in hierarchy its source, routine reporting leading to a weakening of the media's auditing function, limiting of agenda-setting capacity as journalists wait for information from their sources rather than seek news themselves, alternative media becoming marginalized, and finally, mutual agreements among journalists leading to a general cross-media homogenization of the news.

While Freeman's research on the media-state relationship pictures reporters at the elite mass media as uniform and rather uninventive in their pursuit and cultivation of government sources, Pharr (1996) famously portrays the Japanese mass media as playing the role of a "trickster". Pharr's (ibid.) conception defines the media as acting, contingently and somewhat unpredictably, both in favor of and in opposition to the state or society. To illustrate this inconsistent role, Pharr offers an example from the 1960s when officials from Ministry of Health and Welfare sought to increase public support for a proposed reform of policies for the elderly. The media campaign successful gained public attention but the mass media ended up ignoring the political and administrative

intention of the suggested measures which was to reduce welfare expenses, choosing instead to promote welfare expansion (Campbell as cited in Krauss, 1996, p. 363). Freeman (2003, p. 236) sees this relationship between the state and media in Japan as a key factor in a narrowing of the discursive realm: Such practice has obstructed the public sphere's access to the political core and become a barrier to citizen access to the voice and agency necessary for bringing about mobilization.

Szczepanska (2014, pp. 90–92) suggests that this interplay between the media, state and public sphere is well demonstrated in the example of the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery held in Tokyo in December 2000. Organized by NGOs, the tribunal published testimonies and attempted to ultimately foster legal adjudication on Japan's state-organized sexual abuse of women from colonized and occupied territories during the Second World War (Morris-Suzuki, 2006). The tribunal sought to provide women with a space to be heard, and to have new empirical findings provide the basis for formal judicial proceeding and forums (ibid.). The event was widely covered by foreign and international media, yet the Asahi was the only major Japanese daily to widely report it. The tribunal concluded that the institutionalized system was a crime against humanity, and it placed personal responsibility on Emperor Hirohito as the wartime head of state (ibid.). A few years later, Japanese public broadcaster NHK produced a documentary on the event, enlisting academics and members of the Violence-against-Women-in-War Japan Network as commentators. Conflicting with what participating commentators claimed to have been told by NHK professionals in advance, however, the aired documentary included an interview with historian and outspoken critic of the tribunal, Hata Ikuhiko (ibid.). The conclusions of the Tribunal, originally featured in the documentary, had been edited out in the postproduction process. In 2005, the Asahi ran an interview article with the documentary's chief producer where he revealed that the request to edit the content had come from Abe Shinzo himself, then deputy chief cabinet secretary and currently Japan's Prime Minister (although the NHK quickly denied this) (ibid.).

2.4   Japanese public intellectuals in a historical perspective
During the Meiji period, intellectuals actively worked for the state to create the emperor-centric ideology in order to secure popular support of national modernization, institutional reform and

military expansion (Said, 1994, pp. 41–43). As history reveals, this particular type of collectivity eventually grew into a nationalist fervor and facilitated aggression in neighboring parts of Asia. Before the outbreak of World War II, the press and nationalistic agitators actively urged intellectuals to come together to serve the state by promoting its agenda (Müller, 2015, p. 14). In the early postwar period, intellectual activity was largely preoccupied with the two overarching questions at the time: how to achieve national modernization and democratization, and the balancing act between the West and Asia (Oguma, 2007, pp. 1-2). In a shift towards liberal values, intellectuals who had previously worked for a collective identity now began to advocate subjectivity (Said, 1994, p. 42).

The interwar and postwar periods also revealed an ideological divide in intellectual discussions between orthodox Marxists on the one hand (who saw intellectuals as closely connected to the elites) and liberal humanists on the other (who emphasized the importance of expressing a critical mind (Müller, 2015, pp. 15-16). Intellectuals also sought to redefine their own practice as they suffered remorse over their role during the war, and began to reflect upon their own position in society. Previously a conformist to the state, the intellectual now began to oppose the establishment (Kersten, 2004, p. 122). In the 1950s some intellectuals began to shift their focus towards the public, believing that they should be learning from ordinary people (Oguma, 2007, p. 5).

Perhaps one of the most vocal public intellectuals at the time, Maruyama Masao, argued that intellectuals should serve society (Kersten, 2004, pp. 121–122). He saw the cause of the intellectuals' wartime failure in their too close alignment with the state, and argued that cooperation between intellectuals and society was vital in order to achieve postwar democracy and peace (ibid.). Reaching out to "educate" the public is a common trait of the liberal public intellectuals: In the Cold War era, they spoke against the USA-Japan security treaty and the Vietnam War, and vocally supported democratization of Asia (Ogawa, 2010, pp. 189–192), among other current issues of the time. In addition, in the 1970s, liberal intellectual magazine *Sekai* published a report on Japan's military rule of Korea, inspiring intellectuals to initiate solidarity movements with Korea (ibid.).

Kersten (2004, p. 117) suggests that intellectuals gain significance in moments of change or crisis. As with volunteer activism, the 1995 earthquake, the terrorist sarin attack in the Tokyo metro in the same year, and, more recently, the 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami all sparked public intellectual activity. While Japan's wartime actions remain hotly contested (perhaps increasingly so under the current government of Prime Minister Abe, a national conservative with certain historical revisionist sympathies), other recent issues that have invigorated public debate and popular movements in Japan include the nuclear power debate, proposals to amend the pacifist Article 9[1] in the Japanese constitution and the 2014 enactment of the State Secrecy Law[2]. An illustrative example of public intellectual involvement was the group of intellectuals who set up a campaign following the 2011 Tohoku triple disaster to gather ten million signatures in support of ridding Japan of nuclear power plants (Penney, 2011).

If intellectuals were formerly well-educated men from elite circles, the contemporary public intellectual can be found outside the world of academia. Recent studies have defined novelists and artists such as Kobayashi Yoshinori (*manga* artist and right-wing political commentator with trivializing and jingoistic views of prewar Japanese colonialism) and Nakazawa Keiji (*manga* artist and author of *Barefoot Gen* ["*Hadashi no Gen*", published since 1973], a *manga* series based on the author's own experiences following the 1945 atomic bombing of Hiroshima) as public intellectuals (see for example Sakamoto 2016, chap. 11; Suter, 2016, chap. 12). Both artists contributed to the discussion on Japan's wartime past, at times placing themselves deliberately in the middle of the heated debate. In addition, some researchers have defined voices from the interim, such as the *hibakusha* poets, as public intellectuals (see Atherton, 2015).

As I noted earlier, some researchers give Japanese public intellectuals' main focus on domestic issues as the reason why they have remained largely unnoticed on the international stage. I find this idea problematic and too superficial. Attention should be given to the fact that Japanese intellectuals do discuss international topics (Asian-Pacific and global issues), and I suspect that

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[1] Article 9 states that Japan renounces was as a sovereign right.
[2] According to the State Secrecy Law, enacted in December 2014 despite strong protests, individuals in the private sector, including journalists, face up to 5 years imprisonment for leaking state secrets (the definition of which is left to the government), and up to 10 years if acquiring them through illicit means. Public servants who leak state secrets face up to 10 years imprisonment.

the low international impact of their contributions is due more to the intellectual's lack of a suitable platform or because of language and translation issues. While Murakami Haruki has spoken out about international issues such as the Boston terror attacks and the democratization movement in Hong Kong, his international popular-cultural prominence means that both the international and domestic media are quick to report on his opinions; a privilege few intellectuals enjoy. Noting the language problem, Eldridge (2014, pp. 81–82) also suggests that Japan has not actively promoted the translation of native intellectual contributions or ideas, although a very substantial importation and translation of foreign intellectual literature into Japan and Japanese is taking place.

2.5   Contributions of this thesis

As seen in studies on Japanese civil society and their emphasis on the strong state, research on Japanese mass media often tends to portray the mass media as a rather passive entity influenced by external factors such as pressure from above or the state-media relationship. As Pharr notes, however, the case is not so clear-cut. What other inner factors affect the role of the media? Previous studies on Japanese intellectuals have focused mainly on the postwar role of the intellectual during the rebuilding of the nation. Discussion has centered on the changing role of the intellectual following the war, and the self-reflection intellectuals went through after the war in order to define themselves. However, these have mainly focused on self-definitions, and the question remains what non-intellectuals perceive the role of the intellectual to be in present-day Japan.

3 METHOD

This chapter explains how the data used in this thesis were collected and how they were analyzed. First, I lay out the philosophical basis that has structured and guided my research by clarifying my epistemological and ontological stances, before I move on to describe the chosen research design and focus, the collected data, and the chosen method of data analysis. Finally, I offer some thoughts on the limitations and contributions of this study.

3.1   Epistemology

Epistemology is the question of what is passable as knowledge, and concerns the relationship between the researcher and the object of research (Bryman, 2012, p. 27; Creswell, 2007, p. 17). Bryman defines three epistemological stances; positivism, realism and interpretivism. In this thesis, I adopt a critical realist epistemological stance. Like positivists, critical realists acknowledge the existence of reality yet differ from the former in that they consider our understanding of that reality a social construction (Maxwell, 2012, p. 5, 8). This entails that the conceptualizations, sometimes even sensations, of reality are always subjective, therefore there can be no absolutely "true" representation of the world (Maxwell, 2012, p. 5). In research, this implies that a researcher's observations are never an absolute truth nor neutral as the researcher's own values affect his findings.

In discourse analysis the critical realist seeks to investigate not only the discourse but also extra-discursive elements that bring about a particular discourse, e.g. underlying power and social structures (Bryman, 2012, p. 537). In this thesis, adopting a critical realist stance means not only looking at the discourse in Japanese print media but also considering what structures occasion these particular discourses. Media discourse is, therefore, not simply a matter of free and conscious choices made by individual agents but texts affected by underlying social structures.

3.2   Ontology

Ontology concerns the nature of reality: do reality and social phenomena emerge spontaneously or are they social constructions (Bryman, 2012, p. 32; Creswell, 2007, p. 17)? As a researcher I take a constructionist ontological stance, meaning that I understand that social actors continuously

construct and revise social phenomena, and that the categories used to make sense of reality are also social constructs subject to constant revision (Bryman, 2012, pp. 33-34). Language, itself a social construct born out of human interaction, plays a key role here, as it is used to shape and understand the world around us, and discourse analysists typically take a constructionist ontological stance (Bryman, 2012, p. 34).

A constructionist approach has certain implications for validity, however. As Bryman (2012, p. 33) points out, constructionism underlines that all inter-human phenomena are social constructions, suggesting that the researcher's analysis is also merely a particular construction. A few factors in this thesis strengthen its validity, however, as the data I have used consist of sources that were published prior to this inquiry, exist independently and are attainable in the same form by anyone. I have not created or generated primary data or sources for this thesis. While my own background and values to a certain extent penetrate my observations, the data I use are not as time- or place-sensitive as, for example, interviews are. Although it is unlikely that another researcher would spontaneously use the exact same collection of data to reach the exact same conclusions, the data can be easily retrieved and checked, ensuring that the necessary standards of transparency and repeatability have been met.

3.3 Research site/focus

I chose Japanese print media as the object of this study because the media have considerable influence over the public sphere in Japan and who is considered to be, and able to perform as, a public figure (this issue is discussed in more detail in the Theory chapter). This choice of research site was guided by the nature of the research question: how the media frame public intellectuals as (il)legitimate commentators. Choosing to work on media coverage also made for an easily accessible research site.

3.4 Method: Discourse Analysis

As mentioned above, discourse analysis lends itself to a constructivist stance, as it offers a method for examining social phenomena believed to be constructed socially through language (Bryman, 2012, p. 34). Although many discourse analysts are inherently anti-realist, critical realists accept the existence of objective reality but believe that our representations of that reality are social

constructs made by use of language. A critical realist stance therefore implies looking at the structures behind the discourse, as well (Bryman, 2012, p. 536).

What exactly does the term 'discourse' imply? A common explanation is Gee's (as cited in Rogers, 2004, p. 5) discourse as divided into little "d" and big "D" discourses, where the former is grammar and language bits, and the latter the ways that these language bits are used for representation, validation and participation. Within critical discourse analysis (hereafter CDA), images are often included under the term discourse, analyzed as linguistic texts (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, p. 61). Fairclough (1992, p. 3) defines text as a written or spoken product, and discourse as language used in a social situation, e.g. newspaper discourse and advertising discourse, images, television shows, interviews, et cetera. Although Fairclough includes images under the term discourse, in this thesis discourse refers only to written, published, and media-circulated text.

Defining language as a social practice and considering discourse as reflecting and shaping social structures, CDA sees discursive practices as encompassing ideological effects (ibid.). Fairclough (1992, p. 12) defines critical discourse analysis as differing from non-critical analysis by its emphasis on revealing power relations and ideologies in discourse. The approach often positions itself on the side of the marginalized and oppressed in society (van Dijk as cited in Wodak and Meyer, 2001, p. 1). Critical discourse analysts view language as a tool for achieving certain, often ideological, goals. Language is not merely a tool used to oppress, however, as it can also be used to challenge existing power (Wodak and Meyer, 2001, p. 11). Ideological struggles are reflected in texts and statements, and by studying how language is used to effect certain outcomes and (re)produce unequal distributions of power, CDA seeks to determine the oppressors in society (Rogers, 2004, pp. 2–4; Wodak and Meyer, 2001, pp. 1–3).

3.5   Data – selection and analysis

The primary data for this thesis consists of articles in the original Japanese from three very large daily newspapers: the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, the *Asahi Shimbun* and the *Sankei Shimbun* (henceforth the Yomiuri, the Asahi and the Sankei). These publications were chosen because of their large national readership and agenda-setting influence on public debate, as well as their varying political positioning. The three publications are among the five leading national newspapers in Japan, as

well as among the ten largest newspapers in the world (by readership) (Freeman, 2012, p. 17). Although newspaper circulation is declining even in Japan, a survey from 2013 shows that the medium comes second only to television, and still enjoys wider reach as a news source than the Internet (*Shimbun Hōkoku Dēta Ākaibu*, 2013). A 2015 survey on perceived media credibility by the *Japan Press Research Institute* ranked NHK TV the most credible (70.2%) and newspapers following very closely in second place (69.4%), ahead of commercial television (*minpō terebi*) (61.0%) (*Shimbun Tsūshin Chōsa Kai*, 2015).

I collected the data during five weeks of fieldwork in Tokyo by accessing the publications' online archives[3] through the Waseda University library network. While the Asahi and the Yomiuri are accessible through the Lund University network as well, I was only able to access the Sankei while in Japan.

The sample space for Murakami Haruki, Miyazaki Hayao and Aida Makoto took 11. March 2011 as the starting point, the day of the Tohoku earthquake and the tsunami that set off the Fukushima nuclear disaster. For Chim↑Pom I set the starting point at 1. January 2008 in order to include articles about their artistic happening in Hiroshima. I initially used the names of these public intellectuals as keywords and downloaded all articles that contained them. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Initial search results.

	Murakami Haruki	Miyazaki Hayao	Chim↑Pom	Aida Makoto
Yomiuri	468	496	12	50
Sankei	484	272	12	21
Asahi	999	529	30	68

After this I went through the data manually and selected articles that I deemed most relevant to the thesis, i.e. down-prioritized pieces mainly concerned with other issues such as Murakami's prospects of winning the Nobel Prize in literature, book ranking lists, information on Studio Ghibli

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[3] The databases are as follows: the Asahi's *Kikuzo II Visual*, the Yomiuri's *Yomidasu Rekishikan* and the Sankei's *The Sankei Archives*.

movies, Miyazaki's retirement, other exhibitions by Chim↑Pom and Aida Makoto, etc. I also sought to focus on topics that were reported in at least two source newspapers, in order to allow for some comparison. The events and number of articles dedicated specifically to them as my principal body of sources are listed in Table 2 below. While I occasionally reference other articles as well, the focus of the analysis is on these articles. In Miyazaki's case there is an overlap of his 2013 essay and the controversy surrounding his movie *The Wind Rises*, so I grouped these articles in the same category. The data from the Yomiuri and the Sankei consisted mainly of anonymous reports, although the Sankei also featured front-page columns (called "*sankeishō*") and contributed articles by guest writers. The Asahi's reports were the longest, and genres most varied, including interviews, speeches, opinion pieces and articles by guest writers.

Table 2. Number of articles after second selection phase.

		Yomiuri	Sankei	Asahi
Murakami Haruki	Anti-nuclear speech in Barcelona, Spain (2011)	1	5	3
	Essay on territorial dispute (2012)	1	2	6
Miyazaki Hayao	Essay against altering the pacifist constitution, *The Wind Rises* movie controversy (2013)	2	4	6
Chim↑Pom	'Pika' in the sky of Hiroshima (2008)	3	3	2
	Okamoto Taro's mural (2011)	1	3	3
Aida Makoto	Controversial artwork at MOT (2015)	0	0	7
Total by paper		8	17	29
Grand total				54

3.6   Ethical considerations

Bryman (2012, p. 135) lists a number of guidelines to determine if a given research strategy imposes ethical problems, including whether or not it harms participants in any way and whether it requires their informed consent, invades privacy or deceives its participants. As no interviews

were conducted nor any participants observed during the research process, none of these concerns arise here. The primary data consists of published material only, posing very few potential ethical problems.

3.7 Research limitations

This thesis deals only with a very limited number of media outlets and articles. More time would allow a more thorough analysis of a larger volume of data, including more publications and a larger number of articles. In addition, analyzing the discursive strategies of Western media might also be interesting. I recognize that the conclusions drawn in this thesis are based on analyses of media reactions to merely a handful of contemporary public intellectuals. This thesis, therefore, does not seek to generalize to cover all Japanese public intellectuals but rather to offer insight into the (de)legitimation processes in Japanese media reports on public figures speaking on sensitive and contested issues. In addition, all selected public figures hold liberal views, a fact that influences the results of the analysis. Although I initially planned to include rightist manga artist Hasumi Toshiko in the sample as well, none of the three newspapers had written anything about her. Further study would be needed to expand the empirical scope to include more cases and a further diversified data set.

4 THEORY

The framework I apply in this thesis is a combination of the concept of legitimacy, the media's role as legitimators and the intellectual's perceived role in society.

4.1 Defining legitimacy and the act of legitimation

Legitimation has been studied within numerous fields, mainly sociological theory, social movements, institutional theory and discourse studies. Within sociology, research on legitimacy has touched upon authority, power relations and inequality (see for example Martínez Lirola, 2014; Van Leeuwen and Wodak, 1999). In institutional theory, legitimation is often seen in connection to institutionalization, and studies have focused on the ways in which institutions legitimate themselves, how organizations gain and manage their legitimacy, as well as how organizations strive to legitimize their own actions in a specific context, many recent studies focusing on linguistic analyses (see for example Suchman, 1995; Vaara, Tienari and Laurila, 2006; Vaara and Tienari, 2008).

But what exactly is legitimacy? In this thesis I follow Suchman's (1995, p. 574) definition of the term as the most comprehensive one I have encountered:

> "*Legitimacy* is a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions."

Suchman (ibid.) further notes that legitimacy is a social construct, meaning that for something to be legitimate it must be approved by a certain social group. Perceptions and assumptions are based on previous knowledge or beliefs that individuals hold. What this means is that there must be certain presupposed expectations regarding the intellectual's actions in society. In other words, there must exist an idea as to what the intellectual's proper role is.

4.2 Public intellectuals and legitimacy

Legitimacy, or authority, is not easily attained, for as Cummings (2005, p. 5) maintains, the public today is inherently suspicious of authority, betrayed by numerous scandals. In order to build authority outside their own field of expertise, Kristóf (2013, pp. 198-201) believes that intellectuals rely heavily on their reputation. Dividing reputation into internal and external, Kristof (ibid.) notes that the former is built within an intellectual's specific field and consists on the acknowledgment by other members in that field, while the latter is made within the public sphere and can be influenced by the media. Also, this reputation gained in the public sphere can influence the internal reputation of the intellectual (ibid.).

Whereas Kristof studied the intellectual within these internal and external fields, Said saw the different connections an intellectual has as more complex. For Said (1994, p. 40, 88), the intellectual, as any individual in society, is a part of various identities, including but not limited to national, religious and ethnic ones. These numerous connections will evidently, Said (1994, p. 40) notes, cause the intellectual to come face to face with a dilemma of loyalty. This question of the intellectual's role was touched upon in the literature review, as well, as intellectuals in Japan tackled the question of loyalty to the state or to the public. But who defines this role, and what implications does it have?

Intellectuals must also tackle the question of responsibility, as the special status they occupy in society assigns them a role of moral responsibility (Nadeau, 2015). In an interview, Chomsky (as cited in Chomsky and Reynolds, 2016, p. 104) emphasized that an intellectual's responsibility to act is connected to the level of privilege he or she enjoys, as this defines the level of access in form of opportunities to address the public. The more privileged an intellectual is, the greater his or her responsibility.

Said noted that the intellectual must "speak truth to power" (1994, p. xvi), but as Sassower (2014, p. 17) asks, whose is this truth and how is one to know if it is the "right" truth? Quoting Foucault, Sassower (2014, pp. 17-21) notes that truth and power are intertwined, and that the intellectual must seek to detach the truth from the hegemony surrounding it. Power struggles, he adds, are an inherent part of deciding what is perceived as true or false, for those producing and managing truth are always ready to defend it (ibid.).

4.3 Media and legitimation

The media are commonly assumed to possess four techniques to create impact in society. They can function as gatekeepers who choose what to allow through their gates, act as watchdogs to oversee the powerholders in society, have an influence on what people think and discuss through their agenda-setting, and finally, they use framing to assemble a narrative that highlights a particular interpretation of reality (Entman, 1993, p. 52; Shoemaker, Vos and Reese, 2009, pp. 73–74; Coleman et al., 2009, pp. 147–148; McNair, 2009, p. 239). Framing, Entman (1993, pp. 52–54) explains, means emphasizing particular information through picking and choosing specific aspects of reality in order to promote them in a text; a task that then promotes a particular definition or interpretation, a moral evaluation, et cetera. Frames can influence how certain information is understood, evaluated, remembered and acted upon (ibid).

The media also have a degree of influence over discourse in the public sphere, for as gatekeepers they can choose to open or close the space of opinion to those otherwise situated outside the public sphere of mass-mediated public discourse (Jacobs and Townsley, 2011, p. 50, 70). Through their professional choices, journalists can stage and edit discourse regarding public figures, a notion that is especially focal in this study. In addition, the media can also effectively keep certain topics out of discourse by disregarding them in their coverage (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 47). In order to introduce alternative discourses (or 'destructive strategies', according to Van Leeuwen and Wodak, 1999, p. 92), one must first successfully enter the field.

Through its control over discourse the media also has a certain degree of control over access to 'public spaces' (or mass circulation) (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 46). This means, however, that an intellectual who has not been recognized by his peers, as Kristóf (2013, p. 201) suggested, can be catapulted into the intellectual position. In addition, a public figure can through continuous appearances in the media over the course of time become an established authoritative voice (Vaara, Tienari and Laurila, 2006, p. 805). As opposed to the more traditional intellectual who gains his status through his academic work, the media can offer an alternative road to becoming a public intellectual (D'Cruz and Weerakkody, 2015, p. 144). Deephouse and Suchman (2008, pp. 55-56) see the media as a mediator between the source and the subject of legitimation; as both an indicator

of what is publicly legitimate, as well as a source of legitimation, especially in the case of prestige media.

Szczepanska (2014, pp. 87–88) notes that what the Japanese media choose to report on depends on factors such as timing (are there other, more pressing topics at the moment?), the nature of the news content, the interest (ideological stance) of the newspaper as well as the perceived interests of its readers. Using the empirical case of a history textbook authorization in 2011, Szczepanska (ibid.) notes how the media largely overlooked the event due to the very heavy coverage given to the then-recent Tohoku earthquake. While in this case it was a question of timing, in another case she shows how the international media reported extensively on the 2000 Women's War Crimes Tribunal in Tokyo, yet the Japanese media, save for the Asahi, disregarded the event despite attending it (Szczepanska, 2014, p. 90).

In the Introduction I offered an overview of the ideological positions of the newspapers featured in this thesis. Szczepanska (2014, p. 97) notes that the ideological divide has an effect on news coverage, as a paper's political stance determines how it approaches certain issues. Many of these issues concern the nation's war history; a divisive complex of topics that remains, as Takekawa (2016, pp. 79–80) notes, an integral part of contemporary domestic and international politics in Japan.

5 ANALYSIS

In this chapter I analyze the discourse (articles, editorials, opinion pieces and contributed articles) featured in three Japanese national daily newspapers, the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, the *Sankei Shimbun* and the *Asahi Shimbun,* to analytically demonstrate and problematize the ways in which public intellectuals are portrayed, evaluated and subsequently legitimized and/or delegitimized in news journalism. Drawing upon the theoretical framework, I ask what effect the ideological divide has on influencing the portrayal of intellectual and the expectations placed upon their role in society. As noted above, the media has the ability to frame their coverage in a specific way so as to highlight certain aspects. How, then, do these practices affect the portrayal of public intellectuals?

5.1   National or universal values – to whom is the intellectual responsible?

A close examination of the data reveals a marked division of opinion regarding a central thematic question of an intellectual's responsibility and the nature of such a responsibility. Here, I will illustrate how newspapers frame of news on public intellectual activity, and in so doing foreground questions about whom he or she supposedly owes loyalty.

In June 2011, author Murakami Haruki delivered an anti-nuclear speech in Barcelona, Spain, upon accepting the *International Catalunya Prize*. The speech received attention in both the domestic and foreign press. In his speech, Murakami quoted the engraving on the cenotaph in the Hiroshima Memorial Park that reads "rest in peace, for the error shall not be repeated" ("*yasuraka ni nemutte kudasai, ayamachi wa kurikaeshimasenu kara"*) (Asahi, 24th June, 2011), and noted that these words indicated that the Japanese are both victims as well as perpetrators of the war. Expressing his view that the Japanese (he used the expression "*wareware Nihonjin"* which translates to "we, the Japanese", thus explicitly including himself in the national collective) were in the unique position of having both experienced the devastating atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as well as made the postwar decision to make use of nuclear power for energy production (ibid.). This latter decision had now resulted in a nuclear crisis not only for Japan but for its neighboring countries, as well (ibid.). The Japanese, Murakami emphasized, should have protested more loudly against the introduction of nuclear power when the Japanese government began to argue in its favor in the 1950s. Instead, Murakami argued, the Japanese people were swept up in a system

(*shisutemu*) that prioritized economic benefits over safety. Now anyone who voiced their concern against nuclear power was branded an "unrealistic dreamer" (*higenjitsuteki na musōka*) (Asahi, 27th June, 2011).

What is interesting in the Asahi's reporting of Murakami's speech is that this paper saw it as a sign of him abrogating his former refusal to occupy an intellectual position, emphasizing that the author had previously put significant distance between himself and Japanese postwar intellectuals (Asahi, 24th June, 2011). Murakami's decision to take communicative action, the newspaper suggested, was born from "his anger towards himself and his self-reflection" ([…] *jibun ni taisuru tsuyoi ikari, jikohansei* […]) that he felt upon realizing, after the Fukushima accident, that he should have commented more on the nuclear issue (Asahi, 24th June, 2011). The speech, therefore, was a sign of Murakami finally taking on the role of an intellectual, revealing his anti-nuclear stance not only to Japan but to the world.

While the Yomiuri only reported briefly on the speech, the Sankei was very critical of it. Responding with suspicion as to Murakami's underlying reasons for making the speech, the Sankei (4th October, 2011) questioned why the author had kept silent following the 3.11 triple disaster in Fukushima only to speak out against nuclear power at this point, three months later. The newspaper identified various problems in his speech, including its timing, location and message. It questioned why the author, who seldom appears in public in Japan, had given numerous speeches abroad, literary critic Kuroko Kazuo opining in the Sankei that Murakami giving far more speeches to foreign audiences was really part of a self-serving strategy aimed at increasing his chances of winning the Nobel Prize in literature (ibid.).[4] Furthermore, the Sankei's readers were informed, his speech seemed insincere as he would only speak about the nuclear crisis from abroad rather than in front of the Japanese public who were in the midst of it.

The Sankei's criticism against Murakami reflects the criticism he has faced throughout much of his career in Japan. Following the novel *Norwegian Wood*, Murakami, who was facing harsh criticism from literary critics faulting him for his Americanized work, left Japan on a self-imposed

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[4] Remaining critical of the author years later, Kuroko added in an article published in the Sankei Digital (26th October, 2015) that Murakami's speech had also undermined previous anti-nuclear protest movements in Japan.

exile together with his wife. This exile, which saw the author live abroad in Europe and America, further showcases him as an intellectual in Said's terms.

In September 2012, Murakami published an essay in the Asahi about the maritime territorial dispute between Japan and China regarding the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. As a response to the Japanese government's decision to buy three of the contested islands from a private Japanese owner, demonstrations had spread across China. Some of these demonstrations grew violent and saw protesters attacking Japanese businesses and removing books by Japanese authors from Chinese stores. Murakami expressed his shock at this development, and presented the dispute as something that should, and could, be addressed and solved practically, warning against letting nationalistic feelings (enflamed by political agitation) lead to rash and disproportionate reactions (Asahi, 28th September, 2012).

The Asahi covered Murakami's essay extensively and the ongoing discussion surrounding it (perhaps unsurprisingly as they were the original medium of its publication) in the context of the territorial dispute, portraying Murakami's essay as an opportunity to reinitiate consultations between the two sides in the dispute. Referencing Murakami's famous 2009 "egg and wall" speech in Jerusalem, the newspaper saw the essay as a natural continuation of his previously expressed call for people to come together despite their various differences to break what the author has on numerous occasions referred to as "the system". According to Murakami's essay, and echoed by the Asahi, such mutual understanding is fostered through continuous cultural exchange between nations.

The "system" that Murakami has referred to on numerous occasions in various terms (in Jerusalem he called it "the wall") indicates power that seeks to exploit the individual (Murakami, 2009). Murakami advocates that each individual is an egg; a unique soul with a fragile shell around it, but confronting the egg is the system; a cold, strong and tall wall (ibid.). Murakami urges his audience to remember, however, that this system was created by humans and has no soul of its own, and although striking at the wall may seem hopeless, it can be broken if people come together, to unite across national borders, race and religion (ibid.). In his anti-nuclear speech, the author made the

same call for action, urging people to become "unrealistic dreamers", despite what the government, corporations, the media and others may advocate.

Calling for Japan to seek regional understanding and build a constructive relationship with its neighbors seems to be a major ideological goal for the Asahi, usually portrayed as a necessary move rather than focusing inwards as Japan had done before. Pointing to Murakami's wide fan base in the region, the Asahi portrayed Murakami as an influential intellectual who might be able to bridge regional mistrust and mutual misunderstandings. The Asahi (8th October, 2012) emphasized this potential role for Murakami by referring to an article by Chinese novelist Yan Lianke, who had responded to Murakami's essay in *The New York Times*. Praising Murakami for his bravery, Yan suggested that the author's actions should be followed by other intellectuals, as well, adding that the author's words had created an opportunity for a sincere discussion between the two sides.

The Yomiuri, in contrast, largely ignored Murakami's 2012 essay while the Sankei was quick to respond to the author's apparent criticism of the domestic Japanese public. Reacting to the positive welcome the essay was receiving in South Korea, the Sankei (30th September, 2012) voiced its discontent with the way the essay was allegedly being (mis)represented in Korea as a message directed towards the domestic public of an increasingly rightist Japan. In addition, together with an anti-Japanese declaration (*han'nichi seimei*) penned by a group of Japanese intellectuals, it contributed to Korea's misguided view of Japan as a nation showing insufficient remorse and self-criticism for its past aggression. Such a view goes against the Japanese nationalist rhetoric that pictures Japan as not having to apologize for its wartime past, or already having done so sufficiently (Sakamoto, 2008). In addition, the Sankei's reaction to the essay reflects the nationalist belief that China and Korea use history as "a diplomatic card" (ibid.). Here, the Sankei saw these liberalist statements as really aiding China and South Korea in their efforts to put pressure on Japan for their own purpose and benefit.

In the Sankei's reporting, such an intellectual position may even invite allegations of hypocrisy and national betrayal. Thus, referencing Murakami's injunction that the matter be dealt with calmly, the paper (12th October, 2012) suggested that Murakami use his influence in China to address those

who were actually causing the agitation and assaulting Japanese property and interests there. Furthermore, throughout the Sankei's texts on Murakami, there is an underlying confirmation that the author goes against everything the nationalists advocate. The nationalist discourse proclaims communal values and norms, which make up the perceived unique Japanese national character (Akaha, 2008, pp. 158–159). Murakami, however, in his emphasis on the need for souls to unite across national and cultural borders effectively advocates universal cultural values. His delivery of the speech on an international stage only emphasized its universalist claims.

The Asahi (24th June, 2011) brought up Murakami's father, who was a Buddhist monk and teacher of Japanese literature, saying his influence is felt in the speech. It notes how Murakami differs from liberals such as novelist Ōe Kenzaburō in his honoring and affirmation of the traditions and spirituality of the Japanese. This view would seem palpable to the nationalist discourse stressing traditional Japanese values, yet the Sankei (25th April, 2015) in a later article on Murakami's comment that Japan should apologize to the comfort women, noted that his author's father must be "regretting in the afterlife" ("*senka de kuyande iru*") that he had failed to properly teach his son history. Whereas the Asahi showed his father as a positive inspiration in Murakami's work, the Sankei used the relationship to contrast the difference between the author's honorable father and his supposedly ignorant self who made comments without any proper knowledge of history.

5.2 Hypocrisy or self-reflection?

In the summer of 2013, Studio Ghibli released the animated movie *The Wind Rises*, directed by Miyazaki Hayao. The movie recounts the life of Horikoshi Jirō, the principal designer of fighter planes used by the Imperial Japanese armed forces in the Second World War. While the director was criticized in South Korea for "beautifying war" (Sankei, 27th July, 2013), for both the Yomiuri and the Sankei, *The Wind Rises* served as an affirmation that Japan should no longer be criticized for its wartime actions. Both papers (Sankei, 27th July, 2013; Yomiuri, 27th July, 2013) referred to the director's unwillingness to judge if Horikoshi was right or wrong, suggesting instead that people who lived during the war had been born into a specific time and were simply trying to live as best they could under the circumstances.

The Sankei was especially drawn to this aspect of the movie. In a column, the Sankei (15th August, 2013) noted that it was puzzled about recent accusations that the movie did not clearly show

Horikoshi's inner conflict about cooperating with the authorities during the war. It criticized the postwar stance of intellectuals who had allegedly pretended that they had never behaved in a militant way before and during the war, and underlined how those who lived during the war should not be judged with today's values only, echoing Miyazaki's words (ibid.). The Yomiuri (30th August, 2013) explained that the movie did not portray military nationalism per se but rather the origin of the Japanese people's heart/spirit (*kokoro*).

Coinciding with the release of *The Wind Rises*, Studio Ghibli published a special issue of its magazine *Neppū* in July 2013 that addressed the topic of constitutional amendment. Here, Miyazaki criticized the government's attempt to amend the pacifist Article 9 (which states that the "Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation") in the postwar constitution. While Miyazaki touched upon other issues in the essay as well, his comments regarding the Article 9 were the ones that garnered the most attention.

The Yomiuri, again, as in the Murakami case, chose to ignore a controversial essay. The Sankei struck a neutral tone in its daily newspaper coverage but criticized the director heavily in its monthly magazine *Seiron* (18th September, 2013). Detecting both inconsistency and hypocrisy in Miyazaki's intervention, the article lambasted Miyazaki for speaking out in favor of keeping intact the pacifist constitution right after releasing a movie that "praised" the military prowess of wartime Japan. Noting how the director usually refers to his personal early memories of the war, the Seiron (ibid.) stated that, as Miyazaki was born in 1941, he had no direct memories of the war, and that the early childhood memories he was recollecting in the essay were mostly based on exaggerated hearsay. It even, sarcastically, noted that the young Miyazaki must have been a "highly knowledgeable boy, mature beyond his years" ("*sōjuku de ishiki no takai shōnen*") (ibid.). Due to this personal inexperience ("*taiken naki mono*"), the Sankei berated Miyazaki, calling him naïve for his postwar confrontation of his father about this responsibility in the war, an experience that Miyazaki mentioned in this essay (ibid.).

The Sankei furthermore noted that this was not the first time the *Neppū* had overstepped its proper topical area as a niche magazine by an animation studio and meddled in affairs outside its specialty (Seiron, 18th September, 2013). It noted that in its August 2011 issue, Ghibli had proclaimed that

from now on they wanted to create their movies in a production process entirely free of nuclear-generated power. The Sankei wondered sarcastically if this meant that all the studio's previous movies should be discarded, and if the studio would cease making movies altogether if the nation's nuclear power plants were in fact restarted (ibid.).

It is difficult to determine precisely if the Sankei was primarily taking issue with Miyazaki for his apparent "hypocrisy", or simply using the ambiguity of his position as a crux to discredit those of his opinions that went counter to the Sankei's own editorial stance. Nevertheless, allegations of hypocrisy and contradiction is a constant theme throughout the newspaper's coverage of Miyazaki's opinions. It is interesting, however, that while pointing out the contradictions in the directors words and actions on the one hand, the Sankei has praised Miyazaki as a movie director on the other; in an article, a Sankei editor-in-chief emphasized the emotional affect that *The Wind Rises* had had on him, and even proclaimed Miyazaki "the god of anime" ["*anime no kami-sama*"] (5th September, 2013). Whereas all Miyazaki's movies feature the director's worldview and opinions, cinematic works always leave room for interpretation, as clearly evident in the debate surrounding *The Wind Rises* and its different interpretations in the press. Miyazaki's reflections in the *Neppū*, on the other hand, were accorded very little room for interpretation in the Sankei's coverage.

In contrast, the Asahi (7th August, 2013) approached this apparent "inconsistency" on Miyazaki's part from a different angle. The Asahi (ibid.) noted that while the director's essay had been well received in South Korea, his latest movie portraying a weapons inventor had caused "disappointment" (*shitsubō*). For the Asahi, this "inconsistency" was indicative of the director's struggle to reconcile his own anti-war principles with his sympathy for Horikoshi, and the paper suggested that this confusion (*tomadoi*) reflected the feelings of many Japanese. This view was further underlined by quoting Miyazaki's own expression of initial reluctance to speak out about politics ("*seiji ni tsuite wa, amari hasshin shitakunai*") (Asahi, 2nd August, 2013), a reluctance that he claimed he overcame when the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) intensified its calls for amendment of the pacifist constitution. Miyazaki, it was clear, had felt that there was no other time to come forward than now, despite the recent release of *The Wind Rises* ("[…] *kono taimingu shika nai*") (ibid.). The impression of Miyazaki and his ideological motives that the Asahi delivered to

its readers suggested that he was a somewhat reluctant intellectual, who despite contradictory feelings within himself, chose to do what he thought morally right and speak out against the LDP rhetoric.

What the Sankei labels "hypocrisy" and the Asahi "inner conflict" both stem from a central thematic preoccupation with the nature of change and self-reflection. The Asahi sees such things as positive and as directly representative of the feelings of many, or most, Japanese, while the Sankei sees them in a negative light, and discredits them as inconsistencies that reveal a morally weak and self-serving intellectual position. Why? The Sankei seems to believe that the intellectual should advocate a collective judgement, rather than be someone who questions it at every turn. Yet Miyazaki appears to be constantly questioning, pointing to the existential dilemma and choices that have to be made. This is reflective of Said's (1994, pp. 32–33) idea of the intellectual constantly having to choose whether he or she aligns with the collective and the consensus or goes against it.

The struggle that Miyazaki is portrayed as having with himself is in fact a constant theme running through his entire oeuvre. In Miyazaki's movies nothing is ever simple or clear-cut, and his characters can never be classified simply as good or evil, as they all possess both sides. As Miyazaki himself noted in his comments on war, "military things in general stem from the dark side of humans" ("*gunji ippan wa ningen no anbu kara kuru mono*") (Asahi, 7th August, 2013). Miyazaki's characters, however, always have the option to change; to evolve. For the left-leaning in Japan, engaging in self-reflection is precisely the way Japan should be dealing with its wartime history. In their view, the postwar period offered the opportunity to reflect upon past mistakes in rebuilding the country after militarism had led to national disaster in the Second World War (Nakazato, 2016, p. xxvi).

5.3 Self-serving activists or critical jesters?

The memory conflicts are connected to unresolved questions of Japan's wartime history, and they are therefore a much more internationally and domestically divisive issue than more local domestic disputes such as the legacy of the atomic bombings and the much later Fukushima disaster (Seaton, 2007, p. 92). Does this mean that the portrayal of public intellectuals shows less variety when it

comes to domestic topics? As I noted earlier, Said (1994, p. 12) argued that the intellectual's role was not to please the public; on the contrary, the intellectual should be prepared to be considered problematic or unpleasant. However, where is the line between what is deemed an acceptable interference and an insensitive disturbance? The case of Chim↑Pom offers insight into the difficulty that public intellectuals may face when dealing with sensitive topics that evoke unpleasant memories. What consequences can the public intellectual face if his or her actions are deemed as having crossed the line?

In October 2008, the Chim↑Pom collective rented an aircraft and flew it over the city of Hiroshima, using the plane's exhaust fumes to spell out the word "pika" ("ピカッ", an onomatopoetic expression describing a brief and powerful flash of light and uniformly seen in my sources as a reference to the atomic blast) in the sky. The group received harsh criticism both from the public (especially the representative organization of the *hibakusha*, survivors of the atomic bomb) and the mass media. Among the responses were negative comments to the effect that Chim↑Pom's actions had "hurt the public's feelings" (*shiminkanjō o kizutsuketa*) and were "making fools" (*baka ni shite iru*) of them (Sankei, 13th March, 2009). Tsuboi Sunao, chairman of the Hiroshima Confederation of Organizations Supporting A- and H-bomb Sufferers, stressed during a meeting with the group that the deep trauma from the atomic bomb meant that, to this day, even sounds and lights from fireworks felt to his members like "being stabbed in the chest" ("*mune ga tsukisasaru*") (Yomiuri, 25th October, 2008). Further, he encouraged the group to learn more about the Hiroshima bombing in order to think about peace (ibid.).

One of the main critique points in the coverage was the way the happening was carried out, and comparisons were drawn to Chinese artist Cai Guoqiang, who just a few days later had staged a show in the sky over Hiroshima using black fireworks to portray the atomic bomb (Yomiuri, 9th April, 2009). Apparently not triggering the *hibakusha*'s usual stressful responses to fireworks, Cai received, according to the paper, no criticism for his work (ibid.). The difference in reception, the Yomiuri suggested, was due to Chim↑Pom's failure to adequately announce and communicate their stunt beforehand (ibid.). The Yomiuri noted that, unlike Chim↑Pom, Cai had reached an understanding of his artistic actions with the city of Hiroshima beforehand through his previous artwork. Later, however, the Yomiuri found that the group's intention to deliver a provocation

(*shigeki*) rather than a message might have been met with citizens' discontent even with prior information, suggesting that a prior consultation would still not have been enough to justify the group's method (ibid.). Despite the group's explanation of the event as a way to "create an opportunity to think about peace", the newspaper suggested that the way the stunt was conceptualized emphasized the moment of the atomic bombing rather than this suggested "peace" (Yomiuri, 25th October, 2008). Furthermore, the depiction of the word "pika" against the blue sky framed the real-life urban landscape of Hiroshima as if it were a manga panel. According to the Asahi (4th July, 2009) this manga-like depiction was believed by some critics to point to the shallowness of the Japanese, although the leader of Chim↑Pom said, in very colloquial terms, that he "thought it would look totally peaceful" ("*sugoku pīsufuru ni naru to omotta*") (ibid.) to have katakana characters written in fleeting clouds against the blue sky.

While Chim↑Pom's performance in 2008 had received mainly negative press, the group's 2011 stunt was somewhat better received. In 2011 Chim↑Pom added an extra panel depicting the Fukushima nuclear disaster to Okamoto Tarō's mural *The Myth of Tomorrow* (painted in 1969 and revealed in its current location in 2008) in the Shibuya metro station in Tokyo. The mural depicts the effects of the atomic bombing and expresses the artist's fear of atomic weapons. Through their extra panel, the group effectively connected the current nuclear crisis and nuclear power plants to the devastating atomic bombings. As it happened, the year 2011 also marked the 100th anniversary of the birth of the beloved artist. Of the three studied newspapers, the Sankei was the most critical of the group's action, using words such as "incident" (*jiken*, a word also commonly used for criminal events), "dispute" (*sōdō*) and "controversy" (*butsugi*) in its coverage, subtly implying that the group had primarily fostered division and antagonism. The Sankei (5th July, 2011) also reported that the police was investigating the group on suspicions of having committed a minor offence in connection with the artistic action at Shibuya Station. According to the paper, Chim↑Pom was exploiting a nuclear tragedy as well as abusing Okamoto Tarō to draw attention to themselves (*wadaizukuri*) (Sankei, 22nd December, 2011).

The Asahi, on the other hand, noted that the criticism after the Hiroshima stunt had led the group to cooperate with the *hibakusha* organization, suggesting that the artist collective was actively trying to learn from their previous mistake. In addition, when speaking of the group's exhibition

in Fukushima, the Asahi portrayed the members as having reflected upon their responsibility as artists ("*bijutsuka to shite nani ga dekiru ka*") (25th May, 2011) before going to the disaster-stricken region. Again, the Asahi focused its discussion on a notion of the ethical development and moral responsibility of the intellectual. Whereas the Yomiuri and the Sankei labeled the group's choice of methods as guerilla-like, and the Sankei especially remained hostile towards the group after the Hiroshima happening, the Asahi's (ibid.) coverage of the mural case emphasized Chim↑Pom's use of playful and humorous methods and suggested, through numerous citations, that the group had gained recognition in the art world. Whereas the Sankei focused on what the group had done to Okamoto's mural, the Asahi noted that the stunt at Shibuya station was a mischievous trailer to the actual exhibition, which carried a serious tone, and suggested that despite their methods and appearance as a group of tricksters, there was a well-thought strategy behind their actions (ibid.).

The coverage of Chim↑Pom was centered tightly around a question of what is permissible from an intellectual. Sassower (2014, pp. 15–17) discusses the activist role of the intellectual by looking at the intended aim of his or her actions. The activist, Sassower says, is driven by self-serving motives rather than honorable intentions. Sassower does not elaborate upon what is to be considered either self-serving or honorable, perhaps because such qualities are always defined by the context and according to the viewpoint from which they are attributed. The two main concepts nevertheless connect to the two central notions of an intellectual's actions and motives in my sources; two points that are central to the discussion in the media regarding Chim↑Pom. The Sankei and the Yomiuri framed their actions, or methods, in a negative way: both disagreed with the group's use of so-called guerilla-like (*gerirateki*) (and even criminal, according to the Sankei) methods, both papers even continuing to use this term in their coverage of the group after the Hiroshima happening. In a later article, the Yomiuri was somewhat more lenient, suggesting that artistic expression can cause misunderstandings (9th April, 2009), and later, when discussing Chim↑Pom's inaccessible exhibition of artwork inside the Fukushima exclusion zone, suggesting that the ethical pros and cons of their guerilla-like methods should be "discussed" (28th June, 2012).

As I mentioned earlier, the Asahi's portrayal of Chim↑Pom's actions, on the other hand, was quite different, the newspaper describing them instead as humorous. Humor, Sassower (2014, pp. 41-

45) suggests, can be used strategically by a public intellectual as a disarming way to deliver an otherwise difficult message. In Sassower's understanding, a so-called 'jester', reminiscent of Said's (1994, p. 11) definition of the public intellectual as someone who is not afraid to ask difficult questions and make a fool of himself in the process, is an intellectual who can offer sound criticism through humor. Although Sassower (2014, pp. 41–45) suggests that this role is perhaps more dominant among entertainers, I argue that it fits quite well with the Asahi's portrayal of Chim↑Pom around the time of the Okamoto mural case. A downside to the jester role, Dahrendorf (as cited in Sassower, 2014, p. 41-45) notes, however, is that jester intellectuals are often disregarded as harmless and unworthy of serious attention. The Asahi appeared to acknowledge this fact by noting that the group has a tendency to be portrayed as "trouble makers" (*osawagase gurūpu*) in the media, overshadowing by a focus on form and deliver the message the group was seeking to present (Asahi, 25th May, 2011). Chim↑Pom's methods may be controversial, but the Asahi suggested that they have, in addition to the art world, growing support among the young people (Asahi, 6th December, 2013).

The Asahi showed through its coverage the group as actively seeking to learn from their previous mistake in Hiroshima by cooperating with the *hibakusha*. Although suggesting that their message is often overshadowed by the controversy surrounding their methods, the Asahi emphasized that the group was gaining increasing support from the art world and the public. On the other hand, the Yomiuri and the Sankei fundamentally questioned the ethics of such intellectual activity, portraying the group as sensationalizing and benefitting from sensitive collective memories to draw attention to themselves rather than the issues they claimed to advocate.

5.4   An intellectual's right to speak the unpleasant truth

When The Museum of Contemporary Art in the summer of 2015 sought to interfere in an ongoing exhibition by Aida Makoto, the Asahi extensively followed the events, framing the story as one of a conflict between the freedom of speech and an intensifying pressure to conform.

Said (1994, p. xi) said that the public intellectual should seek to unmask stereotypes and categories that limit thought. By emphasizing the existing stereotypes in Japanese culture and society, Aida Makoto challenges his audience to think about things that have become so accepted in society that

they are often overlooked and left unproblematized, including the sexualization of young girls and ideas of self-sacrificing salaryman. Aida himself claims no political stance (McNeill, 2013), maintaining that he simply likes to agitate as well as paint, and that these two things fortunately led him to his current work (Asahi, 16th October, 2015). He further notes that by observing the reactions to his work, he wants to understand the world, society and the present time (ibid.).

Whereas critics deemed Chim↑Pom's performance in Hiroshima self-serving and insensitive, Aida's contemporary art has been labeled as shocking, disgusting, gory and inappropriate, even prompting an NPO in 2013 to demand that a museum close its exhibition of his work (The Huffington Post, 2013). Some of the artist's most noted work includes a massive blender filled with naked, young girls, a disorderly pile of dead salarymen, cannibalistic girls and a school girl's corpse being raped by a tentacle monster. However, in 2015 the main point of criticism was not the artistic quality of Aida's work, but that of a defiant artist refusing to bend to the demands of the museum exhibiting his works.

In comparison to his other works of art, Aida's contribution to the exhibition aimed towards children at The Museum of Contemporary Art in 2015 was undeniably much tamer. Two of the pieces, however, soon became objects of controversy. Both artworks were openly critical of the government, one of them consisting of a six meter long white scroll[5] criticizing the Ministry of Education in handwritten black-ink calligraphy, the other a video featuring Aida impersonating "a man calling himself the Prime Minister of Japan" ("*Nihon no sōri daijin to nanoru otoko*") (Asahi, 4th October, 2015) delivering a speech in unsteady English that acknowledged and apologized for the Second World War to China and Korea. A few days after the opening of the exhibition, the museum asked Aida to either alter or remove the two pieces. While the museum argued that they had doubts about whether the art was accessible to children or not, Aida responded by insisting that he was in fact conveying the message to children that it was alright to voice one's opinion in society, even if it differed from the consensus (Asahi, 30th July, 2015). This, the artist wrote on his homepage, is the rule and principle of democracy; that anyone, including non-experts such as

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[5] The scroll was reminiscent of the manifesto banner displayed by author and nationalist Mishima Yukio at a failed coup d'état to restore the Emperor in 1970 in Tokyo. The event ended in Mishima committing ritual suicide (Asahi, 16th October, 2015).

children and the ordinary public, have the right to express their dissatisfaction without fearing any consequences (ibid.).

While the Sankei and the Yomiuri both ignored the exhibition, the Asahi chose to follow it closely. The newspaper repeatedly presented both Aida's and the museum's voices on the matter, but nonetheless framed the case in a way that insinuated that the museum had other reasons than the publicly stated ones to ask Aida to alter or remove the pieces, suggesting that the museum was doing so out of "political consideration" (4th August, 2015). This happened despite the museum's insistence, in answering to the press's inquiry, that it had no problem with the artwork in itself but was simply questioning its accessibility to children. However, the Asahi (25th July, 2015) noted that the museum also contemplated removing the subtitles from the English-language political video, suggesting that their newfound problem with Aida's work was indeed the political message being delivered. Another reason for the Asahi's doubts about the credibility of official explanations stemmed from museum staff initially having informed Aida that they had received complaints from customers, although the number of these complaints, upon the artist's inquiry, turned out to be only one.

Why did the Asahi cover the case so closely? It seems that the paper sought to link the Aida case to a series of recent problems with artistic expression and censorship, and to the ongoing debates regarding the public space. Referring to two other similar cases, the Asahi quoted Iida Takayo, the former chief curator of the Aomori Museum of Art, who argued that museums have a moral obligation to publicly display artwork critical of society (4th August, 2015). In its editorial on 4th October 2015, the Asahi furthermore connected the controversy surrounding Aida's art to the discussion of the freedom of expression in "public places" (*kōkyō no ba*), which, the newspaper emphasized, must remain free and accommodating of even divisive topics such as politics (4th October, 2015). Furthermore, the editorial referred to an ongoing movement in Japan that sought to hinder expressions critical of the current condition and opinions differing from those of the present government. In a concluding thought, the editorial warned against those professionally taking care of the public space becoming too sensitive to the attitudes of authority and eager to avoid complaints, as indulging such concerns poses a danger to effectively stifle free expression, and by extension, society.

The Asahi is not the only significant public-sphere agent concerned about the present state of freedom of expression in Japan. Following the 2014 enactment of the State Secrecy Law and a number of crackdowns on media professionals, censorship in Japan has increasingly become a topic of concern and discussion. In April 2016, a U.N. report expressed growing concern over the state of press freedom in Japan (Murai, 2016). The Japanese government was quick to rebut these claims, Foreign Press Secretary Kawamura Yasuhisa stating at a press conference that the report did not reflect the government's explanation on the points raised (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan, 2016). In addition, an annual ranking by Reporters without Borders voiced similar concerns and placed blame on the Abe government for the current situation (Reporters without Borders, 2016). When discussing freedom of expression in Japan, the western media often focuses on the role of the state. In an interview with *The Japan Times*, former NHK producer Nagata Kozo, however, suggests that preventive self-censorship by institutions and organizers, such as The Museum of Contemporary Art, is more commonplace (Yoshida and Nagata, 2015).

What the Asahi never explicitly stated in its editorial (4th October, 2015), however, is who exactly are "those who take care of 'public places'" (*kōkyō no ba wo kanri suru mono*). Was the newspaper calling for institutions such as museums to show courage in the face of demands and pressure? Was the Asahi criticizing the state for seeking to constrain the freedom of speech? Or was the Asahi calling out to the media, a cornerstone of the public space, not to give in to censorship? Perhaps the answer is all of the above. The newspaper noted that when it published an article on the Aida case, it had been shared over 10,000 times already the following day (Asahi, 4th August, 2015), seemingly suggesting an activist role of the press in informing the public of ongoing pressure to conform.

The Asahi never touched upon the opinions expressed by Aida, choosing instead to focus on the discussion of freedom of expression in art and so-called "public places". Although the museum eventually chose to allow Aida's works to remain unaltered, the Asahi conveyed an increased concern about a process of increasing pressure on the freedom of expression and opinions differing from those of the current government; a pressure that inevitably affects the scope and possibilities of actions by intellectuals such as Aida, as well.

6 CONCLUSION

This thesis has aimed to answer the question of how the Japanese print media portrays modern-day public intellectuals as they comment on contemporary issues, and how this portrayal either shows the intellectual as a legitimate or illegitimate commentator.

In the Introduction I posed the question who is a public intellectual. Answers may vary, but the fact is that almost everyone can come up with at least a few individuals they consider public intellectuals. But how, then, do we decide who is a legitimate intellectual? In the Japanese print media, the portrayal and legitimation of public intellectuals is influenced by the ideological stance of the publication. This reflects different notions as to the moral ideas of what constitutes a legitimate and genuine intellectual; what his or her role and responsibilities are, as well as where his or her loyalty should lie.

As Suchman noted, legitimacy is constructed within a system of values and beliefs. These form the basis for the ideological conceptions for the liberal and conservative/nationalist side, portraying both as having their own operative notions of what constitutes and defines a legitimate intellectual. The entities carrying out the legitimation (here, the Asahi, the Yomiuri and the Sankei) all have certain established ideas of an intellectual's proper role in society, these underlying assumptions guiding the legitimation process.

The liberal side, here the Asahi, generally holds that the public intellectual should advocate transnational, shared values. As the Murakami case showed, the newspaper maintained that the author could possibly function as a vital transnational voice in the region to foster mutual understanding and cooperation. The intellectual's loyalty, likewise, should transcend regional, cultural and ethnic borders. As mentioned earlier, Said emphasized that the intellectual, bound by numerous ties, always has a difficult choice to make; and in their coverage the Asahi often pointed to the choice an intellectual had made and the self-reflection leading up to it, e.g. Miyazaki's initial reluctance to make political statements and Chim↑Pom's continued self-reflection following the Hiroshima case. The liberalist view holds that the intellectual is not affixed to a certain community or bound by a particular commitment. The notion that the intellectual must always decide who to

stand with highlights the intellectual's subjectivity. Finally, a group's collective memories should not be taken for granted but rather questioned and re-evaluated by the intellectual, as he or she seeks to add something new to them (Said, 1994, p. 44). By attaching a panel depicting nuclear power plants to Okamoto's mural, Chim↑Pom effectively showcased the connection between the Fukushima nuclear crisis and the atomic bombings.

On the other hand, the nationalist side, here the Sankei, maintains a very different operative notion of the legitimate intellectual. The public intellectual's loyalty is held to lie unambiguously with the domestic public, the intellectual's strong ties to his or her national community emphasized. A main responsibility of the intellectual, therefore, is speaking to and for this community. Therefore, when Murakami argued for transnational values and understanding it was met with criticism from the Sankei. The nationalist idea shows the genuine intellectual's role as connected rather than someone always on the move. The emphasis on community also means that an intellectual should refrain from acting in a way that may be perceived as self-serving at the benefit of the group, as was portrayed in the Chim↑Pom case.

The final case in this thesis portrayed the obstacles and forces an intellectual may face when seeking to, as Said called it, "speak truth to power" (1994, p. xvi). The Asahi voiced concern for the increased pressure in the public space to conform to the current government's views. Much attention has been focused on the state's role in this alarming trend, but it is important to also keep in mind the self-censoring carried out by institutions in order to avoid trouble.

As my analysis has shown, the public intellectual can be assigned a variety of different roles, depending on the authority doing the assigning. Some may label him a traitor of his own nation while others hail him as an important transnational voice, all in the context of the very same statement of action. These ascribed roles tend to be mutually exclusive within the polarized ideologies and editorial stances of the Japanese press.

The ascribed role is a function of the operation of fundamental values and notions that underpin the newspapers' ideological stance, and this polarization in opinion becomes especially pronounced when public intellectuals discuss topics that concern the controversial question of

Japan's wartime history. Although such fundamental values and notions are not expressed directly in news discourse, they are very much present in the logic and narrative framing of news stories. In order to capture and bring out these ideological constructs, critical analysis is require.

Due to the fact that all public intellectuals presented in this paper hold opinions to the left of the center, legitimation of their activities comes mainly from the liberal side, as shown in the Asahi's often extensive coverage. In many cases the Yomiuri refrained from commenting on these controversial cases, and so most of the delegitimization emerged from the far-right, nationalist side, from the Sankei.

Although the conversational treatment in existing literature foregrounds the homogenous aspects of Japanese news media and journalistic practice due to the special reporter-state relationship in place there, the varying discourses in this thesis clearly show that there is indeed variety in newspaper discourse in Japan. This thesis examines in detail the character of this variety, demonstrating that it differs in level of pronouncement according to the ideological weight of the issues raised by public intellectuals. The ideological divide is especially clear when intellectuals invoke topics that concern difficult aspects of Japan's present-day relationships with its neighbors, as this raises the highly-sensitive question of the nation's wartime history.

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