

**“PREPARING THE FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX: NIPPON STORIES:” THE VERY FIRST
DAYS OF THE OCCUPATION OF JAPAN**

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[*Editor’s Note:* Dr. Wilton Dillon, a distinguished anthropologist and Senior Scholar Emeritus at the Smithsonian, fought in the Pacific campaign during World War II. When the war ended he went first to the Philippines and then to Tokyo, where he stayed for three years serving the Occupation. His many friends there included such distinguished Japanologists as Donald Keene and Herschel Webb. This journal in 2007 published Dillon’s recollections of Manila in 1945 and we continue here with the fascinating story of Dillon’s first days in bombed-out Tokyo.]

Like a bow too tautly strung, the Japanese islands... are steep with mountains, thick with forests and thin of soil...a turbulent country with taut, dynamic people – excessively kind and excessively cruel, makers of delicate poetry and revolting wars, born as artists, living as bondsmen, dying as gods.
Frank Gibney, Five Gentlemen of Japan, 1953

Eyes, You Have Seen Al.

*Come Back Now,
Come Back to the White
Chrysanthemum!*

Issho

“I want to restore the sword to Japanese culture... After World War II, the chrysanthemum, our culture, has been weakened and spoiled. Balance of these two characteristics is the best solution for Japan.”
Yukio Mishima (1925-1970)

The sun was beginning to set on the land of the rising sun when we finally docked. Susanoo, the mythical storm and sea god and brother of the Sun Goddess Amaterasu had stopped his mischief and we found “safe harbor.”¹ Landing in bone chilling Yokohama strangely gave me none of the excitement of hitting the beaches of tropical, liberated Manila. Though weary from the tempest in the China Sea, I felt a wild sense of curiosity about the mental processes, manners and customs of a subjugated empire. After all, at the time of Pearl Harbor, I was writing a college term paper on *Facts and Fallacies about Japan*. Then I had all that exposure to Japanese war atrocities at the Yamashita trial. It failed to set off any feelings of my needing revenge as a conquering soldier.² I had never seen a buddy die. Nor had I seen

1 Susano’o-no-mikato, a key figure in Shinto, represents an example of sibling rivalry vis-à-vis his Sun Goddess sister and his brother, Tsukuyomi, god of the moon. Their allegories continue to inspire classical theatre, movies, sci-fi fantasies, and popular video games. See "Susanoo," *Wikipedia Encyclopedia*, May 31, 2007; and "Susanoo," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. 2007. Encyclopaedia Britannica Online. 2 June 2007.

2 My late friend, distinguished scholar-journalist, Frank B. Gibney, (1924-2006) Japanese language interpreter, arrived among the earliest to observe the scorched landscape. He mused: "The conquerors walked through the wasted area of their bombing and gaped at the reflexive effort of thousands to set up their homes again, as soon as the bombers went away... The conquerors brought forward an ideal in the world's history – a sincere effort to

evidence until now of the utter devastation our firebombing. As we rumbled in trucks toward Tokyo, I saw rubble stretching to the gloomy skies. *Unconditional surrender*, indeed! If I were Japanese, regardless of who started the war, how would I cope with the trauma of defeat and the struggle for subsistence amidst the ruins? How would I perceive the soldiers from the country that brought a fiery hell to Tokyo, Hiroshima, Nagasaki and other great cities. Revenge is a two-way process. Such thoughts of role-reversal – useful to anthropologists – were already sneaking into my awareness in those first hours. With the power of the atomic bomb behind me, I was unworried about personal safety. My main concern was where I would sleep tonight. Surely, this time, not in an undrained rice paddy with *caribou* licking my face.

Night fell quickly on the ghostly quiet center of this then largest city of the world. A sergeant told us we were heading to a billet near Emperor Hirohito's Palace and the Dai Ichi Building, MacArthur's headquarters as Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers. American MP's stood on little boxes choreographing almost non-existent traffic: a few American jeeps interspersed with rickety Japanese taxis fueled by charcoal burners. As trucks deposited us in front of the Sanshin building, I was about to survey my first home in Tokyo, an architectural gem of *art deco*.³

As I hoisted my duffel bag into the lobby, I admired the majestic arches rising above a dramatic pattern of black and white tile floors. Soon upstairs, we soldiers began to unpack our stuff in footlockers placed at the end of cots. Here, I imagined obedient women secretaries recently serving green tea to Japanese businessmen at their desks. Instead of sounds of air raid sirens heard by the previous occupants, I welcomed the musical hissing of steam radiators and the therapy of a hot shower. The American Quartermaster Corps did admirably in making the troops comfortable in confiscated quarters. Never mind that millions of Japanese were cold and hungry. *C'est la guerre*

While this conquering army was well fed and clothed, the U.S. military failed to provide *comfort women* as allegedly the Japanese army embraced.⁴ Sex and warfare seem symbiotic. The Japanese had expected raping by Western barbarians to follow their defeat. Instead, the following pattern was evolving, a tension-releasing pattern I report in deadpan, pseudo-anthropological style:

"Do Japanese women have vaginas perpendicular or slanting like the epicanthic fold of their eyes?" That is a less vernacular phrasing of soldier talk I heard aboard the ship

recast an old enemy after one's own imagine, in the hope that this would make him a partner and co-protector of peace, rather than its destroyer." See his *Five Gentlemen of Japan: A Portrait of a Nation's Character* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Young, 1953).

3 Demolition of the historic Sanshin building, known for its modern, prewar architectural style, started in March, 2007 after preservationists of the Japan Institute of Architects failed to save the 77-year-old structure. (It was only 15-years-old when I lived there). The Mitsui Fudosan Company spokesman defended the demolition "because Sanshin became too old, and unsafe." In many blogs of protest, from Japanese and foreign admirers of the building, I found no reference to its having served as a shelter for soldiers during the early Occupation. At least Japanese photographic skills were employed to chronicle its interior and the ornate interior and exterior decorations were shipped off for preservation. One protector said, "It's so regrettable to lose old memories of the city, as skyscrapers have sprouted up one after the other..." A nostalgic foreigner took dates there because "Sanshin feels warm and familiar." I felt the same when I last saw it, with affection, in 2005.

4 The allegation that Japanese military and government leaders forcibly rounded up females as "sex slaves" for soldiers was still a live issue in 2007. A full-page ad in *The Washington Post* June 14 2007 vehemently denies the charges contained in U.S. House of Representatives Resolution 121 introduced by Representative Mike Honda to rebuke Japan for maltreatment of "comfort women" (*ianfu*). The Japanese Committee for Historical Facts reminds American readers that the Allied Occupation of Japan asked the Japanese government to set up hygienic and safe "comfort stations" to prevent rape by American soldiers. Patriotic women who enlisted belonged to the Recreation and Amusement Association (*Tokushu fan Shisetsu Kyokai*). Though popular, the comfort stations were closed in 1946 in the name of human rights.

before we landed. Two of my impatient fellow soldiers postponed their unpacking to rush out into our first Tokyo night to test the hypothesis. Even before Sanshin lights were out, the comforted soldiers returned, happy to have found *panpan* "women of the night" in Japan, undeterred by not knowing the language. They found their cigarette rations effective barter – tobacco for sex protected by GI condoms. Respecting privacy, I avoided the anatomical question, and concluded that imagined vagina variations made no climactic difference. All this was prelude to my exposure to images of robust Japanese sexuality in pillow books created by classical artists for *how to* instructions for brides. Penis exaggerations in that art suggest that Shinto-inspired phallicism endures.⁵ That first night in Tokyo reinforced my awareness of the universality of the *libido* and new insights about how sexual hunger can be found lurking beneath religion, politics, mythology, and military conquest.⁶ Of course, my passionate fellow soldiers could not have cared less about such extrapolations, and would be on the town the second night for more fleshly fun and games. Clinical detachment can be a bore, as I was to learn during the next three years when I felt burdened by carrying all of Western civilization on my back.

Dawning in a New Land

I slept soundly. No rolling of the sea, no earth tremors. Military discipline was almost as lax as in the Philippines, no reveille. The Sanshin mess provided standard GI breakfast served on metal trays; Carnation milk in strong coffee, bacon, and French toast with maple syrup. Fortified, I checked into the orderly room to learn we had a free day before reporting for duty at the Radio Tokyo transmission tower. I had been away so long from using Morse code, I wondered how I could tolerate those hysterical dot dots. But, first I wanted to rush outside to behold *history*.

The Babasaki Moat of the Imperial Palace and the Niju-bashi Bridge loomed largely as a postcard suddenly coming to life. I could not imagine that behind those massive walls lived the very Emperor we had learned to fear, along with Hitler and Mussolini, as war monsters. Did courtiers wake him up with gongs and incense? What did he eat for breakfast? What does it feel like to be a god? A guidebook only mentioned that the palace was once occupied by Tokugawa Ieyasu who established his shogunate (military government) here in 1603, and when his clan fell from power the earlier Emperor, with his authority restored, moved up to Edo (now Tokyo) from Kyoto in 1868. What a contrast to the story of the Malacanang palace I had just visited in Manila. The Spanish and American colonizers had no monarch through whom they could rule, indirectly, British style.

5 See Robert O. Ballou, *Shinto: The Unconquered Enemy Japan's Doctrine of Racial Superiority and World Conquest* (New York: Viking Press, 1945) Published as the war was ending, the book provides an implicit rationale for Occupation leaders to try to separate religion from statecraft. Phallicism *per se* was not the target, but one part of a larger animistic origin myth that permeated Japanese patriarchal social pyramids with the Emperor at the top. We occupiers were made aware early of the myth that the islands of Japan were "born" of the sexual union of male and female deities—an Asian variant of "the divine right of kings." An American diplomat, Cabot Coville, described Shinto as "the engine of government." (Personal conversation at the Asiatic Society of Japan, 1947). Theocratic tendencies in 21st century American society provide comparative insights about the link between fundamentalist creationists and their influence on governance.

6 Among countless records of the debate about Nature and Nurture, a.k.a. biological and cultural determinism, see *Passion and Social Restraint* by Ernest van den Haag (New York: Dell, 1965). He wrote from a Western psychoanalytic perspective informed by anthropology, but without the benefit of such analysts of Japanese culture as my friend Donald Richie. His 1967 book. *The Erotic Gods: Phallicism in Japan* (Tokyo: Zufushinsha) describes Shinto as a life-affirming religion using the sex organs as worship of life in contrast to Buddhist focus on death, and how the Japanese synthesized the two. See also Arturo Silva, ed., and Donald Richie, *The Donald Richie Reader: 50 Years of Writing on Japan*. (Berkeley: Stone Bridge Press, 2001).

Turning around, I could see the Dai Ichi building, site of the new shogunate. *The American Caesar*, a short walk from my new "home." The day was too young for me to see MacArthur stride to his old black Cadillac at noon to return to his American Embassy residence for daily lunch with his wife. (He ate breakfast with his young son). That ritual, watched by Japanese and Americans, would become for me more commonplace later.⁷ Continuing to explore my new neighborhood in the unbombed Marunouchi section of downtown Tokyo, I used the Sanshin building as my homing landmark. I was little aware at first that I was walking on a stage set for the new super-government. After all, I was still a soldier and did not feel like a governor. Occasionally, I saluted an officer I saw while Japanese on the street shuffled by without eye contact with each other or me. Women wearing wartime pantaloons (*monpe*) swept streets with brooms. The scent of charcoal-burning Japanese cars stirred proustian remembrances of American barbecue grills. Less familiar was the combined scent of Lysol and mutton that wafted from a British billet combined with a PX selling also musty Harris tweeds to civilian bureaucrats.⁸

Day Two brought our Army Airways Communication System squadron to our new work station, the dingy Radio Tokyo transmission tower built on a hill in Hibiya south of the Imperial Palace.⁹ I was not surprised to discover that Kilroy had preceded us. The legendary graffiti was greeting us on the walls. The distinctive doodle of "Kilroy" peeping over a wall is almost ubiquitous among us veterans of WWII.¹⁰

In addition to Kilroy, American equipment had been installed to complement or replace Japanese technology. I rejoiced at the sight of an old Morse code mechanism, and the nostalgic sound of short wave crackling and sputtering. Control of radio stations had already become a part of revolutions, coups and wars, but this encounter was anti-climactic. I felt redundant; our mission was fabricated mainly as a refresher course. The Army had to give us something to do. As I had discovered in the Philippines, wars peter out slowly. I reported to that station only two or three times before confirmation that my three-year tour of wartime duty was soon to be over. I would be free to return home. First, however, I was

7 Fabion Bowers, my fellow Oklahoman who served as his interpreter and military secretary, described the ritual this way: "...the blush of white-helmeted MPS outside the Dai Ichi entrance did their twice-daily parade of thunder and blazes: turning, stepping, snapping to, and saluting in four directions, like Tibetan lamas at prayer, MacArthur, head lowered, indifferent, tossed a massive salute to cover the guard and those civilians and Japanese who always clustered at the place, but were harshly cordoned off at a distance." See "The Late General MacArthur, Warts and All," in William M. Leary, ed., *MacArthur and the American Century: A Reader* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2001). "For five years, the general's movements were as predictable as a metronome," observed John W. Dower in his excellent history, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York and London: W.W. Norton, 1999). Describing victors as viceroys, he portrayed MacArthur as "a stock figure in the political pageantry of Japan: the new sovereign, the blue-eyed shogun, the paternalistic military dictator, the grandiloquent but excruciatingly sincere Kabuki hero." Bowers painted SCAP's authority as a policy of "demand, insist, enforce, ban, burn." I did not know that I was soon to become a minor player in that process.

8 Dogs are much better than humans at smelling. Yet my own limited olfactory gifts are important in remembering events, persons and places decades ago. Scientists at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute are working on seeing, hearing and smelling the world. See "Olfaction," *Wikipedia Encyclopedia*, June 12, 2007.

9 On that site would bloom in 1958 the world's largest self-supporting iron tower, the orange and white Tokyo Tower 1,092 feet high, 42 feet higher than the Eiffel Tower, Japan's symbol of supremacy in the high tech communications industry, and a tourist attraction from which one might see Mt. Fuji in the distance. When I returned years later as a tourist, I found it hard to imagine that I had worked on that site in an ancient stage of technology.

10 See "Kilroy was here," *Wikipedia, the free Encyclopedia*, June 15, 2007. The phrase appears to have originated by US servicemen who would draw the doodle on walls or elsewhere where they were stationed, encamped or visited. One legend states that Adolf Hitler believed that Kilroy was some kind of super spy because the graffiti popped up in secure Nazi installations. It has appeared on the torch of the Statue of Liberty, the Marco Polo Bridge in China, huts in Polynesia, and on the Mt. Everest peak. Kilroy is still found in popular media.

determined to seek out Brigadier General Kenneth Dyke to whom I was referred by General Barnwell in Manila.

Calling on the Brigadier

Not far from my Sanshin billet I found a grim, black building housing General Dyke's domain, the Civil Information and Education (CI&E) Section set up to help carry out the Potsdam Declaration aimed at demilitarizing Japan. Wartime Japanese propaganda broadcasts were born in Radio Tokyo. CI&E understandably had taken over the Japan Broadcasting Company (NHK). From here, the democratizers set out to influence the hearts and minds of the Japanese through schools and the media. In charge was a non-professional soldier, an athletic and spirited young man from Madison Avenue. In civilian life, Ken Dyke served as an executive of the celebrated Young and Rubicom agency and worked for NBC. No doubt, in the 21st century, he would be tagged as an expert in strategic communications.

I took the elevator to headquarters on the fourth floor, introduced myself to a cordial woman lieutenant, explaining that I thought General Barnwell of Manila had sent a letter of introduction to General Dyke. She remembered the letter. After a brief disappearance to his office, she returned with "Please come in. The general will see you now." My PFC insignia set me apart from the brass or civilians who usually called.

"Welcome," said the genial general. "How is General Barnwell?" Like his friend in Manila, he dispensed with military protocols, giving me a clue that salutes were not in order. He came from behind his desk and sat in one of the two chairs, facing the one he asked me to use. I thanked him for seeing me on such short notice. He learned that I had the choice of going home within a month, or staying on in Tokyo as a civilian to work for the Department of War. He seemed aware, somehow, that I had five years of newspaper experience – three for a small-town daily in Oklahoma, and two writing press releases for two university news bureaus. With authority to hire on the spot, he urged me to sign on as an information specialist for the CI&E Press and Publications unit. I would report for duty as soon as possible after my honorable discharge at Tachikawa Air Base. He saw no reason to wait for the tedious recruiting of civilians from the states, and that he preferred personal interviews to reading paper resumes. He told me that I was needed to help do an incredible job at turning an enemy into a peace-loving ally. How could I refuse?

Walking back to the Sanshin building past the glorious Imperial Hotel, I felt giddy with excitement. Was this my personal discovery of manifest destiny? Was this an example of the old boy network? Is life so random? How will I explain to my parents that I am volunteering to stay on? What will this do to earning my undergraduate degree so rudely interrupted by war? The first blush of ambivalence quickly faded. My Sanshin bunkmates thought I was crazy not to go home. Yet, I was yielding to the intoxication of exotic Manila carried over to Tokyo. Rational, linear career planning was never to become part of my life. I felt that I was *meant* to stay on for more adventure and the anthropological curiosity whetted in the Philippines.¹¹

The next day, I walked back to Radio Tokyo as though it were a magnet. I felt I had to check reality. Did I dream about the general's offer? I actually saw Ken Dyke wearing a khaki-colored sweater, his single star shining from his cap. He jumped into his unchauffered jeep, drove off with a wave to people on the street. Under such egalitarian leadership, I could hardly wait to get to work.¹²

11 " Looking back on this life-changing epoch, I was happy to read in the June 25, 2007 *Newsweek* an essay by Matthew Wolfe, "Reaching My Goal of Having No Life Plan."

12 Unknown to me at the time of my interview with Dyke was the backstage role he was playing in preparation for the Emperor's upcoming New Year Day speech. Nor did I know when he had ordered the Japanese to build three

Modifying Mythology

Perhaps it was *The Stars and Stripes* that alerted us to the unprecedented prospects of hearing the Emperor's voice on New Year's Day. Somehow, we learned that January 1, 1946 would be marked by an historical occasion. I joined thousands of Japanese and Allied personnel in the plaza outside the palace. Never before had I felt like such a small fish in a large ocean. In the far distance. I could vaguely see a platform on which the miniature monarch was about to deliver a broadcast speech that would supposedly deny his divinity. Never mind that he would speak in a language I did not understand. Some of us soldiers seemed aware that the whole war was leading up to this occasion when Shinto cosmology and origin myths were being modified as the reciprocal of laying down the sword. Was the Emperor willing to *become human* in exchange for immunity from charges as a war criminal?

"Cutting Smoke with Scissors" is the language used by Dower in describing this event decades later.¹³ The historian wrote: "The emperor minimized the importance of this 'reunciation of divinity' because, he said, it essentially amounted to little more than a semantic game necessary to mollify the Westerners. He was never a "god" in the Western sense of omnipotence and omniscience...nor was he ever a *kami* or "deity" as Japanese understood this admittedly ambiguous concept...but he was unwilling to deny that he was a descendant of the sun goddess as the ancient eighth-century mythic histories had set forth.

Standing in the crowd, I could only hope for some other divination to take place to make sense of the 1945 audio system – lots of crackle and pop – that high tech Sony Corporation eventually would correct. The imperial vocal chords were indistinguishable from the amplified buzz. Just *being there* was the reward. Exegesis of the emperor's esoteric language would follow. Right wing violence of betrayed true believers did not occur. MacArthur praised the speech by calling Hirohito a leader of the democratization. The Supreme Commander needed the emperor in place to keep Japan's social structure stable while he was launching New Deal-type reforms. Implicit was an understanding that some kind of *quid pro quo* was under way so that the emperor would start behaving like a British-style constitutional monarch rather than heading for the gallows. To straddle this delicate divide, the emperor's "declaration of humanity" was tucked away in his quoting of the peace loving "Charter Oath" that had been proclaimed by the young Emperor Meiji in 1868. His Majesty thereby reassured Japanese royalist conservatives and the population at large that the "new Japan" of 1946 was not a rupture with the past. I was beginning to discover the Japanese genius for syncretism, blending old and new, blurring contradictions, bending like the bamboo.

A Military Rite de Passage

The countdown to my discharge from the army came with astonishing speed. Though military tradition is full of rituals, I was mustered out on February 6, 1946 with a most perfunctory series of mundane actions at Tachikawa Air Base near Tokyo.¹⁴ I turned in my weapon without sentiment. I had never been socialized into gun culture, though I was proud that I had managed, in the infantry, to earn a good marksmanship award. I was presented with honorable discharge papers and a \$300 mustering out paycheck. I could keep my boots. Another proud souvenir is one still in my possession: a dogtag with my

million new radio sets to replace those worn out or destroyed by bombing. How better to insure that the Emperor's denial of his own *divinity* could be heard by his millions of subjects? A fascinating account of the machinations of SCAP and the Imperial Household in Grafting that speech is a feature of John Dower's *Embracing Defeat* (op.cit). See Chapter 10, "Imperial Democracy: Descending Partway from Heaven." Today's concept of *spin* in politics has a long history under other names.

13 Ibid.

14 Tachikawa continued to be used by the U.S, in later wars, serving as a medical evacuation center for the wounded in the Korean and Vietnam Wars.

blood type, serial number, and a niche in the side that I had never had to use- an indentation to prop open my mouth had I died on the battlefield. Superiors would know to inform my father, Earl Henry Dillon, at 1415 Caplewood Terrace, Tuscaloosa, Alabama. "P" for Protestant would help sort out what kind of chaplain to call for last rites. "T43" could be decoded as the year I was mobilized. The dogtag was my talisman, an intimate artifact that summed up my essential *identity*. Now I would soon be developing a new one.

Becoming a Department of War Civilian gave me a new number: CAF #5. That appeared in a nine-month contract identifying me as an "Information Specialist." CAF means Clerical Administrative Fiscal. The "5" denoted my salary. Though it was a modest one, I thought I was rich -a hearty increase over my income as a PFC. Of course, I had now to pay rent and buy food and clothing. The latter was not a problem, for many civilians still wore military uniforms without insignia. I had already learned to pass as a civilian while in Manila when the army lost my records.

Leaving the *art deco* Sanshin building found me in new quarters not far away from my new workplace in Radio Tokyo. I moved into the Nomura billet, a Japanese securities company building¹⁵ confiscated by the Occupation for housing lower ranking civilians. A block away was the Dai Ichi Hotel intended for fieldgrade officers and civilians with comparable rank. Its summertime rooftop terrace with a bar and live Japanese jazz players (mainly performing pre WWII tunes) was to become a scene of memorable encounters during ensuing years. My immediate supervisors at Radio Tokyo lived there, while generals, admirals, and supergrade civilians enjoyed the elegance of Frank Lloyd Wright's legendary Imperial Hotel, survivor of the devastating 1923 earthquake. Other supers lived at the Peers' Club. Civilian and military lives share the similarities of rank and privilege. The latter is relative, of course. I felt privileged indeed to live in a large high-ceilinged Nomura room with only three other individuals, a demographic contrast to the army. Double-deck beds gave us more space. As I was the newest occupant, I had to ladder nightly to the top bunk. One nightmare had me back aboard the *Leonard Wood* troop carrier embedded in one of its claustrophobic hammocks. I counted my blessings.¹⁶

A Rich New Stage

On the same floor (*yonkai*) of Radio Tokyo where I had my fateful interview with General Dyke, I reported for duty at the CI&E Press and Publications Unit. Major Daniel Carrington Imboden, Texas-born former publisher of the *San Luis Obispo Tribune*, welcomed me as the newest staff member. He was a tall courtly, Lincolnesque gentleman with Southern manners bespeaking ancestry that included a Confederate general by almost the same name. Another famous kinsman was former Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius, Jr. who also was rector of the University of Virginia. Imboden was pleased that I, too, had Southern roots. He had studied some Japanese at a Yale University course for military destined for civil government. *Dozo* (please), he said, as he showed me to my desk and typewriter in a minuscule space that had been a corner recording studio behind glass partitions. I was to share this with George Russell Splane, Jr., a former Pennsylvania newsman who would be my editor. Our desk chairs were so close that we bumped each other's seats almost with every move. Newsmen are conditioned to work in close and noisy

15 Nomura Securities Ltd. Would become one of the largest global investment and securities companies with operations in 30 countries and membership in the New York Stock Exchange. I was unaware in 1946 that I was so closely connected with the history of modern Japanese capitalism.

16 A glimpse of a more comfortable civilian life style was the room in the Nomura occupied by Holloway Brown and Roger Coar, both news photographers for Allied press services in Radio Tokyo. Holloway's embrace of Japanese aesthetics in room décor was manifest by Japanese screens and a bamboo tea table and a hanging screen scroll (*kakemono*). So taken by Japan, Holloway stayed for 50 years, building two Japanese-style houses, and teaching journalism at International Christian University until his death. I still wear jade cufflinks given to me by Roger when I served as best man at his Tokyo wedding.

quarters. Splane and I became immediate friends and colleagues; I would eventually serve as best man at his civil wedding at the Yokohama Consulate.

Russ Splane introduced me to others in the office, including a Nisei who served as interpreter at CI&E press conferences for Japanese reporters. Then he escorted me to the corridor outside where coffee breaks were an already established ritual. As we stood at a long table doctoring our coffee with sugar and canned milk, Russ told me of a thrilling assignment he and Maj. Imboden had already discussed. I was to serve as Japanese press liaison officer for the U.S. Education Mission soon to be arriving in March to advise MacArthur on the future of Japanese education. He knew that I had reported on education for the *Holdenville Daily News*, and that my reporting at the University of Alabama News Bureau had been interrupted by a call to active duty in the war. Yet, I felt such flimsy credentials seemed disproportionate for such a demanding job. That was already the pattern in the Occupation: young people who had to learn on jobs that had no precedents. Perhaps never in American history had our republic been faced with the chance to test on such a scale John Dewey's admonition, *learn by doing*.¹⁷ Though a colonial power since 1898, we were being *stretched* to the extreme. Wars do strange things to challenge untested potentials. We did not even think of how the youthful Alexander the Great, Napoleon, or our own Founding Fathers preceded us as we faced the governance of Japan. Perhaps the empire-wise French and British, among other allies in the Occupation, had no doubts about their secondary jobs in Japan. My new job was less grandiose than empire, but I could not resist connecting the whole and the parts, the macro and the micro. It would give me access to what anthropologists call *culture contact*. Education, after all, is the means for transmitting one's culture from one generation to the next. What would the conquerors want to insert into Japan's transmission process? What would they do to create "a new education free of militaristic and ultranationalistic influences" as charged by the Potsdam Declaration.? Who indeed were the American intellectuals chosen to play like Platonic kings? What kind of education mission did the Japanese send to the Philippines to change *a colonial mentality*?

George Dinsmore Stoddard (1897-1981), a noted child psychologist who wrote on the meaning of intelligence and individual differences in learning, was appointed to head the U.S. Education Mission. As Commissioner for Education in New York State at the time, Stoddard became the face and chief spokesperson for a diverse group of 27 American leaders. He, at age 51, and I, at age 22, were an unlikely twosome, but circumstances threw us together in close contact for the month-long mission. While daunted by the responsibility of organizing their encounters with the Japanese press, I felt comfortable dealing with college presidents at home. Both in Shawnee and Tuscaloosa, I wrote news stories about the men who presided over provincial universities where I was a student. I was now in virgin territory: a world stage where intellectuals of two vastly contrasting cultures were to operate a mixing bowl of histories, races, and values. SCAP asked the Japanese government to appoint a similar committee of Japanese experts to work side-by-side with the American mission.

The Japanese were soon to meet Dr. Stoddard. He would meet the press on the very day that the Japanese Minister of Education, Yoshige Abe, made a welcoming speech that was "virtually a plea to America to allow Japan to retain some of their own culture and not to westernize everything."¹⁸ On March 8, 1946, a gaggle of accredited Japanese reporters of 30 or so assembled in a former radio studio now the pressroom for CI&E. Tobacco-addicted Japanese filled the room with smoke stench from Peace brand – an occupational hazard then tolerated. I sat with pen and paper near the speaker's table to make notes for

17 Icon of American pragmatism-cum- instrumentalism, Dewey (1859-1952) built his educational theories on the ideas of Rousseau, Pestalozzi and Froebel. A key phrase: "Education is not preparation for Life: Education is life itself." See multiple online commentaries on his *Early Childhood Today* and his other works.

18 See *New York Times* of 9 March 1946 for the story with this headline, "Japanese Bids US Ease Re-education; Minister pleads for limit on "Westernization" and saving some national culture; Warns Victors of Mistake."

a summary – the beginning of duties I would be repeating for the next several years on a wide range of reforms, such as land tenure, a new constitution, women's rights, and war crimes.

Stoddard, his baldhead glistening in the lights, looked professorial with a gentle smile and eyes showing curiosity about his newest constituency. He was accompanied by Dr. Gordon T. Bowles, Department of State Far Eastern specialist who was born in Tokyo of Quaker missionary parents in 1904.¹⁹ They were both introduced by Robert V. Berkov, a top CI&E official who often presided over press conferences early in 1946.²⁰ Bowles, speaking in translated English, though he could have performed in classical and vernacular Japanese, emphasized that the Mission represents U.S. educational resources in the fullest measure – according to educational levels and geography. Four women were in the Mission, including the already famous Virginia Gildersleeve, Dean of Barnard College and the only woman to sign the United Nations Charter in San Francisco; and Mildred MacAfee Horton, former head of the WAVES (Women's branch of the U.S. Navy) and president of Wellesley College. A labor union advocate for continuing education, the president of Fisk University, and a University of Chicago philosopher were in the mix. The Mission was an early American effort to advertise *diversity* as an exportable element of democracy.

In reviewing my old press conference summaries, recently retrieved from my mother's attic, I notice that Stoddard proved adept at avoiding direct answers to questions, though I doubt he knew that he was imitating Japanese patterns of response. "Will the Education Mission consider abolishing or revising the Japanese Imperial Rescript on Education?" asked one reporter on the front row. Answer: "We haven't discussed that question yet," Stoddard said, emphasizing that the Mission had much to learn and that meetings would not be made public and there would be no interim reports. "I realize this may be frustrating to the press... We must get on with our work and to do this we must have time to ourselves before making a comprehensive report," Stoddard explained. With a nod to me, he promised some interviews with Mission members with specialties in adult education, secondary schooling and the peculiarities of a decentralized U.S. system under state and local controls.

I was delighted by the directness of some of the questions: "In your opinion what relation did education here have with the war?" Stoddard said he had no pre-formed judgment on what was, after all, the whole premise of the mission. He was more forthcoming with answering a question from a reporter who knew that Stoddard had been the US delegate to a London conference on the UN Education, Science and Cultural Organization. His answer set the stage for whetting Japanese appetites for UNESCO as a framework for Japan's rejoining the world community. He mentioned 44 participating nations, with 20 already having approved the UNESCO constitution.²¹

Stoddard and his mission made no claims to know Japanese culture. Yet, he was exposed to a key value at the first press conference. He came ear-to-ear with a question that sums up the classic pre-war Japanese ideal for the education of women: "What is your attitude regarding the Japanese idea that a good

19 Bowles (1904-1991) taught anthropology at the University of Hawaii and wrote a book, *People of Asia* (New York, Charles Scriber's Sons, 1977) based on his fieldwork in China, Tibet and Burma. Japanese reporters were familiar already with his father, Gilbert Bowles (1869-1960), the Quaker educator who founded the pre-war Japan Peace Society. Both Bowles were instrumental in identifying Elizabeth Grey Vining, a Bryn Mawr Quaker, as tutor to Crown Prince Akihito, eventual successor to his father, Hirohito, as Emperor in 1989.

20 Later assigned to Washington in the Department of State, Berkov profiled the Japanese press in his article, "The Press in Post-War Japan," *Far Eastern Survey* (16.14), 23 July 1947.

21 Five years later, I would see Stoddard at UNESCO headquarters in Paris witnessing Japan's admission to UNESCO. We were photographed together at the old UNESCO headquarters on Avenue Kleber along with the Japanese Minister of Education, Tamon Maeda. A poetic full circle was realized in 1999 when Japanese Ambassador Koichiro Matsuura launched two full-terms as UNESCO Director-General and helped encourage the United States to rejoin the organization. My path crossed with his in 1961 in Ghana where he began his interest in basic education in developing countries.

education for a Japanese woman is one that trains women to be *good wives and intelligent mothers*? "Cleverly, he replied: "We all want Japanese to be good wives and intelligent mothers." The Japanese question would be revisited on a large scale during the subsequent campaign to elect women to the Diet.

Kyoto and Nara: Classical Japan

The American Mission spent most of its time in Tokyo consulting with Japanese counterparts and visiting schools and universities. I had no *hard news* to report, though Japanese newsmen always seemed eager for anything they could get. The big news to all concerned would be a long-awaited fieldtrip to Kyoto and Nara. Without that exposure, the visitors might understand little about the history of Japanese education, dating back to at least the sixth century when Chinese learning was introduced at the Yamato court.²² From the sixth to the fifteenth centuries, Kyoto, as the imperial capital, became a yeasty center of learning as Buddhism, Confucianism and the Chinese system of writing blended with animistic Shinto culture.

Langdon Warner (1881-1955) the Harvard art historian and author of *The Enduring Art of Japan*, was well known to several members of the mission as one of the influences on Secretary of War Henry Stimson to spare Kyoto and Nara from bombing.²³ The Japanese already regarded him as a savior of their most precious cultural riches. Warner was one of the first American notables I was to meet in CI&E, for one of my new duties was to interview and write press releases about their presence in Japan. I approached my own first visit to Kyoto with a keen awareness of the *mystique* surrounding his name.

Another kind of *mystique* surrounded our boarding a sleeping car train in Tokyo Central to embark on the Kyoto journey. Agatha Christie's 1934 novel, *Murder on the Oriental Express*, was on some of our minds as the 27 educators were escorted to assigned compartments. Instead of Istanbul's Sirkeci Terminal, Tokyo's Victorian-style station was worthy of the opening scene in a novel set in the Far East rather than what Europeans then called *the Orient*. _We had no Detective Poirot in our party. Nor a railroad role for Miss Marple of British mysteries fame. Yet, some of us romantics felt an air of mystery about heading to unknown ancient cities at night in a country recently at war. A pre-war engine puffed steam as we settled into first-class Occupation Car cabins. Coal scented the air. The mohair seats were decorated with white embroidered lace doilies, an enduring legacy of the Meiji period when Victorian Westernization set in. Morbidly, I thought their whiteness would smartly show off bloodstains. In a new land, literary imagination comes quickly.

The now famous highspeed bullet trains now connecting Tokyo with Kyoto and beyond could not have been imagined in 1946, except perhaps by a Jules Verne. On this night, our train moved as though in a stately but jerky procession to the Kansai region and its temples and shrines and universities. My map told me that sacred Mount Fuji should be seen on the right within the first hour of the trip. Darkness kept her from my eyes. Before pulling up the Japanese wool covers, I checked my briefcase of documents for the press and was reassured to find my new supply of calling cards printed on rice paper. By a dim and

22 By the fifth century, the Yamato court was headed by a hereditary ruler presiding over clans made up of agricultural communities that produced weapons, armor, mirrors and irrigation systems. Korean immigrants left strong cultural traces.

23 Warner was a modest gentleman professor when I interviewed him, without raising the question of his *saving* these ancient cities. He was mainly concerned with saving the post-war treasures from possible hurt by Occupation troops as well as retrieving art looted by Japanese in their occupied territories. This was the main mission of CI&E's Arts and Monuments Division where he arrived as a consultant. Decades later, I learned he was one of the models for Steven Spielberg's Indiana Jones. Monuments to him have been erected in Kyoto and Kamakura. See Otis Cary, "The Sparing of Kyoto – Mr. Stimpson's 'Pet City'," *Japan Quarterly*, October 1975. Most of MacArthur's fine arts advisors were art historians much influenced by Warner: James Marshall Plumer, Howard Hollis, Sherman E. Lee, Charles F. Gallagher, and Laurence Sickman.

flickering electric light, I could see the inscription: *Wilton Dillon, Press Relations, CI&E, Radio Tokyo* – English on one side, and Japanese characters on the back. I felt prepared to slip into a still predictable pattern of Japanese culture: the exchange of calling cards.

Agatha Christie's muses followed us into the night. Before dawn, BANG! Dean Gildersleeve's sleeping compartment was pierced by a bullet shot from the countryside as we passed near Lake Biwa.²⁴ The bullet entered and exited the car happily without hitting the sleeping, stoic Dean. I do not remember whether the train stopped in the night, or whether I learned of this *hard news* upon arrival. In any case, I had to deal with my American superiors to find out how to conceal or reveal the shot to the Japanese press. Japanese were not supposed to possess firearms, and especially not since the Occupation. My recollection is that we allowed interviews with the unflappable Gildersleeve to put down any speculation that she or the delegation were targets of a Japanese uprising against the Occupation.

The Japanese value of *good wife and intelligent mother* was not manifest in the career of Virginia Gildersleeve (1877-1965), for she never married and was not a mother. Yet, this 69-year-old lady was a remarkable model for us to use for our benign propaganda purposes: a woman of privilege and education who refused to interfere with student suffragists when she became Dean of Barnard in 1911. She protected free speech. When I wrote about her for the Japanese press, we emphasized her role as the only woman to sign the UN Charter at the historic 1945 convocation in San Francisco.²⁵ And we pointed to the women leader graduates of Barnard, including Margaret Mead whose leadership skills were honed there during the full flower of the early women's movement. I wish I had known then that her Ph.D. dissertation was entitled, "Government Regulation of Elizabethan Drama." My Japanese press clients were pushing me for quotes from Occupation speakers who could reconcile our censorship practices (the media and theater) with democracy.

The drama of the shooting incident may have been obscured by a press policy that played down even the suggestion of violence against Occupation authorities. We were helped by the Japanese pressmen seeing her regal bearing – body language that bespoke serene calm and grace under fire, a kind of female MacArthur who eschewed feminist slogans. The bullet of Biwako seemed to her nothing more than a sneeze in the night. Her aplomb and sense of command I soon was to experience the first day of our Kyoto tour. As I reported in the *Columbia Alumni Magazine* issue of Fall 2001 devoted to "Living Legacies," (Gildersleeve, I.I. Rabi, and Lionel Trilling):

"In touring one of the great Buddhist temples in Kyoto, the monks and military attaches from MacArthur's GHQ arranged for male members of the mission to make a rest stop in a mossy glade but neglected to find comparable facilities for the ladies. 'Young man,' Dean Gildersleeve said to me, 'you will please see to it that the ladies of this mission are tended to at once.' I did, without a salute, and reported her demand. The military hosts followed orders, and the entire caravan of, say, a dozen sedan cars was rerouted to take the entire delegation back to the hotel where the ladies were comforted."

24 A mystery writer could make use of the story of Biwa-ko as a backdrop for the mysterious shot. This huge freshwater lake is one of the planet's oldest, believed to have been created about four or five million years ago during the massive earthquake that brought us Mt. Fuji. It is named because its shape resembles the Chinese lute, the *biwa*. No Japanese Lochness Monster has yet been found among the 595 species of animals found there. An imaginative author could build suspense by speculating that the gunman was a foreign scientist tracking lake monsters in order to deflect suspicion away from the *real* culprit, identity still unknown. Without access to forensic reports of military intelligence, I regard this as a *cold case* well into the 21st century.

25 She inserted into the Charter's statement of purpose the following goals for people around the world: "higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development," and also persuaded delegates to adopt language protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion. Gildersleeve's role at Columbia is described in Robert A. McCaughey, *Stand Columbia* (New York, Columbia University Press, 2003. See also her autobiography. *Many a Good Crusade* (New York: Macmillan, 1954.

After the *male chauvinist* toilet episode, we sped off to see the famous Zen garden at Ryoan-ji Temple. The austere collection of 15 rocks, symbolically adrift in a sea of sand, has inspired millions of truth seekers and tourists since 1450. The American VIP's dutifully removed their shoes to slide over ancient wooden floors to take their seats on a viewing platform facing the *kare-sansui* (dry landscape) encased by a white earthen wall. At 22, I was proud of my limberness in squatting and rising, for my muscles were not far from martial conditioning. In contrast, some of the more venerable educators made discreet but still audible grunts and groans to break the self-imposed silence appropriate to meditation of the rocks and swirls of raked sand.

Prof. Ernest R. "Jack" Hilgard, (1904-2001) the celebrated experimental psychologist from Stanford University, sat next to me in the silent viewing of the symbolic rocks. When we talked while walking later toward the Kyoyo-chi Pond, he excitedly told me that the dry landscape was a magnificent Rorschach test.²⁶ From him, I heard, for the first time, the concept of '*selective perception*. I had the unusual privilege of sharing exposure to Japanese culture with savants who brought with them a vast architecture of learning that would later become a part of my world as an anthropologist. Years later, I would find his name in psychological literature dealing with his research on perception and learning motivation, how learning affects perception, and how memory affects cognitive processes.²⁷

Hilgard also studied hypnosis and pain. (No wonder that he was asked to serve on the education mission that would have to deal with Japanese amnesia for pain inflicted during war). When I returned to the Ryoan-ji rock garden in 2003, my first thoughts were of that long ago conversation with the professor. I still remembered his rhetorical questions: What do you see in a rock? How does your life experience influence what you see? How does one's cultural conditioning filter optical experience? Do Japanese see what Americans see? Also in 2003, I photographed a beautiful row of red fire buckets lined up like soldiers under the eaves of the temple, and immediately thought of how Andy Warhol could turn them into Marilyn Monroe-type *repetitions*; I wished that I could e-mail the picture to Hilgard.

Spontaneous Acculturation through Zen

One Hand Clapping

The Gateless Gate

Something is Nothing

Nothing is Something

I had never heard the word *Zen* in my growing up in the Baptist Bible belt. Mysticism was unknown, or secretly practiced. Kyoto was soon to compensate. Some of the American intelligentsia and I were about to be shown paths of enlightenment: finding spirit in clay.

A convergence of multiple streams of civilization streamed before my eyes on a Sunday afternoon during the encounter with Kyoto. Mission members could opt for breaking up in smaller groups to visit sites of special interest. I chose presciently to accompany four members of the mission to the studio and

26 These inkblot tests have been used since 1921 for forensic diagnoses of psychotic thinking. Subjects interpret ten standard abstract designs. Tests named for Hermann Rorschach (1884-1922) See *American Heritage Dictionary* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1982). Margaret Mead, trained first in experimental psychology, used them and other thematic apperception tests in her fieldwork in New Guinea and elsewhere to differentiate cultural differences.

27 A sampling of his book titles include: *Conditioning and Learning*, *Introduction to Psychology*, *Hypnosis in the Relief of Pain*, and *Divided Consciousness*. I used one of his texts in my later university studies and college teaching, and proudly told my students of my conversations with Hilgard in a Zen garden. Many of my colleagues benefited by fellowships at the Stanford Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences for which he was responsible in establishing.

residence of the renowned potter, Kawai Kanjiro (1890-1966). He was a key figure in the Japanese *mingei* (folk art) movement celebrating the beauty of the human touch and spirit imparted into everyday household objects. *Mingei* artists did not sign their works, though individual artists were so distinctive their pots are easily identified. They quietly revolted against the standardization of the industrial revolution.

Colorful kimono-clad young women, relatives of our host, welcomed us through the distinctive doors (*shoji* paper punctuated by vertical strips of wood) of Kawai's house near the famous Kiyomizu Temple. We walked under rustic rough-hewn timbers perhaps, taken from a peasant's house. The timbers formed a canopy over the entry. Quietly, suddenly, we were being introduced to the then 56-year-old ceramicist, calligrapher, poet, sculptor and essayist. The balding sage gave us invitations to join him in low barrel-backed wooden chairs in a circle around a sunken hearth. A cheery charcoal fire provided some warmth for the cold room as well as heating tea water in an iron kettle suspended by a sculpted hook connected to a chain rising to the ceiling.

This was not to be a traditional Japanese tea ceremony; instead a welcoming ritual to place in our hands Kawai's uniquely red copper glazed cups fired in nearby kilns from local clay. The green tea was poured by one of the women as we were being introduced to an unexpected member of the party: a marvelously animated *holy man* with eyebrows reminding me of corkscrews. He was none other than Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki (1870-1966), the author of *Zen Buddhism and its Influence on Japanese Culture*, then a professor at Otani Buddhist College in Kyoto, already world famous for his early efforts to explain Zen and Shin Buddhism to the West.²⁸

In American parlance, the pairing of Kawai and Suzuki was a *double header*. It is hard to imagine what would be an American equivalent of such a fusion of intellect and spirit. Perhaps a couple of the characters in *The Metaphysical Club*.²⁹ It is in retrospect that I realized the privilege of meeting those giants. Their lives were manifestations of philosophical thought filtered through multiple layers of Western and Eastern learning, thinking, and observation. An American medievalist, Lynn Townsend White, Jr., declared Suzuki's 1927 *Essays in Zen Buddhism* as an intellectual event as great as Moerbeke's Latin translations of Aristotle in the 13th century. Thomas Merton, the American Trappist monk, compared him with Einstein and Gandhi as contributors to the spiritual and intellectual revolution of our time.³⁰

Though less well known than Suzuki, Kawai bridged several cultures while maintaining a deep Japanese identity. He was inspired by British industrial arts, thinking of himself a scientist-engineer experimenting with glazes. His science/art brought his work to the attention of British potter Bernard Leach (1887-1979). Leach, whom I was later to meet in Radio Tokyo, was a symbol of East-West fusion. Born in Hong Kong and educated in England, he found common *clay* with Kawai through their shared

28 Descended from a Samurai tradition, Suzuki shed warfare. His Buddhist name *Daisetz* meaning *Great Simplicity* was given him by his Zen master, Shaku Soen. Though never becoming a monk, he lived a monk's life at Engaku-ji, a monastery I was to visit later near Kamakura. He describes that challenging experience in his book. *Training of the Zen Buddhist Monk* (Kyoto: Eastern Buddhist Society, 1934) and (New York: University Books, 1959). Suzuki studied Chinese, Sanskrit, Pali, and several European languages. His excellent English was due, in part, to his marriage in 1911 to Beatrice Erskine Lane, a Theosophist graduate of Radcliffe College, who co-founded with him the Eastern Buddhist Society with a focus on Mahayana Buddhism. His three series of *Essays in Zen Buddhism* influenced Alan Watts, Thomas Merton and other Western spiritual leaders.

29 See Louis Menand's celebrated portrait of the interaction of these 19th century American savants: Oliver William Holmes, Jr., Charles Sanders Pierce, William James, and John Dewey. *The Metaphysical Club: A Story of Ideas in America* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2001).

30 See "Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki," *Wikipedia Encyclopedia*, 20 July 2007. Suzuki was not easily categorized by his religious associations. John W. Dower, *op. cit.*, reports that he wrote a letter to the *Asahi Shimbun* warning readers to be wary of prominent Buddhist leaders who suddenly embraced democracy after earlier support of militarists.

interest in Sung Dynasty and Korean pots that combined "unity, spontaneity and simplicity of form."³¹ Leach and Kawai were bonded with the founder of the folk pottery *mingei* movement, Soetsu Yanagi, who traded intelligence about glazes and their underlying *spiritual meaning*. Zen was linked somehow to the aesthetics of the poet-painter, William Blake (1757-1827) whose allegorical works reminded Yanagi of *the power of Buddha-nature*.³²

The goateed, philosophical Yanagi (1889-1961) himself was a quiet presence during the afternoon, a triad in this historical circle. I learned that he had visited Korea several times to see statues of the Buddha, and to admire simple chinaware and ordinary objects by nameless craftsmen – just the opposite of individually-signed artists in the American crafts movement. In Tokyo later, I often visited Yanagi's *mingei* center and bought pots to keep company with a Kawai creation the potter gave me. It is now among my family heirlooms, sometimes on loan to museums.

(Though Zen eschews dichotomies, I cannot imagine a greater contrast than Paris or Milan *haut-couture* compared with the Asian folk pottery tradition that extends to Leach's English slipware. Ostentatious flaunting of costly high art in fashion – puffery for celebrity designers and their clients – is at an extreme other end of the spectrum. Never mind that *mingei* potters in Japan now produce collectibles at steep prices).

Kawai's prodigious outpouring of ceramics, calligraphy and sculpture was evident all around his eclectic house. His followers believe that the Buddhist term *tariki* explains a *supernatural force* that guided him. "When you become so absorbed in your work that beauty flows then your work truly becomes a work of art," he wrote in an essay that also supports his views: "*Everything that is, is not. Everything is, yet at the same time, nothing is. I myself am the emptiest of all.*"³³

Such mind-blowing statements naturally generate jokes and anecdotes about Zen practitioners. When Suzuki visited the University of California Los Angeles after the Occupation, an American member of a large excited audience, Jonathan Greenlee, remembered: "We all sat in silence. This little guy comes out to the mike. Adjusts a pair of glasses.. He reaches out and taps the mike. A hollow ping sounds through the hall. He says: 'Zen Buddhism: Very hard understand. Thank you' and walks offstage. The audience went crazy. Then from backstage professors returned with chairs, sat Suzuki down and asked him questions for an hour so everyone would be satisfied."³⁴ Kawai and Suzuki, in my memory, engaged in no direct *guru* dialogue with each other. They were convivial with each other and with us honored guests. A recently found photo shows that our party has moved from the hearth to a long low table for eight. Suzuki sits at the head of the table with two Kawai ceramic bowls on a straw mat. I appear intently listening to the Zen master, his hands folded on his knees, as he responds to a question. Kawai's kimonoed back is to the camera at the other end of the table. Two visible American guests were the distinguished Columbia University Teachers College professors, Isaac Kandel (1881-1965) and George S. Counts (1889-1974).

The Japanese asked *them* questions, for the hosts had good reason to want to detect how effective they were in impressing on the Education Mission aspects of their culture that should be respected in the new scheme of things. Counts spoke with a Kansas twang that belied his knowledge of the Western classics. He was by no means a provincial. He wrote a lot about the Soviet educational system, once chaired the American Labor Party, and later was to campaign for a seat in the U.S. Senate. His mustached

31 See Leach, *A Potter's Book*, (London: Faber and Faber Second Edition, 1945) and Emmanuel Cooper, *Bernard Leach: His Life and Work* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001) A critical analysis of the Yanagi-Leach symbiosis (the view that they annointed each other) is Edmund de Waal's article, "Bernard Leach and the Japanese Craftsman," in *Journal of Design History*: Vol. 10, No. 4, Craft, Culture and Identity (1997). He questions Leach's authority in the West as the interlocutor for the values and ideas of Oriental craftsmen.

32 See "Kawai Kanjiro's House," <http://www.e-yakimono.net/html/kawaikanjiro.htm>.

33 Ibid.

34 Click <http://www.serve.com/cmtan/buddhism/Lighter/suzuki.htm>.

Columbia colleague, Prof. Kandel, speaking with a British accent (born in Romania of British parents) was a pioneer in comparative and international education. Both were devoted to designing educational systems that would serve democracies rather than totalitarian regimes. Their histories reveal their search for a balancing of conflicts between the ideal of freedom and authority and control.³⁵ I never found out if this 1946 *hors-d'oeuvre* of Zen continued to permeate their personal lives as it did mine.

A few weeks after the Mission returned to Tokyo from the grand tour of Kyoto and Nara (where we fed elegant deer gamboling on green moss, and beheld the sacred treasures sheltered in the ancient *Shosoin*), I was again pounding out press releases on my typewriter. Suzuki, his spiral eyebrows preceding him, appeared at the door of my tiny office, unannounced. He bowed as I offered him the empty chair of my editor, and then unwrapped from his cloth carrier (*furoshiki*) a precious gift: a signed copy of his *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture*. In fountain penmanship that suggested he had used brushes for calligraphy, I read: "To Mr. Wilton Dillon with the regards of the author, Kamakura, April '46. In 1950 I would remind him of this memorable moment in Berkeley and again in New York when he and Paul Tillich, the theologian, were lecturing at Columbia. He had an astounding memory of persons and places.

I opened his book that night to a typical statement: *Zen is a difficult subject to comprehend ...since Zen claims to be above logic and verbal interpretation*. He quotes a Sung dynasty master to make the point that Zen is against teaching based on intellect, logic and verbalism: *If people ask me what Zen is like, I will say that it is like learning the art of burglary*. So much for that part of Japanese culture to challenge the American reformers of Japanese education who surely believed in logic. (As a later anthropologist and officer of the Institute for Psychiatry and Foreign Affairs, I embraced a truism that you cannot understand human behavior by standards of rationality. Even French Cartesians have to account for non-rationality in their schema).

Hindsight on the Stoddard Mission

With the benefit of hindsight of more than half a century since the U.S. educators left their 1946 blueprint for reform, I have read many analyses of the Japanese pattern of accepting change, and then reverting to earlier practices. Change, of course, is incremental. People cannot go back exactly to where they were. In 1945 the major emphasis in secondary education was to train pupils on the moral principles of empire and on military training. Stoddard's team was bound to honor the Potsdam Declaration to decouple education from warfare. So the Mission recommended abolishing special courses on morals believed to lead to ultra-nationalism. Non-aggression and peace were the key words. A social studies program was developed in 1947 to follow the U.S. recommendations, but a swing back to the traditional curricula started in the late 1950's.³⁶

Here is what I remember from some of the off-the-record internal debates within the Mission as the members were Grafting their guidelines for reform. In a low-ceilinged Frank Lloyd Wright chatroom in the Imperial Hotel, I witnessed a protective tribute to some aspects of Japanese tradition – *etiquette* – by Thomas Vernor Smith. Texas-Born, Chicago University philosopher Prof. T.V. Smith made a big impression on me by his argument, a cautionary tale to prevent "throwing out the baby with the bath." He

35 See entries of their impressive life stories in Richard J. Altenbugh, ed., *Historical Dictionary of American Education*, (Westport Ct., Greenwood Press, 1999). Counts activism is suggested by his book, *Dare the School Build a New Social Order*; and Kandel's aversion to totalitarians is found in his 1935 book, *The Making of a Nazi*. Kandel's free spirit is found also in his reported fear that the U.S. Education Mission would try to impose American-style education on the Japanese in the name of *demilitarization*.

36 See Angus M. Gunn, "American Social Studies in Japan: Some Observations on the Social Studies Reforms on the Japanese Educational System after World War Two," Education Research Information Center. ERIC #: ED 167442.

said: "Let us remember that the Japanese have spent centuries evolving rules of behavior designed to prevent daily hurt."³⁷

The red-haired professor spoke passionately on that point, and helped to provide some nuances to a report determined to modify *Bushi do*, "The Code of the Warrior," which had sources in both Shinto and Zen. I have remembered Smith's functional analysis all these decades, and found great agreement from *Miss Manners* with such advice:³⁸ caring for the feelings of others, sparing others from daily hurt, provides an essential lubricant for a whole range of interpersonal, inter-group, and international relationships.

(Still, pre-1945 Japanese etiquette courses did not restrain Japanese soldiers in the Rape of Nanking. And ceremonial politesse – salutes and regimented forms of address – are learned by our own military who also are trained to kill. Look, too, at the ineffectiveness of the Geneva Conventions and our own *Judeo-Christian* tradition in preventing our own tortuous forms of humiliation to extract intelligence from detainees in 21st century wars. Manners, the glue of society, are works in progress or revision everywhere. Communist China in 2007 is reclaiming the virtues of once-suppressed Confucius. More importantly, religions in the new century ironically are rallying points for killing *infidels*, or those who surge against *invaders* seeking uranium, oil and other energy sources).

T.V. Smith's philosophizing in the small group sessions inspired some debate, too, about the issue of allowing *Kendo*, a high fencing form of martial arts, to remain in the curriculum. So popular was the art and sport that Japanese newsmen had many questions about the possible fate of *Kendo*. I remember accompanying some members of the Mission to a Tokyo school ground to see demonstrations using wooden and bamboo swords. Looking like reincarnated samurai in padded sports garb, the players conditioned me for seeing future *Kabuki* drama. The Japanese wished to emphasize that *Kendo* is a part of physical education. They played down its historical links to samurai swordsmanship, and emphasized its importance for moral and spiritual training. The debate in the Imperial Hotel foreshadowed what I would increasingly face in my exposure to Japanese culture: the enduring symbolism of the sword.

37 See Wilton S. Dillon, "More Than Civility," in *Cosmos Journal* (Washington, D.C., 1999).

38 Judith Martin, a.k.a. *Miss Manners*, has told me on various occasions that she is an applied anthropologist in her historical views on civilized behavior. One of her many books is: *Miss Manners' Guide to Excruciatingly Correct Behavior* (New York: Atheneum, 1982). She even has some advice on dueling.