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I

Professor Matsuo's death on 8 October 1997 at the end of a relatively short illness which at first did not seem serious, took colleagues and Japanese scholars of Ireland by surprise. He had, before the gravity of his illness became apparent, already booked an apartment for an overdue sabbatical in Dublin. But for the fact that his dean had asked him to defer his leave until the second semester of 1997-8, he would already have been in Ireland at the outset of April 1997. With a long interval since his previous visit to Ireland in 1992, he was keenly anticipating his return. It would have been his sixth visit. He had spent two years in Ireland in 1972-4, six months in 1979-80, two months in 1982, two months in 1990, and six months in 1992.

Thus, in all he spent a considerable amount of time, almost three and a half years in Ireland: an indefatigable researcher, much work and much travel was fitted into that precious time. His knowledge of Ireland was wide, and it was deepened by intense reading and research while in Japan. The British Parliamentary Papers are a unique source of information on British and Irish history in the nineteenth century, unrivalled by the printed sources of other countries for the century, and because Ireland was the number one problem region of the British empire, they are particularly informative on Ireland. Because Britain was a parliamentary regime, they contain not only statistical and factual information and countless official reports, but the voluminous minutes of evidence on many issues, economic and social, gathered by the great Victorian parliamentary committees and com-

missions set up by parliament. Available in Tokyo, they were accessible to Professor Matsuo, and in the 1980s, a decade in which he was able to visit Ireland only once, he used them intensively and developed an acquaintance with them which few if any English-language historians of Ireland could rival in its breadth. His large personal library is a further measure of his wide reading both in Irish and English history, consisting not only of the monographic literature, but of many obscure and little-known accounts and reminiscences which he acquired during his Irish visits. One of his last articles is a wide ranging review article of the literature on rural history not only of Ireland but of other regions in the British Isles: "Noson-kindaika-katei no taihi: airurando to ingurando, ueruzu, scotlando", *Keizai-Shirin*, vol. 65, no.1 (1997), pp. 1-44. It together with an article in English in the preceding year ("Transformation of rural societies in nineteenth-century Ireland", *Keizai-Shirin*, vol. 64, no. 3 (1996), pp. 81-204) presents a comprehensive and rounded view of Professor Matsuo's study of Irish rural history.

Like many Japanese historians, Matsuo *sensei* had not only an ideology, but an urge to remain consistent or faithful to it. He greatly admired his old professor at Todai, Otsuka, and his last article, published in the month of his death, is in fact a short one setting out Otsuka's concepts of traditional society, and, from that perspective, looking at features of Irish history ("Otsuka Hiso, Kyodotai no kison riron no shatei: Airurando minzoku undoshi kenkyu to no kanren", *Toshi seido shigaku*, no. 1457 (Oct. 1997), pp. 31-39). Where he differed from many in Japanese studies was in the sheer amount of his empirical work. He was anxious to study documentary data, and to see how relationships actually developed in the documents. He tackled difficult sources, and interpreted them with confidence. In Ireland, it was this mastery rather than his ideology which commanded people's respect. In other words, in his mastery of the sources and in his ability to interpret the evidence, he was a historian's historian, and in 1985 he became a member of the panel of Editorial Advisers to *Irish economic*

and social history. Only one other historian from the non-English-speaking world has shared this distinction.

II

In the *atogaki* to his collection of essays on Irish history, *Airurando to Nihon*, in 1987 he recalled coming to my office for the first time in April 1972, and his first work session with me somewhat later. In writing this article I have gone over old files. His visiting card and letter dated 18 April, to be left, if I was not available, seeking an appointment for the following day, are still on the file. There had been no prior correspondence with Professor Matsuo, and the question he raised of formal supervision was one which was out of my power. It would require reference to the head of the department and to the dean of graduate studies. The following day I wrote both to Professor Moody and to the Dean. In the letter to Professor Moody, I noted that "Mr Matsuo was particularly interested in economic conditions of the Irish farmers, and in the related question of why land reform in Ireland unlike the case of his own country did not lead to rapid economic development. ... He is also apparently preparing a book for a Japanese audience on the relationship between Irish economic matters and Irish nationalism in the 19th century". His name on his arrival sounded familiar: he was the only Japanese subscriber to *Irish Historical Studies*, of which at the time I was treasurer.

For a man as methodical as Professor Matsuo, the fact that he arrived without prior correspondence seems out of character with his careful conduct of business, all the more so as he was already in Dublin and in his letter he had added that he already had obtained permission (without the intermediation of the Modern History Department) to use the College library. Years later in the *hashigaki* to his *Airurando mondai no shiteki kozo* (1980) he recalled that, having no contacts in Ireland, he left arrangements for his studies until his arrival. His plan was to study at University College Dublin, thinking that as a mainly

catholic and nationalist college, it was the obvious centre at which to study. He approached that College, but failed to secure admission. At this stage he came to Trinity. The case for Professor Matsuo's admission was, it seemed to me at the time clear cut: his academic competence was sound and while his spoken English was defective, it was by no means inadequate, and he was well able to cope with the written language. The formal offer of admission, made after he had satisfied the Dean's documentary requirements, is dated 9 June 1972. Though an assistant professor in Hosei, he had opted to come as a student both to seek supervision and to be able to attend lectures. I still retain a vivid impression of his face in the small sea of faces in class and of his close attention and concentration: in Seijo University, thirteen years later in the discussion after a lecture, he was to remind me that on a topic under debate my opinion was different from what I said in class many years previously.

He had a very clear idea of what he wanted to do, and it was a case of guiding him in executing his plans rather than setting out a programme for him. He wanted to document the pattern of family holdings and succession of farms, and we discussed at some length the areas which he would use for sampling. Several letters still on the file refer to the progress of his work during his stay, and illustrate inter alia his extensive use of the land registry which is a major source for the more recent history of land holding, and to his interest in landlords taking over common land (a subject in which he had a keen interest, and which became, after many years' investigation, the main subject for an article). At the end of the year reporting on the research students under my supervision, I wrote to the dean (19 September, 1973) that he was a "Japanese university teacher, very hard working and thorough in his approach. Understand that he proposes to remain in Ireland until March next, and I assume that he will therefore be re-registering". He did remain in Dublin when the academic year ended in June 1973 until the following April. In fact, he did not reregister as a student (there was not much that one could teach him,

as he was a fully-fledged researcher who knew very well what he wanted to achieve in research terms), and our meetings thenceforth were informal. I can recall that he made contact with Mrs Margaret Conway, a very knowledgeable national school teacher in Meath who provided him with information, much of it in written form, on the traditional social customs of rural inhabitants, and we discussed this and other issues. His Irish work in these two years is described briefly in his paper *Airurando ni okeru kindai keizaishi oyobi kita airurando mondai no kinkyo* which appeared in *Keizai-Shirin*, vol. 42. no. 2 (August 1974), pp. 1-34.

Shortly after he returned to Japan, he wrote to me that "I think we should construct regional patterns of economic development in Ireland" (letter of 24 July 1974). This purpose, which was already evident in his researches, remained for the remainder of his life a prime concern. At this time he had completed work on districts in Limerick, the north midlands and on other areas. In his work in 1990 and 1992 he extended his work into co. Louth, especially for a detailed study of commonage in the parish of Dromiskin ("*Airurando ni okeru mana nyukaichi no shometsu to sonogo no sui-i: raisu shu no dromisukin no baai*", *Keizai-Shirin*, vol. 63, no. 1 (1995), pp. 163-245), and into the parish of Carnmoney, co. Antrim (1831-1911, "*Jukyu-seiki airurando kogyo toshi kohaichi noson no doko*" *Keizai-Shirin*, vol. 64, no. 1 (1996), pp. 1-74). In 1990 and 1992 he also visited Achill, later writing three articles on the rural history of the island, which are by far the closest examination which exists of social conditions and change on the island: two of these are in English, "The Achill Mission Estate: a protestant enterprise in catholic communities", *Keizai-Shirin*, vol. 62, no. 2 (1994), pp. 1-95: and "A history of landholding in an isolated village in Ireland: a Japanese view", *Keizai-Shirin*, vol. 59, no. 4 (1992), pp. 57-98. Material from his research in 1990 and 1992, combined with detail collected in the 1970s and in 1982, was also incorporated into the long article published in 1996, which presents a full and mature survey of his extensive research in detail in selected parishes, over more than

twenty years, into contrasts in the regional experience of change and development in Ireland ("Transformation of rural societies in nineteenth-century Ireland", *Keizai-Shirin*, vol. 64, no. 3 (1996), pp. 81-204). For an Irish historian or sociologist wishing to profit from Professor Matsuo's masterly command of detail and keen insight, it is the essential starting point.

His interests already reached in the early 1970s to Northern Ireland, a very logical extension of his research background and objects, and his 1974 article included a long "Bibliography of the Northern Ireland problem for Japanese readers (by Stephen Gregory)". Gregory became a close contact: there is acknowledgment in his 1974 article to him for guidance *nichijo seikatsu ni tsuite*, and he was referred to again in Professor Matsuo's published account of his 1990 stay, "Nihon-airurando rekishigaku no koryu", *Keizai-Shirin*, vol. 58, no. 3 (1991).

III

He was to remark in the paper reporting his 1990 visit how little knowledge of Japan there had been in Ireland, and how little contact there had been at the time of his first acquaintance with the country. There was only, he noted, the presence each year of a Japanese student financed by the Irish government, and a very few Japanese scattered across the Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies, University College and the New University of Ulster. The student in 1972-3 we can identify as Matsuoka Toshi, engaged in studies in the Irish language, who was later a colleague in Hosei Daigaku; among the others in the Republic of Ireland he met were Professor Imaeda Kuni who was at the Institute of Advanced Studies, and Dr and Mrs Ushioda (Dr Ushioda was a member of the Department of Chemistry in University College, and his wife was part-time curator of the Japanese collections in the Chester Beatty Library). These were the only Japanese in academic life in Dublin. All thee contacts were the beginning of life-long friendships. In the *atogaki* to his *Hikaku Keizaishi teki settkin: airu-*

rando to nihon (Tokyo 1987), he recalled how during his long stay in 1979–80, Professor Imaeda, with his motor car, helped to show him Ireland. When in 1993 Professor and Matsuo and I attended a conference in Matsuyama, we stopped off for a night in Okayama, and we had dinner at the home of Professor Imaeda: I was struck by the warmth of the friendship between the two men. He made Irish friends as well. Stephen Gregory was of course one, and he also had a particularly close friendship with a chemist and his family. That man has since died, and it is pleasant to record that even after his death the contact continued with the family.

As recently as 1995 Professor Matsuo mentioned to me that on his first visit he made a point of sitting beside old people on benches in public parks. They had plenty of time for conversation and provided an opportunity of improving his English. He had an easy manner, and travelling with him in Shikoku in 1993, I was witness to the ease with which, everywhere we went, he struck up conversations: I still remember vividly his conversation with old men resting on a sweltering day on a bench in the shadow of Matsuyama Castle. His warmth and human qualities made it easy for him to make contact with people.

His disappointed ambition to study at University College in 1972 had been due to his desire to make contact with the dominant cultural and religious tradition on the island. In 1980 he wrote that his studying at Trinity College, which was an Anglo-Irish institution and where at that time more than half the students were protestant meant that his everyday contacts made him more familiar with protestant than catholics, adding characteristically however that “anyway I tried to come into contact with as wide a range of people as possible” (*hashigaki to Airurando mondai no shiteki kozo*, 1980). In 1979–80, he resided in the Church of Ireland Divinity Hostel in Rathgar. As divinity students were in decline, there were many protestant lay students from the north of Ireland. He remarked that it gave him direct insight into the views of protestant students: their presence and arguments with the small number of catholic students in residence he also found illu-

minating on relations between catholics and protestants (*Hikaku Keizaishi teki settkin: airurando to nihon*, Tokyo 1987).

In 1991 he recalled the extent of the changes since his first visit in 1972. Compared with some 30 Japanese in Ireland in the early 1970s, there were about 500 at the later date. In 1972 there had been no contacts with the modern history department in Trinity ; at the later date there were one or more Japanese in the department every year, and one had submitted a Ph. D. thesis in 1990. In his 1980 book, *Airurando mondai no shiteki kozo*, he recalled that in the field of economic studies he was the first Japanese historian to make a long stay in Ireland. There had been few Japanese in any field before this, though of course there had been Professor Oshima Shotaro (of whom he was aware), who knew Yeats, often visited Ireland, and whose interests survived the long interruption of the war and immediate post-war years: as late as the 1950s he wrote a remarkable book on Irish literature.

It is impossible for young Japanese scholars to-day to appreciate how difficult intercontinental contacts were even into the early 1970s: air fares were in terms of real purchasing power far dearer than now, real salaries were lower, and the yen was not yet the powerful currency of the 1980s and early 1990s. Otsuka, Professor Matsuo's professor and mentor for instance, visited Europe only in 1962 and briefly. Professor Matsuo spent the two years 1972-4 in Ireland without returning home, and much later in the late 1980s, writing of his daughter's success, he recalled with regret the long separation during which she had entered primary school, seventeen years before, in the course of his first stay in Ireland. It is pleasant to record that, in his long and happy stay in 1992, he was accompanied by his wife and daughter.

IV

Combined with his research work in 1972-74, Matsuo *sensei's* visits in 1979-80 and 1982 were the basis for a large run of articles based on detailed research, much of it archival, reaching beyond his inter-

ests in land, to Irish history, political as well as economic, and into relations between Ireland and Japan. He published a book of his essays in 1980, and many later articles were republished in 1987 in a further collection, *Airurando to Nihon*, which is a remarkable book for its grasp of Irish history and both the quantity and variety of detailed work that unlay it.

Matsuo *sensei*'s visits to Ireland were interrupted by a long interval from 1982 to 1990. This was at first due to his assuming the office of dean of his faculty, and later the age of his father. His father's death in 1988 made it possible for him to plan to visit Ireland again. However, during the decade his Irish interests remained strong. Moreover, apart from keeping abreast of the now huge literature on northern Ireland, he had extended his interest by 1987 into studying the origins of the Orange Order and into the sectarian troubles in 19th-century Belfast, which it was possible for him to examine in depth from the voluminous British Parliamentary Papers in Tokyo.

In 1990 he was invited to address the meeting of the Irish Economic and Social History Society in Dublin. Reflecting his interest in the Orange Order, and the progress of his work on its rural background and later extension in the towns, he spoke on his work on sectarian tensions in labour relations in Belfast and on contrasts with labour pattern in Japan (the text in reduced form appears in the 1991 article reporting on his stay of that year). He remained in Dublin for two months, extending his varied library work into the history of the island of Achill, and into a visit to the island. His experiences and work for 1990 visit can be followed briefly in his own words in "Nihon-Airurando rekishigaku no koryu" in *Keizai Shirin*, vol. 58, no. 3 (1991), pp. 77-114, and in the foreword to his *Airurando: rekishi to hangyaku* which appeared in 1994, which has also an interesting vignette on his Achill visit.

My contacts with him were intermittent after his return to Japan in 1974, though the papers for the late 1970s and early 1980s are either lost or mislaid, as they do not appear on the files. However, I visited

Tokyo on his invitation in 1985, and from that time on the correspondence was frequent and close. Over this period too he discussed problems of studying Irish history and his own philosophy of history. These contacts had a great influence on me, leading me into an interest in Japanese history and in learning the language. Subsequently, these contacts were reinforced by my semester teaching in Hosei at his invitation in 1993, by my visit two years later as a Japan Foundation Fellow, and by invitation again as a visiting professor for the semester beginning in September 1997, a visit which was however overshadowed by his illness and death. In the second half of the 1980s his interests, always comparative, began to become more explicitly so, something reflected in two articles in 1989, "Peasant movements and traditional solidarities in rural communities: Comparative aspects of Japanese and Irish economic history (i)", and "Solidarity in rural community and totalitarian regime in the 1930s: comparative aspects of Japanese and Irish economic and social history (ii)", *Keizai-Shirin*, vol. 56, no. 4 (1989), pp. 287–314, and vol. 57, no. 2 (1989), pp. 1–23. His interest in making explicit the comparative history of the two countries grew very rapidly, and in 1993 he edited a large volume of eight papers on *The comparative analysis of Irish and Japanese economic and social history*. It included a paper of his own on "The attitudes and activities of the workers in the early stages of industrialisation: a comparative study of Ireland and Japan".

V

The greatest single influence on Professor Matsuo was his mentor at Tokyo University, Otsuka, Hisao. Professor Otsuka, one of the most powerful figures in post-1945 Japanese university history taught European history. From him Professor Matsuo derived his philosophy of history, and his own career in Hosei was primarily one of teaching European history. The influence of Professor Otsuka is very evident from Matsuo's book *Keizaishi to shuron* published in 1986 and re-

printed in 1988, which resumed the themes of a course taught over the preceding twenty years. The reading recommended at chapter endings is frequently to Professor Otsuka's works; and reflecting the influence of Otsuka, the book starts by discussing the theories of Marx and Weber, going on from that into the transition from feudal to modern, and a study of the English context for recent centuries. Its cultural reach is wide, embracing Egyptian, Roman and Christian influences, and it is overall a very interesting book combining a well-defined philosophy of history with a refreshing survey of the many influences that lay behind change in Europe.

Otsuka, a powerful personality not only produced many brilliant students, but had a profound direct influence on them. Indeed, speaking a few months ago in Japan to a very distinguished professor who knew of Matsuo only by name, he assumed as a matter of course that he was a Christian, because he had been a student of Otsuka's. In fact, not only was Matsuo not a Christian but he had no particular interest in religion. It never came up in our conversations, and religion rarely features in his work except in the context of sectarian or political problems. In so far as western religion entered into Professor Matsuo's ken, it was as an unpleasant or intolerant force. In a letter of 13 April 1986 he observed that "most Japanese historians of my age spent their childhood in totalitarian setting, which was somewhat similar to that in Catholic college in Derry described by E. McCann in his book called *War and Irish town*". Again, in writing of Lafcadio Hearn's Irish background, he noted the narrow and intolerant atmosphere of his Irish upbringing with his catholic aunt Mrs Brennan.

Professor Otsuka was very much influenced by German history, and its concepts. He also argued, taking his lead from Weber that "the total flow of world history from the ancient Orient to modern Europe, or the flow of European Christian culture which was born out of a complex interrelationship between the Hebraic and Hellenistic cultures" provided the basis for modern economic change. (Otsuka, Hisao, "The Weber thesis on the spirit of capitalism considered," in

The spirit of capitalism: the Max Weber thesis in an economic historical perspective, translated by Kondo Masaomi, (Tokyo, 1982), p. 161). He had a keen interest in England, “closely examining the dazzling results of the ongoing research on English economic history” (“Translator’s notes” in Otsuka, *The spirit of capitalism*, p. 176). Otsuka’s impact gave Matsuo a particular awareness of England: he did seminars with Otsuka on British history, and later his Ph. D under Otsuka’s guidance was on English history and its capitalism. Professor Matsuo’s personal library has a very large and complete collection of major works in British history and political philosophy. It was also under Otsuka’s direction that he became aware of the importance of Ireland in England’s capitalistic development, and the foreword to his 1987 collection of essays on Ireland has a very positive acknowledgment, in the context of Irish history, to Professor Otsuka.

Professor Matsuo’s interest in comparative work was very directly influenced by Otsuka. Otsuka was described as early as 1954 as attempting “to analyse Japan’s modern capitalistic development by the aid of parallels drawn from European history” (John Hall, *Japanese history: a guide to Japanese reference and research materials*, University of Michigan Center for Japanese studies, bibliographical series, no. 4 (Ann Arbor, 1954), p. 115). The interpretation of Japanese history at this time was split into the *Koza* and *Rono* schools, the former minimising early (i. e. pre-Meiji) development, the latter seeing it as significant. Otsuka’s approach was more complex, falling somewhere between the two, but made more appealing by his more cosmopolitan perception combining a sense of a late start with wider perspectives: “he never lost sight of, indeed he could not lose sight of, the problems of late-starting capitalist countries like Japan and Germany in their efforts to industrialise and modernise. Thus, the problems of how the Third World can resist the domination of the West and attain independence has always been in his mind while studying modern transformation in Europe” (“Translator’s notes” in Otsuka, *The spirit of capitalism*, p. 177).

There were two poles to Otsuka's approach, one a study of modernisation and its relevance for Japan if it was to retain its independence, economic and political, in the ongoing challenge of its comprehensive defeat, the other the acceptance that society, Japanese or non-Japanese, with the exception of some European regions which were the vanguard of modernisation, was dominated by traditional values until very recently (from this perspective he was perhaps closer to *Koza* than *Rono*). Thus, if he studied economic development, he also stressed in his own words (following the thought of Weber) that "the spirit of traditionalism" is "that ethos which brings forth such patterns of behaviour that are suited to such values, or that ethical atmosphere which places high values upon the never-changing continuation of traditional habits and customs" (Otsuka, "The spirit of capitalism reconsidered" in *The spirit of capitalism*, p. 159). In studying English history with Otsuka, Professor Matsuo was made aware of the impact of modern society (England) on such a society (Ireland). Reecheoes of this approach occur in Matsuo's thinking: in a letter in the late 1980s he wrote that "I will insist that both Japan and Ireland have suffered from the difficulties peculiar to late-developing countries. And I want to study the differences...". He opted in effect to teach Otsuka-type European economic history, and to investigate Irish history in terms of its traditional social framework. In his 1997 article he repeated many of the Germanic concepts which Otsuka postulated for traditional society, and which as approaches or terms crop up in Matsuo's writings.

VI

Matsuo's Irish interests were well-defined at the time he arrived in Ireland, and it was as much his English perspective as his Irish interests which led him to pursue to the extent that he did the Northern conflict. He was very well read indeed on the literature on this substantial subject. Essentially, there were two distinct strands to his

Irish interests, rural history and the *kita-airurando mondai*. They did fuse to some extent when he studied in the 1980s the Orange Order and its repercussions. His interest in the origins of the Orange Order was very much alive in the late 1980s, and from intense research in the Parliamentary Papers he laid the basis of several remarkably thorough papers on the origins of the Orange Order. Matsuo's subtlety of understanding is shown in the fact that, though he attached such importance to the study of rural history, he was careful not to put the northern problem in an elementary rural or agrarian context as so many historians had done. His views were already well-defined on the topic by 1987: "According to my hypothesis, the Orange Order movement started in the area just off the most advanced areas. So I will agree with you that the Orange Order movement was not promoted by peasants, but by linen weavers and commercial farmers. I would stress that it was promoted by those who were more distressed than in the advanced area" (letter of 25 Oct., 1987).

Professor Matsuo I think was motivated by two things. The first was a consuming concern with rural communities, a study prompted by his own idealistic and nostalgic interests, and which was theoretically interesting because it provided an opportunity of exploring both Marxist and Weberian premises on institutional change. He was content in that context to lay bare the existence of communal structures and the changes over time in them. The second motivation was one prompted by the political outlook of Otsuka whose purpose was not simply to study European history, but to use it as one of the intellectual tools to support change in post-1945 Japan into a modern and open society. Part of the purpose was to make known in Japan the development of the outside world, in Professor Matsuo's case, the Irish experience (as well of course as in his lecture courses in Hosei, European experience), not simply its rural dimension but its political and economic context. That is evident in his collections of essays in 1980 and 1987, and even more in his book on Irish history in 1994. That combined with an interest in multiplying contacts between the two

countries, whether by encouraging young scholars to think of Irish history (whether or not they were Hosei students), or by encouraging comparative work as through publication of the volume he edited in 1993.

In the meeting to commemorate Professor Matsuo in Seijo in January 1998, I noted that younger historians stressed Professor Matsuo's philosophy of history and its application to his study of rural history. That in itself is valid, as it was a very marked feature of his outlook, and it is usually referred to in his work on rural history. However, it is dangerous to overstress it. None of his writings on Irish history explicitly discuss it any length, and the concepts are usually mentioned in passing. He was however increasingly aware of the changes taking place in the outlook of Japanese historians, and, in self justification, his views are briefly carefully summarised on the first three pages of his long essay "Transformation of rural societies in nineteenth-century Ireland" in *Keizai-Shirin*, vol. 64, no. 3 (1996), pp. 81-3. Matsuo *sensei*'s work and career had of course a wider context than its philosophic framework: there is a large empirical base to his rural work, and a substantial amount of work which did not relate to rural history at all. His life's work can be summarised under three headings, (i) his philosophy of history, (ii) his research work on rural Irish society and change, and (iii) Irish research ranging beyond rural history, and his contribution should therefore be assessed on a wide basis rather than solely from the perspective of his well-defined philosophy of history. While his work on rural history is virtually devoid of a political context, he understood the political framework of modern Ireland very well, writing a number of penetrating articles on political issues in modern Irish history, and his interest in northern Ireland had in fact primarily a political context. Publication on Northern Ireland began early, with "The development of the Northern Ireland problem (1968-1977: an interpretation" in *Keizai-Shirin*, vol. 49, no. 1 (1981), pp. 79-97. His work is thus too varied to admit of a simple judgment on his approach.

It is true of course that he shared the views of a generation of historians — of the generation of Otsuka — and he was himself part of a new generation who were taught by Otsuka and others in those post-war years. He also felt that Irish historians lacked to a large degree some firm anchor, in the way of values which would not only help them to understand history, but — and this harks back to the dilemma which Otsuka and his young charges had faced in Japan — the question as to what future did people want for their society.

In 1993 he wrote that

We, Japanese historians, tend to construct world-wide views of history. I think this tendency has come from the peculiar position of Japan. Japan is an Asian country, not Western one; and more or less modernised society under the Western influence. Japanese historians have not been satisfied with pluralistic interpretations of history. On the one hand, they cannot be proud of Japanese traditional culture, because the ultra-nationalism had suppressed individualism during world war two. On the other hand, they would criticise modern western system, i. e. capitalism.

Its hard for me to understand the value system which Irish revisionists have adopted. It is sure that they have revised nationalistic interpretations. But, what sort of future do they expect for Ireland? National independence does not matter with Irish people? Any way any historian should hold a specific value system. If not, he can not describe history. A historian can not help selecting something he thinks important according to his value system (letter of 28 Aug. 1993).

Within his broader view of history, set in the context of Weber and Marx, and learned from Otsuka, two strands can be distinguished, one accepting the overlapping Marxist and Weberian frameworks so widespread among post-War Japanese historians, and the other stressing the values of traditional society. These are distinct, though of course they are also part of a common perspective embracing the changes brought about by capitalist forces, and a rather idealistic and

nostalgic view of the society that they threatened and replaced. He observed that “most of Japanese historians have criticised the militaristic trend of Japanese economy. They have argued that unbalanced growth of the economy had created both the restricted home market, which raised aggressiveness towards foreign countries, and the decline of the peasants, who supported militaristic regime” (letter of 13 April 1986). In his views “the destruction of indigenous industries distorted the progress of modernisation. Most of tenants were compelled to rely on communal cooperation and were put under burdens of rack rent, which made the home market poorer. This made Japanese modern industries export-oriented and aggressive, which helped the rise of militarist regime since the 1860s” (letter of 10 Dec. 1985). This is a standard Japanese view of economic development. Professor Matsuo did write a paper on Japanese economic history intended as a guide to English-language students of Japan: it was first delivered at a seminar in Trinity College, in 1992, and it appeared in *Keizai-Shirin*, vol. 60, no. 3 (1993), pp. 33–64, as “Tokugawa economy and society: a Japanese interpretation”. Essentially, it is cast in the traditional mould of post-war Japanese historiography as it was until very recently.

Matsuo-sensei like others was violently opposed to the so-called “emperor system”, and though on other subjects he was a mild-mannered man who discussed ideological differences calmly, argument was not possible with him on the role of the emperor. It is necessary here to remember the experiences of Otsuka, who wanted to create a new and modern Japan, and whose wartime experiences left him in poor physical shape ever after. Otsuka’s generation is that of the large liberal wing from pre-war Japanese universities who survived through the war (Maruyama Masao is an even more famous instance), and who influenced the post-war generation of students with remarkable success, one would have to say, given how widely their views were held. It is necessary to remember too that Matsuo has been born in China, where his father was an official. He was

moved back to Japan, and completed his secondary education in post-atomic bomb Nagasaki. Practical experience as well as the teaching of his professor made him aware of war, its destruction, physical and moral, and the challenge — a real one in the difficult and sometimes turbulent situation of early post-war Japan — to create a society which would not repeat the same mistakes. The oppressive nature of the political system in the 1930s and early 1940s often recurred in his conversation and in his writing. Outsiders might see recent Japanese political history as a case of defective decision making in a weak political framework which Meiji Japan inherited from the Tokugawa regime rather than as the incestuous relationship, motivated by militaristic and imperialistic ambitions, of businessmen, politicians and emperor in a new imperial order. Many Japanese, especially in the universities, however chose to see it differently, and Professor Matsuo is representative of a generation who were not yet adult in the war years and who were instructed by liberal professors after it.

VII

In Matsuo *sensei's* philosophical values as applied to the study of rural history, communal cooperation was a key point. This emphasis marks him off from most other historians, because while all Japanese historians had a view of either cooperation or communal resistance (see the emphasis on *ikki* — or rural unrest — as a centre point of Japanese history), few Japanese historians who studied the west sought to do so in quite such specific terms. There is in this approach a combination of the Otsuka view of history and a more personal and specifically rural orientation. On the latter point there is a contrast with Otsuka. For Matsuo traditional values seem to be a more dynamic force than the passive one, even obstacle, they were for Otsuka, for whom they were the inert forced changed by a Weberian process of modernisation. At one point Matsuo set out his views very clearly:

I would like to stress the existence of “core culture” and the

gap between the western and Japanese culture at the period of the Meiji restoration. Peter Gibbon ignores the "core culture" in Ireland. His only frame of reference is capitalist economy, which does not include cultural tradition of Ireland. I would not support the conversion theory which stresses the similarity of the effects of capitalist economy everywhere. In modern Japan since Meiji Restoration, intellectual people who wanted to catch up with western countries ignored the importance of "core culture"; this point was criticised by Lafcadio Hearn, and on the other hand, common people maintained communal solidarity in struggling against the distress caused by an abruptly commercialised economy. So a group-oriented value system predominated. Modern Japan was a deferential society. Emancipation of "ie" (patriarchal family) and also of authoritarian local community was a favourite subject for Japanese writers. In such intellectual circumstances many intellectual people who wanted to criticise the social conditions adopted Marxist theories as their frame work of criticism. (letter of 14 May 1991).

In regard to Ireland he remarked in the same letter that "many American historians failed to understand the traditional societies, because they have no such societies in their own country. You have that". In some respects traditional values seem to become something independent of the degree of economic development: "I will not insist that economic relationships in the countryside determined very much the nature of social life at large. My point is that social consciousness engendered in the country was predominant in the country..." (letter, first page missing, apparently in the autumn of 1989). Matsuo *sensei's* approach combined two things, firstly the postulation of a pattern of economic development which destroyed traditional relationships and made communities dependent on foreign trade (with a related phenomenon of the creation of inequality by the expansion of the larger peasants and the loss of their holdings by the smaller); and secondly, the survival of traditional relationships as a residue of older society

and as a means to try to combat inequality. Hence, he was very interested in rural social structure and how it changed; in the survival of older patterns such as common land, communal patterns such as cooperation etc.; and in the ways in which commercial landlordism and larger farmers alike encroached on the traditional pattern in rural society

Professor Matsuo's philosophical views are not in themselves original, though a combined interest in traditional society and in outside economic forces is itself very unusual. Even now, Japanese history is in an early stage of transition, and still runs the danger of seeking new philosophic frameworks as the underpinning of research and interpretation alike. The significance of his views lies less in the thought itself, which was a standard one of so many Japanese historians who were liberal in politics, internationalist in outlook and wanted to build a new Japan anchored in democracy and economic prosperity, than in the fact that it led him to choose rural history, and within rural history the social structure of rural communities and the changes in it, as his main line of specialisation. As a researcher, his detailed work began at the same time, even ahead of such work by Irish historians and sociologists. The sources are austere and difficult to interpret. They entailed time-consuming and technically difficult work, combining detail from valuation records, later land registry records and census of population primary returns. For this reason few had been led into using these sources, and few have done so persistently. The geographical scope of his enquiry also ranged widely, and no single Irish historian has attempted to compare the change in such a large number of communities as he did.

The conclusions of Professor Matsuo's work set out the growth of larger farmers; the decline of small households, the loss of old rights, encroachment on traditional rights by landlords and commercial farmers alike; contrasts between rich area which commercialised early and at the expense of weaker elements, and poorer areas where small holders linked by communal patterns held out tenaciously against

change. Historians may disagree on the philosophical context, but his detailed picture is an invaluable one, firmly rooted in the empirical evidence, of how rural communities changed. His interpretation is far reaching, impressive in its detail, and broadly accurate in the picture it paints of the balance sheet of benefit and loss in rural change. In this context, I was myself, arguing like many western economic historians of the 1960s and 1970s that economic change was of general benefit, much influenced by his arguments over the years. His arguments that costs were also involved both at the level of aggregate communities and at the level of small social units seemed incontrovertible and led me to mitigate my own rather optimistic assumptions and arguments.

Professor Matsuo's detailed empirical work on social structures and changes within them is his main achievement in research. Most of this was on hitherto unstudied communities, and his later work on Dooega and Achill is a pioneer study in the economic problems of that marginal—and academically neglected—community in the nineteenth century.

VIII

As already indicated, his research interests were not confined to rural history: they ranged much further afield. He combined knowledge of rural Ireland with detailed study of the Irish economy and society from the first world war onwards. Because this work is varied and not held together by a single interpretative premise, it would be easy to neglect its significance, simply because the volume of his work on rural history is so large, and fitted within a well-identified intellectual framework. It involved wide reading and intimate knowledge of the statistical sources and economic and political commentaries of the period. His articles, mainly in the early 1980s, on the impact of the War of Independence on local communities, Irish democracy in the 1920s and 1930s, protectionism in the 1930s, Fianna Fail's self-

sufficiency policies, the Irish economy and nationalism during the second world war, drew widely both on printed primary and secondary sources. They serve to make the collection of essays published in 1987 into a virtual history of modern Ireland. He was also a specialist on Northern Ireland, and the huge literature on that subject also made it possible for him to pursue this topic in depth during the decade when, one short two-month stay apart, he was absent from Ireland. His interest in the northern problem and his knowledge of economic and social trends provided him with the basis for writing a wide ranging account of modern Ireland. It was in draft in 1991, and his publisher asked him to revise it for the general reader. It appeared in 1994. It is worth comparing with another very successful book which appeared at the same time, Mr Hatano's: Mr Hatano's is fuller on the early period and on cultural themes; Professor Matsuo's account is a closer analysis of the events of recent decades, and of their complex political, economic and social context.

In addition Professor Matsuo wrote a number of articles on links between Ireland and Japan. One was on Ireland's role in the Japan crisis at the League of Nations. This drew on a wide range of sources, and in 1992 he had hoped to take his study further by seeing Department of Foreign Affairs documents, which had not been available at an earlier stage and in respect of which it was not possible to arrange access during the remainder of his time in Ireland. Another article was on the study by Japanese officials of Irish land reform. He also published a shorter English-language version of this paper. His wide and pragmatic interests are reflected too in a very substantial article on Japan industrial investment in Ireland, "Airurando ni okeru sangyo seisaku to Nihon kigyo no shinshutsu", which appeared in a work on electronic industry published by Hosei University entitled *Nihon denshi sangyo kaigai shinshutsu* in 1987.

He wrote too an article on Lafcadio Hearn which involved extensive examining of the primary sources in Ireland relating to Hearn's Irish family background. He also published a paper on Hearn in Eng-

lish, "Lafcadio Hearn (1850-1904): his Irish background and appreciation of Japanese culture", *Keizai-Shirin*, vol. 51, no. 1 (1983). It is much shorter than the Japanese language paper, but it included some of Hearn's comments on Irish authors from Hearn's published lectures to his students. These comments point to the keenness of Hearn's awareness of his Irish background, and a sharp perception of the importance of their Irish background to the authors he described: Matsuo *sensei* has been alone among commentators in giving attention to and quoting Hearn's lectures from this perspective. Matsuo's interest in Hearn preceded the current strong interest in Hearn. Published in a specialised source, his articles have been overlooked in the reprinting recently of various commentaries on Hearn: they are however too important to have merited this fate.

Matsuo *sensei* was a modest man: he made little fuss at any point of time about the work he was engaged in, and he was always more deeply involved and further advanced in his research than one might conclude from his comments. He carried his learning lightly; he was widely read on Ireland, not only from books on its history but from memoirs and biographical accounts by ordinary people. His comments in conversation were perceptive. He knew Ireland well, and the informed nature of his comments, as also of his Irish published work, was enhanced in value by the independent or detached standing that an outsider enjoyed.

He was helpful to others, notably to fellow-Japanese scholars with Irish interests, and to Japanese students with an interest in Ireland. My personal indebtedness to him was large, not least in relation to the study of Japanese history, and from the time I was invited to Japan in 1985 and from my semester as visiting professor Hosei in 1993 and as a Japan Foundation Fellow in 1995 our contacts had become frequent. Well-known though he is to many, much of his work deserves a wider audience: its publication in Japanese journals makes it less widely accessible to Irish historians. Most of his wide-ranging work published in the early 1980s was in Japanese only: however, much of his

recent work, or shorter versions of it, appeared in English. In addition, his work in Japanese, where it involved study of the social composition of the countryside and some of the work on the Irish economy, is partly accessible to English-language readers because the tables and footnotes are largely or partly in English: they can be consulted with profit.

As it is he is well known to his generation of historians in Ireland, and to a host of colleagues and research students in Japan. Japanese interest in Irish history, almost non-existent at the outset of his studies, owes much to him, and the small but growing group of researchers and professors with Irish interests as well as his own written work is part of his legacy to the study of Irish history and to Ireland-Japan relations. In the field of literary or historical investigation, he stands shoulder to shoulder with Oshima Shotaro as one of the two Japanese who achieved both depth and range in their investigation and writing on Ireland.