

## **The Life and Death of *Kamikaze* Soldiers: A Case Study of the Japanese Mental Structure**

### **Abstract**

During the Second World War, the Suicide Attack Soldiers (“Kamikaze soldiers”) of the Japanese military loaded their fighter aircraft with bombs and rammed into enemy ships. This paper addresses two questions. The first is what meaning the Kamikaze soldiers gave to death. That meaning of death will be analyzed and the structure of that meaning distilled. The second question is how the Kamikaze soldiers carried out the actions of their own deaths. These actions will be analyzed and the process of their deaths distilled. This paper will work to depict an overall image of the Kamikaze soldiers’ mental structure.

### **I Significance and questions**

On October 20, 1944, the following order was issued to the 1st Air Fleet of the Imperial Japanese Navy, which was stationed in the Philippines: “In view of the current progress of the war, we will form an attack unit composed of thirteen carrier-based fighter aircrafts which will hurl themselves at the enemy. This unit shall be named the “Kamikaze Special Attack Squad” [*Kamikaze tokubetsu kōgekita*] (Mainichi Shinbunsha, ed., 1979: 49). When the Commander-in-Chief Lieutenant General Onishi Takijiro farewelled the 24 Kamikaze soldiers off into the distant skies, the Kamikaze missions (*tokkō sakusen*) had begun 1). The young pilots flying off into the blue sky, sacrificing themselves in martyrdom by plunging into the enemy ships and aircraft, was an act unprecedented in war anywhere in the world. This unique standing meant that many records have been left about the Kamikaze soldiers, and much has also been written about them. Conversely, this means that it is not simple to ascertain the reality of these young men. What were the feelings of the Kamikaze soldiers as they faced their deaths? The only way to understand their true circumstances is to read their handwritten notes (including farewell notes, diaries, letters, and memos), immersing oneself in the world of the Kamikaze soldiers and exploring their world from their perspective as expressed through their words. We must then distil the structure of their

psychology (emotions, beliefs, and thoughts) and interpret the overall image of them. This paper addresses two questions. The first is what meaning the Kamikaze soldiers gave to death. That meaning of death will be analyzed, the structure of that meaning distilled, and interpretation made of it. The second question is how the Kamikaze soldiers carried out the actions of their own deaths. These actions will be analyzed, the process of their deaths distilled, and interpretation made of it. By doing so, this paper will work to depict an overall image of the Kamikaze soldiers' mental structure.

## **II Prior research and source materials**

Limitations on source materials are unavoidable when analyzing the meaning and carrying out of the deaths of the Kamikaze soldiers. This paper will make reference to the following publications, which draw on the handwritten notes of Kamikaze soldiers: Ohnuki (2003, 2006), Odagiri and Kuboki (1970), Kaigunhiko Yobigakusei Dai 14 Kikai (ed., 1995), Kitagawa (1967), Kuwahara (2006), Todai Senbotsu Gakusei Shuki Henshu linkai (ed., 1947), Japanese War Dead Student Memorial Association (1993, 1995a, 1995b, 2003), Association of Hakuo Bereaved Family (1992), Hayashi (1967), Henmi (2002), Matsugi (1994) and Morioka (1995a, 1995b). Handwritten notes by Kamikaze soldiers will also be extracted from materials containing handwritten notes created by the war dead more generally. More handwritten notes created by Kamikaze soldiers exist than for other war dead. This was because the Kamikaze soldiers "could anticipate when their last hours would come and they mainly left from bases on the homeland, so they tended to leave many handwritten notes. In addition, as the same front line saw many deaths, their handwritten notes tended to be published often (Nakamura, 2006: 302). Finally, handwritten notes also tended to be created and preserved because the Kamikaze soldiers captured the attention of the public.

Next, we must consider the limitations on handwritten notes. Firstly, collections of handwritten notes take a specified editorial stance. Because no notes can cover every possible fact, information is inevitably selected for publication. Thus, the reader must clarify the editorial stance, and keep their distance from it while reading. And even if the contents are misrepresented – including deletions and truncations of wording – there is no way for the reader to work back to the original source material. Secondly, we can only read the *published* handwritten notes. Some notes have not been published, and some Kamikaze soldiers did not write any notes. We are therefore unable to ascertain their feelings. Thirdly, there are limitations in the notes themselves. The way of

expressing emotions on paper varied depending on the timing (on enlistment, on volunteering to be a Kamikaze soldier, when given their orders to commence their mission) and the circumstances surrounding their special attack (the initial battles in the Philippines when death as a Kamikaze soldier was considered sacred, or the later battles in Okinawa when that view had faded). Handwritten notes also varied depending on who they were addressed to. Furthermore, there was the issue of censorship, which affects their credibility (Morioka, 1995a: 20-22). Kamikaze soldiers wrote conformist letters in using unremarkable expressions so that the letters would pass the censors and not worry their parents (Odagiri and Kuboki, 1970: 313). In addition, there were cases where some wrote “I was made to write the note after instructions from my senior officer that it would be displayed as a document in remembrance of the ‘honorable spirits of the war dead’” (Ohnuki, 2003: 292-293). Given these circumstances, the reader of handwritten notes must as much as possible read between the lines of documents where emotions have been misrepresented. However, there is a limit to doing so. On the other hand, there were times when Kamikaze soldiers who were officers of ranks second lieutenant and above were not subject to censorship, so in some cases there is no need to read between the lines of their letters.

The source materials drawn on by this paper have these limitations. In order to alleviate the limitations of the materials, the author must therefore read the handwritten notes carefully and deliberately, delve into the details of the accounts, analyze the wording of the documents, and (in order to contextualize the notes) refer to related materials. This paper will also apply the “overlapping method,” described by Morioka (1995a: 22) as “treating all of the source materials as one pool, and discussing them by focusing on recognized shared characteristics. This paper shall regard the entirety of handwritten notes by Kamikaze soldiers *as one item of documentary materials*, and therefore put to one side the author, timing of writing, addressee, and purpose of each note. In accordance with sociological life history method, individual documents shall –while respecting their context – be extracted, analyzed, and interpreted. The intimacy of the experiences of the Kamikaze soldiers provides equivalence in the handwritten notes and enables application of these methods. Through this process, it can be said that – within the possible range of reading and interpretation – ascertainment and interpretation of facts sufficient for the purposes of this paper are possible 2). These methods form the foundation of this paper’s approach.

### **III Overview of the Kamikaze squads**

### **Kamikaze missions**

Employed toward the end of the Asia-Pacific War, the Kamikaze missions involved military tactics of loading bombs and high explosives onto weapons (such as aircraft and high-speed boats) and ramming enemy ships and aircraft with the pilot still aboard. The possibility of the pilot returning alive was zero.

The types of Kamikaze missions included aircraft attacks, human bombs, human torpedoes, bomb boats, small submarines, maritime volunteer corps and tank corps. A wide variety of special attack weapons were devised as part of the entire military shifting to Kamikaze tactics toward the end of the war, and only some of them were actually used 3). But what were the military achievements of the Kamikaze missions? There are no definitive figures to demonstrate the achievements. That is to say, the calculations of the number of missions, the number of aircraft launched, the number of aircraft which returned, and thus results vary depending on the scope of missions included and what materials to rely on. For example, certain materials count the total number of aerial Kamikaze missions commenced as involving approximately 3,300 aircraft, the rate of hitting enemy ships as 11.6%, rushing in close range as 5.7%, 32 ships sunk, and 368 ships damaged (Hattori, 1995: 590). Many Kamikaze aircraft were shot down by anti-aircraft fire before they were able to hit an enemy ship. But while the rate of hitting enemy ships was low, the Kamikaze missions were a large shock to the U.S. sailors. As a form of suicide attack, the Kamikaze missions shook the foundations of the U.S. approach to battle, which was predicated on always returning home. According to one U.S. author, the special attack tactics were “a horrifying and gruesome thing which made your hair stand on end” (Ikuta, 1977: 80).

### **Kamikaze soldiers**

The number of deaths due to Kamikaze missions differ across documents, varying depending on the scope of missions included and what materials to rely on. For example, published figures include 4,379 by Kitagawa (1967: 12), 3,915 by the Japanese War Dead Student Memorial Association [hereafter “JWDSMA”] (1995: 4), and 3,848 by Hosaka (2005: 151). Most Kamikaze soldiers were navy flight reserve officers and army special apprentice officers (graduates of universities and technical colleges), and 70% of them were students drafted into the military (Hosaka, 2005: 151). Among the 769 members of the Kamikaze special attack squad, 85% were student draftees (Fukuma, 2007: 21).

Objections were raised within the Japanese military against the inhumanity of

Kamikaze tactics, in which the possibility of returning alive was extinguished even before the mission commenced. Running contrary to the name “Imperial Army,” within the military, the special attack squads were treated as “groups of fellow martyrs” (Ikuta, 1977: 45). Prime Minister Kantarō Suzuki stated that “in the strict sense of the word, it is difficult to call the deployment of troops in which there is no outlook at all of returning alive an actual strategy [*sakusen*]. The Japanese Navy’s unwritten rules of troop deployment went no further than situations of a narrow escape from the jaws of death” (Morimoto, 2005: 196). The above-mentioned Lieutenant General Onishi was also critical, saying that “Kamikaze tactics represent misconduct on the part of the military command” (Kusayagi, 1972: 77-78). Stressing the effectiveness of conventional attacks, some commanding officers rejected the formation of the special attack squads 4). However, in the face of the overwhelming military superiority of the U.S. forces, the military headquarters considered that the Kamikaze missions were a “magic bullet” to turn the tide of the war. They believed that the special attack tactics were the only way to thwart the U.S. military invading the Greater East Asia (south-east Asia) “lifeline” from the Philippines to Taiwan, and further to prevent the U.S. military from landing on Okinawa, the front line of defense of the Japanese home islands. On the other hand, in a war situation in which defeat seemed certain, the Kamikaze missions were used to raise morale among a people preparing for the decisive battle for the Japanese mainland. The Kamikaze soldiers were the vanguard of the “100 million huge crush” and the paragon for it 5). Given these circumstances, the Kamikaze soldiers were granted special treatment 6). Firstly, soldiers who died in Kamikaze missions were specially promoted two ranks. This was not only an honor, but the increased pension it entailed provided life security for their bereaved family. Those who returned alive were given priority in orders to commence another Kamikaze mission, and “regard for application for special promotion by two ranks” (Fukuma, 2007: 24) was (one) of the reasons for this. Secondly, the war dead were honored in an all-military proclamation of the “spirits of the war dead.” This was not only an honor, but also aimed to raise morale throughout the military. In addition, deaths in Kamikaze missions also brought glory to the villages who produced Kamikaze soldiers. Their family home was honored by being called a house of the God of Death 7). Deaths in Kamikaze missions were considered to achieve the convergence of loyalty and filial piety. “As the first special attack squad member from my hometown, I will hurl myself at the enemy. Please send others to follow in my footsteps. Please pass on my regards to His Worship the Mayor, and also to the chairman and members of the neighborhood association” (Matsugi, 1994: 47). Thirdly, Kamikaze soldiers were chosen

based on the principle of volunteering (enthusiastic/requesting/not requesting. However, service academy graduates were nominated) 8).

However, there were two problems here.

Firstly, it was almost impossible to make soldiers choose inevitable death. While many soldiers were burning with loyalty and chose Kamikaze missions “from the bottom of their heart,” some soldiers did not. For example, a survey by the Army Aviation Headquarters in May 1945 included statements such as the following. “When some soldiers were made to choose becoming Kamikaze soldiers, they could not make up their minds to becoming Kamikaze soldiers, let the decision wait until the end and became very sensitive about the atmosphere immediately beforehand. And so their emotions swung this way and that, and so conversely it came to require an ever-greater amount of effort to hold to their decision. I believe by observation that this basically holds true for *approximately one-third* of the current Kamikaze soldiers.” (emphasis added) (Ikuta, 1977: 210) 9). This was the result of an official survey. It can be believed that many more Kamikaze soldiers were not resolved to their deaths. Secondly, it was problematic to refuse to volunteer, and some soldiers were compelled to join a Kamikaze unit even after initially refusing. Some were not even asked if they wanted to volunteer. While “eldest sons, only sons, and married men were excluded” (Watanabe, 2007: 125) from selection as Kamikaze soldiers, this rule was also easily broken. On the other hand, “it was believed that young men who did not volunteer were regarded as ‘undesirable,’ and that they would be sent to the southern front, where the likelihood of death was regarded as similar to the Kamikaze missions” (Ohnuki, 2006: 12). In addition, there were not just a few Kamikaze soldiers who commenced their mission, but who returned to due to aircraft malfunction, inclement weather, or inability to find the enemy etc. 10). However, returning alive was considered a disgrace. “April 12, 1945 – the bitterness of returning alone, of not being able to say anything, it was just so shameful. Everyone I met calling out to me was a harrowing experience, so much more so because I was in the first plane to depart” (Kaigunhiko, 1995: 141).

### **A unique death**

Kamikaze missions involved the pilot “abandoning any notion of returning alive before the mission commenced, which therefore enabled focusing all of their willpower, fighting skill, and their aircraft into one thing only – hitting and sinking the enemy ship” (Ikuta, 1977: 28). This is exactly why they were able to evade pursuing enemy aircraft and anti-aircraft fire from the enemy ships and plunge into the enemy ships. Whether or not this

is achieved “in fact hinges on the willpower to extinguish yourself” (Ikuta, 1977: 34). This was the (military’s) intention behind the Kamikaze missions, and it brought a uniqueness to deaths of Kamikaze soldiers. Firstly, soldiers who died in Kamikaze missions had “promised to die.” Kamikaze soldiers were able to (must) be resolved to inevitable death before commencing their mission. Secondly, soldiers who died in Kamikaze missions had a “constructed death.” Dying in a Kamikaze attack was a “selfless death,” and Kamikaze soldiers were Gods of Death for the salvation of the country. This is how the symbolism of the special attack squads were perceived by the people. “The Kamikaze soldiers have a collective symbolism in the sense of a religious ritual (note added: human sacrifice to protect the Japanese Empire)” (Nakamura, 2006: 310), and although some felt uncomfortable about this, many Kamikaze soldiers also perceived themselves in this way 11). In this way, their deaths became a binding commitment. Furthermore, soldiers who died in Kamikaze missions had a “calculated death;” doing so brought glory to their families, and the pension their families received was an expression of filial piety (Ohnuki, 2003: 266) 12). Each of these are characteristics of all war deaths, but the Kamikaze soldiers were deified because dying in a Kamikaze attack was such an extreme case. When young men volunteered for (or were compelled to join) a special attack squad, as well as feeling the fear of death, they were aware of the significance of dying in a Kamikaze mission. During the Second World War in Japan, no young men were exempt from conscription, from combat, or (likely) from death. An attitude of “well, if I’m going to die anyway...” developed. Some young men wished to die quickly and painlessly, and saw dying in a Kamikaze attack as a tool to achieve this. Some wished to die as heroes, and saw dying in a Kamikaze attack as *sange* (a euphemism beautifying death in war). Some wish to express filial piety, and saw dying in a Kamikaze attack as the convergence of loyalty and filial piety.

The binary opposite perspective regarding discussing dying in a Kamikaze attack – one which is critical of the Kamikaze tactics – is to treat it as “dying in vain.” This is however a multi-faceted expression. One aspect of it is that because Kamikaze tactics did not reverse the course of the war and deliver victory for Japan, dying in a Kamikaze attack was pointless 13). This approach criticizes the recklessness of Kamikaze tactics. A second aspect sees Kamikaze soldiers as turned into weapons. This approach emphasizes the self-estrangement of Kamikaze soldiers in which even the fear of death is suppressed. A third aspect is that the deaths of Kamikaze soldiers were historically wasteful. This approach is critical of the “foundation theory” (that the Kamikaze soldiers were the foundation of post-war peace). One counter-argument to the “dying in vain” perspective

is that it “does not understand the distress and torment within the Kamikaze war dead students. This is an impersonal assessment which efficiently ignores the suffering and distress of Kamikaze soldiers (Hosaka, 2005: 22). This is a criticism of the second aspect. The Kamikaze soldiers were anguished about their deaths to the very last, making this a valid criticism. However, it does not constitute criticism of the first and third aspects. What, then, of the first aspect? Kamikaze tactics did not reverse the course of the war. However, they delayed the advance of enemy ships and the landing of enemy troops on Okinawa, and so did at least show some (if limited) results. Thus, Kamikaze tactics were not pointless. Seen from the broad perspective of reversing the course of the war, any tactics which did not achieve this aim would logically be “dying in vain” 14). What, then, of the third aspect? As members of later generations, what we read into the deaths of Kamikaze soldiers depends on our historical perspective. Whether or not there was meaning in their deaths and how to understand the “foundation of peace” is a question of values.

#### **IV The meaning of death**

##### **Framework structure**

How did the Kamikaze soldiers accept death? This is the largest point of issue regarding discussions of Kamikaze squads. A diverse range of discourse has appeared, but much of it is merely expressions of the author’s sentiments. How should we analyze the meaning of the Kamikaze soldiers’ deaths from their own perspective, *including facts inconvenient to the analyst?* The analyst must first put their emotions to one side and immerse oneself in the world of the Kamikaze soldiers. Next, how should the various facts which come to the surface be interpreted? This is where the analyst’s point of view manifests itself, and it is also where a framework for interpretation becomes necessary. If the raw handwritten notes cannot be made to convey meaning, then the question arises of what – in alignment with the method of analyzing the handwritten notes – the author’s own point of view and framework are. This is the next issue.

Morioka (1995a: 205) typifies students drafted into the military as “customary role humans who ascertain their roles in accordance with current customary social norms and find ethical satisfaction in performing them” and “subjective role humans who obtain their roles via the requirements of the situation they are in and find ethical satisfaction in performing them.” Hosaka (2005: 95-96) typifies Kamikaze soldiers as men “who thought that they were entering the framework created by the times (note added: dying



for the State) which would leave a mark on history,” that is to say, men who would rise above the era into history, and “men who were trying to place themselves in the flow of history, and leave a lasting impression on the era,” that is to say, men who would descend from history into the era. Fukuma (2007: 13) describes Kamikaze soldiers in terms of the binary opposite perspectives of “martyrdom” and “dying in vain.” The latter takes the stance of “stripping away all gloss from the experience of war and squarely confronts the experience itself, and then attempting to reconceptualize the violence of war.” (ibid.) This paper draws on the Kamikaze soldiers’ handwritten notes, refers to the above typologies, and updates the frameworks in the author’s previous works (Aoki, 2008: 83) to create a four-pattern typology of the meaning of the Kamikaze soldiers’ deaths 15). The paper proposes an oppositional typology based on “martyrdom” and “projection,” which is presented in Figure 1.

### **Meaning of death**

The Kamikaze soldiers firstly sought meaning of death in their “Community of Loyalty.” The Community of Loyalty was comprised of the Emperor, the State, and the motherland. The Emperor was the guardian (parent) of the State, and the soldiers as his subjects (children). The State was the body which protected the motherland, and the motherland was the emotional representation of the State. Losing the war would enable invasion by the enemy. In this case, the motherland – where their beloved relatives live – would be lost, and their beautiful and elegant homeland would be overrun. Thus, the Kamikaze soldiers had to protect the motherland. To that end, they had to protect the State by giving their lives for the guardian of the State – the Emperor. This is why the Kamikaze soldiers shouted “Hurray for His Majesty the Emperor!” (*Tennōheika Banzai!*) as they plunged into the enemy ships. Here, “Hurray for His Majesty the Emperor!” meant “Hurray for the Motherland!” (*Sokoku Banzai!*) “They imbued the words ‘the Emperor’ with the meaning ‘all Japanese,’ and the words ‘God’s country’ symbolized ‘the hometown” (Kitagawa, 1967: 3) 16).

The motherland was embodied in two directions. The first is the “Community of Affection.” Its focal point was family and sweethearts who were like part of the family. The family includes one’s most beloved people, is where one feels nurtured, and is the place that one’s spirit returns to. Losing the war would bring shame on the family, which is why one has to protect the family. Becoming a deserter from the military would bring shame on the family (the family would be effectively held hostage by the State) 17). Therefore, running away is not an option. This is the rationale of the Kamikaze soldiers.

Some believed that by fighting for the motherland and family they were necessarily fighting for the Emperor and the State. These Kamikaze soldiers shouted “Hurray for His Majesty the Emperor!” as they plunged into the enemy ships. Some believed that they were fighting not for the Emperor and the State, but only for their families. These Kamikaze soldiers shouted “Mother!” as they plunged into the enemy ships. 18).

The motherland was next embodied by the “Community of Fraternity,” which included brothers in arms. For the Kamikaze soldiers, their brothers in arms were their “convoy” (fellow travelers on the path to death) who witnessed their anguish about death and carried out the actions of their own deaths together (Morioka, 1995a: 28). “I would rather die together than die alone. The fear of death diminishes by half when a lonely death is shared” (Morimoto, 2005: 332). The military was “a household of servicemen who share life and death” (Article 3, military internal orders) (Morioka, 1995a: 28). In addition, the military was also a place of solitude, isolated from the “Community of Affection.” All of this served to strengthen the sense of destiny together with one’s brothers in arms. On the other hand, the military also had a rigid class system. The Kamikaze soldiers had the military spirit (violently) instilled into them by their senior officers (the air corps command or service academy graduates). This violence generated antipathy toward the senior officers, and some Kamikaze soldiers showed contempt for their officers. “The big shots have no idea what it’s like being a Kamikaze soldier. It’s absurd they have no idea about the special attacks they’re ordering us to carry out!” (Kuwahara, 2006: 101). Furthermore, upon commencing their mission, “there were Kamikaze pilots who deliberately flew low, almost hitting the base headquarters building, and then flew off into the yonder” (Ohnuki, 2006: 16). Such antipathy toward senior officers strengthened the bonds between brothers in arms. “I am living and will die for the motherland, my fellow 13<sup>th</sup> intake soldiers, for the students-turned-warriors who have come before me, and finally for my pride. I say this while cursing the Imperial Navy, and by that I mean a certain part represented by an officer from Etajima” (JWDSMA, 1995: 392).

In addition, some Kamikaze soldiers questioned the meaning of death within themselves, seeking a “modern death.” “Genuinely stare at death. Look for something deeper with eyes staring at death. The principle of living only for the moment overcomes a certain barrier by staring at death. However, the shallowest thing of all is in the eyes staring at death” (JWDSMA, 2003: 334). They believed that death was the explanation for life. Thus, they questioned the meaning of death (“why die?”) by working back to the meaning of life (“how did I live?”) Next, death was an extension of life. They desired a “Utopia of Freedom” in the next world, seeing themselves liberated there. They stood in the Utopia

of Freedom and rejected the Community of Loyalty. Neither the Community of Affection nor the Community of Fraternity became ultimate solutions to the meaning of death. For them, the Community of Affection and the Community of Fraternity lay on the path to the Utopia of Freedom. They sought comfort in the bonds with their family and brothers in arms, and at that time, their freedom was temporarily “assigned” to them.

Figure 1 above presents merely one conceptual diagram of principles interpreting the meaning of death of the Kamikaze soldiers. All Kamikaze soldiers carried – to a greater or lesser extent – *both* of these principles, and went *back and forth* between them. It was precisely the process of moving backward and forward which formed their process of searching for meaning in death. No Kamikaze soldier held purely to one of the two principles from the beginning. Furthermore, no Kamikaze soldier believed in the Community of Loyalty from the beginning. They were also people who *became* imperialists. Many Kamikaze soldiers began from the Community of Affection, and moved up to the Community of Loyalty. Next, some of them became disillusioned with the Community of Loyalty, or as a substitute moved down to the Community of Fraternity. On the other hand, other Kamikaze soldiers sought the Utopia of Freedom. The State vs. freedom: the Utopia of Freedom formed the binary opposite to the Community of Loyalty. However, there were variances in the hunger of the Utopia of Freedom – it was a harmonized form of liberalism. On the other hand, the Community of Loyalty “permeated” the Utopia of Freedom 19). “The mission of Japan, the only great power in the East, is to liberate Asia from the colonial rule of the West” (Ohnuki, 2004: 338). Conversely, this was assigned to the Community of Affection and the Community of Fraternity. Even Kamikaze soldiers who sought the Utopia of Freedom also ultimately sought a haven to ease the loneliness of death. At that time, family and brothers in arms were valuable resources. In this way, messages sent from Kamikaze aircraft by wireless immediately before plunging into the enemy ships included “I believe that the motherland will always exist,” “I am plunging into the enemy ship,” *and* “Goodbye, mother,” “idiots of the Japanese Navy” (Kusayagi, 1972: 41-42).

### **Martyrdom**

The family is the foundation of the motherland, and the military is the foundation of the State. The Community of Affection and the Community of Fraternity were eventually subsumed into the Community of Loyalty. They form part of the same logic, and the Utopia of Freedom is also not completely unrelated to the three communities (assignment and permeation). However, when discussing the meaning of death, logic of

forced convergence to the will of the Emperor and logic derived from the individual are fundamentally incompatible. In this way, the four meanings of death are eventually aggregated to the Community of Loyalty and the Utopia of Freedom. Here, death seeking the Community of Loyalty is called “martyrdom,” and death seeking the Utopia of Freedom is called “projection.” Kamikaze soldiers were walking completely opposite paths to death from each other.

Wishing to protect the Japanese Empire, Kamikaze soldiers died shouting “Hurray for His Majesty the Emperor!”, and did so without hesitation. Why were they able to die in such a way? Some Kamikaze soldiers thought that they were protecting the State, motherland, hometown, and family from the “ugly enemy.” Some thought that they were liberating Asia from colonialism. Some thought that they were following in the footsteps of their brothers in arms who had gone before. Some wanted to bring honor to their families. Some wanted to achieve what a man desires most by devoting themselves to the role demanded by the era. In this way, they “positively and actively” accepted death. Kamikaze soldiers believed that they would die as heroes and become Gods of Death. They also embraced the symbolism of the special attack squads at that time. That is to say, they had pride as Kamikaze soldiers. “It is us who will save the country.” “They believed that they were dying for the motherland, their country, the homeland, the Emperor’s country, God’s country, and so on, which reinforced their determination, and which became their inner foundation to enable clear and powerful solutions to their various confusion and distress” (Odagiri and Kuboki, 1970: 314). It was “one manifestation of a social conscience” (Odagiri and Kuboki, *ibid.*) Many handwritten notes by Kamikaze soldiers included passages expressing the beauty of martyrdom. If these were their “true feelings” (*honne*), then they carried out the actions of martyrdom. If their true feelings (the attachment to life and the fear of death) were suppressed at all, then – to the extent of that suppression – they became distant from martyrdom. However, the boundary between their “true feelings” and their actual true feelings is indistinct. Some Kamikaze soldiers refrained from expressing their true feelings on paper, writing conformist passages in order to prevent their families from worrying. Some soldiers felt that they had no option but to write in that way before their inevitable deaths. Some felt that articulating their true feelings would be a hindrance to an honorable death. However, (even if) they refrained from expressing their true feelings, all of them wrote passages about loyalty. Over and above modifying their writings to pass censorship, this was an issue of the strength (or weakness) of their true feelings. They unavoidably did not have “a self-awareness of the urgency of their inner needs to the extent that it had

to be written and conveyed” (Odagiri and Kuboki, 1970: 313). To that extent, conversely, their deaths became closer to martyrdom.

### **Projection**

Projection means a “project into the future as a project of a self” (Sartre, 1946=1948: 20). That is to say, people define their consciousness (true existence) by accepting the present circumstances (pledge themselves), wagering themselves to the uncertain future circumstances (project themselves), and by doing so pre-emptively claim their freedom. There were liberalists (and Marxists) among the Kamikaze soldiers. “They had only one ideal – freedom” (Association of Hakuo Bereaved Families, 1992: 84). “To state it clearly, I yearn for liberalism, because I believe it is necessary for Japan to truly endure forever. This might sound ridiculous, because Japan is currently enveloped in an atmosphere of totalitarianism. However, if we take a truly broad view and think of the real essence of the human character, I believe that liberalism is the true logical doctrine” (JWDSMA, 1995: 375-376). They had become disillusioned with the era. “How much more enraged will I become before I die?” (JWDSMA, 1995: 282). They criticized the government, the military, and the war. “This war is no longer a question of righteousness and so on, but only an explosion of hatred between races” (JWDSMA, 1995: 283). Men who had searched for meaning in death on the individual level collided with an era in which death was forced upon them. “The night before commencing my mission, I could not say that I had reached a resolution about the contradictions within myself between the individual and the whole. It is certainly an embarrassment to the most important place in Yasukuni Shrine” (JWDSMA, 2003: 339). They thought that they would be sacrificial lambs to break out of this era and create a new, free Japan. “I’m neither here nor there about living in unending weariness. I love Japan to the utmost. I’m fighting for the motherland, for independence, and for freedom... death is just part of the path to that” (JWDSMA, 1995: 374). Totalitarianism cannot beat liberalism. “I believe that the doctrine a country follows will make clear in advance whether it will win a war or not. I think that the victory in war of a country following a natural doctrine suited to the real essence of the human character is clearer than the flame on a candle.” (JWDSMA, 1995: 376). Therefore, the individual dies while playing their part in that doctrine. In this context, choosing such a death is called projection. Liberalists were able to die by projecting their self into the future. This is also precisely how they were able to resolve (sublate) the contradictions between their own ways of thinking and illogical death 20). “Japan is

agonizing about bringing a great ideal to reality. A bright future cannot be obtained without struggle” (JWDSMA, 1995: 354). It is precisely in a free Japan that the “individual” and the “motherland” would become one. With pride in having been chosen to be in the vanguard of this work, Kamikaze soldiers accepted death.

### **Martyrdom and projection**

Some Kamikaze soldiers believed in *sange* (a euphemism beautifying death in war) to protect the Japanese Empire, and some engaged in projection, believing in the advent of a free Japan. Their ways of thinking did not intersect, and therefore, the differing meanings in death did not overlap. However, at the same time, this was not necessarily the case in practice. “Martyrdom’ and ‘responsibility for the war’ were not polar opposites, but were both positioned on a continuum” (Fukuma, 2007: 205). Here, “responsibility for the war” refers (or is presumed to refer) to liberalists’ criticism of the war. Notably, there was overlap between the ways of thinking of imperialists and liberalists. Firstly, both were anxious about the fate of the State. Even liberalists wrote passages such as “the current situation has made me think deeply about the ‘lifespan’ of this nation. The strength of the passion for our State – although I have only just realized at this late stage – is so strong it fills me with horror” (JWDSMA, 2003: 345). However, the meaning of “the State” varied between the two. Imperialists sacrificed their lives to protecting the nation, whereas liberalists gambled their lives on recreating the nation. Secondly, both imperialists and liberalists loved the motherland and family. Both believed that they were fighting for the happiness of motherland and family. Even liberalists wrote passages such as “our struggles and deaths are for the well-being of our mothers and fathers, our younger brothers and sisters, and all the other people we love. We hope to have helped them even a little” (JWDSMA, 1995: 283). However, the conceptualization of the State which would realize happiness for motherland and family differed between the two. In addition, their deaths were tragic and heart-rending. Kamikaze soldiers “were not honorable war dead, nor did they die in vain. There were perspectives of resentment and suffering regarding the way they died” (Hosaka, 2005: 57). Immediately after their brave words, Kamikaze soldiers expressed these sentiments. “The other day, I asked one of my brothers in arms to send this small amount of money and wristwatch. Please accept them. No private matters, no matters of love, no debts.” (Kitagawa, 1967: 110). The Kamikaze soldiers were anxious about their family’s health, gave consideration to their younger brothers and sisters’ education, and were careful to avoid disputes after they died, going as far as to write about debts, relationships with women, and the family

line (Matsugi, 1994: 236). “Even if I leave a little money, please make my funeral as simple as possible (we are still in the midst of the Greater East Asian War). Please use the money for public services, principally elementary schooling (Henmi, 2002: 172). Finally, imperialism permeated the liberalists’ ways of thinking. The liberalists criticized militarism (the requirements of modernization), but they also criticized Western capitalism (overcoming the modern). They believed in protecting Japan from the poison of capitalism, and that Japan should grow into a community of universal brotherhood. Their criticism of Western capitalism was a continuation of their criticism of colonialism; they believed that Japan’s mission was to liberate the colonies of Asia, and approved of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere concept. In summary, the “liberation of Asia’ became their springboard to accepting the war. In this way, (some) liberalists joined together with imperialists in plunging into the enemy ships.

## **V Carrying out deaths**

### **Courage and anguish**

The Kamikaze soldiers had courage and pride as warriors for the salvation of the country. “Even though Japan is a big country, and we have many men of fighting age, our only weapons to break out of the current progress of the war are the three special attack forces – Navy-Army Air Force, Kamikaze, and Jincho” (JWDSMA, 2003: 375). Such statements also demonstrated an attitude of internalizing the public view which revered them as Gods of Death. “In the end, they were pressed forward by the social coercion that there was no other option but to obediently accept death and the beautification of that coercion, and so they advanced toward death” (Odagiri and Kuboki, 1970: 314). At the same time, the Kamikaze soldiers – before their inevitable death – were in anguish about the fear of death. A life of regret, separation, solitude, grief, anxiety, and fear. They were disillusioned and disheartened. “Separate training was held for the Kamikaze soldiers and the *seikūtai* [pilots making Kamikaze attacks against American bomber aircraft] at the airfield, but you could tell at a glance which was which. The *seikūtai* were vigorous and highly energetic, but the Kamikaze soldiers were sluggish and low in morale. Before being nominated as Kamikaze soldiers, even those who were ill-disciplined regimental soldiers were transformed into saints. They were no longer able to fire up their subordinates who would be plunging [into the enemy ships] together with them” (JWDSMA, 1993: 125-126) 21). Notably, the Kamikaze soldiers felt that delays in units of one day to commencing their mission were hell. “Being on standby to commence my

mission for two long weeks might have reached the limits of human willpower. Will I die today? Will I have a tomorrow? Every day was a showdown with death. To be honest, I was about to crack. By the end, just living was grueling, and I didn't care any more. I got to the point of just wanting to get on with ramming their ships and dying in an instant" (Mainichi Shinbunsha ed., 1979: 255).

### **Image of Kamikaze soldiers' deaths**

Contrasting strains of discourse have been expressed regarding Kamikaze soldiers directly before commencing their missions. The first strain depicts them as gallantly setting forth to the places of their deaths. "They were admirable men. A cheerfulness that would never give you any idea that 'they were certain to die in two or three hours,' and their calmness, you just had to tip your hat in respect. When it was at last time for them to board their aircraft, they smiled and said 'thank you for everything you've done for me. We're going ahead first. Please do your best for Japan in the future' before taking off. Everyone seeing them off was so moved they could not hold back tears" (Ikuta, 1977: 245). The second strain depicts Kamikaze soldiers as trembling with fear of death to the very end. "Even now, I can remember every detail of each and every deathly-pale face wrought with emotion of the other pilots in my intake waiting in the temporary barracks (at Kanoya Special Base) their turn to commence their missions. Refusing to depart would not be permitted, nor could they escape. To describe the Kamikaze soldier barracks concisely, it was like a herd of cattle waiting to be slaughtered, and it would be no overstatement to call it hell on earth" (Wartime reporter) (Mainichi Shinbunsha ed., 1979: 190). Both of these were testimonies from people who had been close by Kamikaze soldiers, and as would be expected, they are both powerful statements. Kamikaze soldiers who were trembling with the fear of death the night before commencing their missions, but cutting gallant figures the day they set forth, were, in fact, the same Kamikaze soldiers. All Kamikaze soldiers intensely felt both courage and anguish when facing death. Morimoto depicts their contrasting emotions during the daytime and at night (Morimoto, 2005: 199-203). "What Kakuta saw there were pilots who were terribly difficult to describe. Perhaps he saw the Kamikaze soldiers that day as fellow human beings. A scene which is spine-chilling in its pressure. The pilots who had commenced their missions that morning together with Kakuta and not returned 'had all seemed cheerful, happy, and in high spirits'..." (Morimoto, 2005: 202). The soldiers became afraid at night, but they were able to face death calmly because they had overcome their anguish about death. Analysis of the process of transitioning from anguish to calm is the



next task of this paper. How the Kamikaze soldiers carried out their deaths is directly connected to the meaning of their deaths, and so analysis of the former is based on the latter. This paper's framework of analysis is presented in Figure 2.

### **The process of martyrdom**

The Kamikaze soldiers who believed that they were becoming martyrs were also in anguish about death. Some faced death with a single-minded belief in loyalty. "The ugly enemy is advancing on Okinawa. They are coming to completely annihilate us. Through our deaths, we will become demon spirits and eliminate the ugly enemy. I hope and pray that everyone I love can live out their natural life, and I wish the Emperor a glorious reign. I believe that Japan has an ever-greater future ahead. The current hardships are merely a test, and before long Japan will blossom together with the cherry flowers on the sacred Mt. Fuji" (Odagiri, 1970: 50-51). They found beauty in a death driven by pure loyalty. "I am commencing my mission now. I have no thoughts left to express. It is no longer a question of whether I live or die. I will achieve my long-cherished desire simply by fulfilling my mission. Japan, the land of the Gods, will exist forever" (Kitagawa, 1967: 94). Some entrusted themselves to destiny. "People do not know their destiny, and human life is like the morning dew. Some people just leave one night and never come back. By comparison, I have chosen my place of death with intent, and am happy to have an opportune place to die" (Matsugi, 1994: 154). Some entrusted their destiny to the Buddha. "Every day is a gift, and the only thing that matters are the words of the Namu Amida Buddha... it is this Buddha which absorbs all, bestows all, and is great and merciful. Namu Amida Buddha" (Odagiri, 1970: 35). Some isolated the attachment to life and fear of death into one corner of their psyche, and disconnected themselves from their own thoughts through complete abandonment (throwing off all attachment). They believed that "waging war as we are told to by the imperial rescript of the Sovereign is only possible through 'complete abandonment'" (Hoshino, 1966: 43). "In my heart there is neither life nor death. There is only space. My view of life and death is that things happen through adherence to life or death" (Matsugi, 1994: 64). They also sought the aesthetics of death in Bushidō (the samurai spirit), as written in *Hagakure*, a 1716 treatise on Bushidō – "the essence of Bushidō is in discovering what death is." But this was not a simple matter. "Trying to completely attain a mental state where 'life and death are the two faces of the same coin (a psychological state where life and death are integrated, as in, because we live, there is death, and because we die, there is life – note added), they studied and made efforts in everyday life, but it was impossible for these young men to

aspire for such things. Some of them avidly read the *Hagakure Rongo* (analects) and talked about the doctrines of Bushidō, trying to reach a mental state where they were unafraid of death, but were agonized in doing so” (Mainichi Shinbunsha, ed., 1979: 157). At this moment, the meaning of death had left their minds. “Tragedy was not only in people crying out that something is distressing, but was precisely in people disconnecting themselves from their own thoughts and no longer feeling any distress” (Hoshino, 1966: 44).

These Kamikaze soldiers began from the fear of death, and before dying moved back and forth between fear and loyalty, destiny, and complete abandonment (refer to the arrows in Figure 2). Some Kamikaze soldiers may have moved back and forth between all of these aspects. It was precisely through each and every one of the stages of this process that they felt the trembling anguish between (attachment to) life and (fear of) death. The length of the process varied depending on the individual. However, these Kamikaze soldiers believed in loyalty, entrusted themselves to destiny, disconnected themselves from their own thoughts, or, in a form unlike all of the above (running out of time to resolve themselves to death), completed the carrying out of their deaths. “Whatever flickering of conscience I have had until now is no longer a problem, and I have been dispassionately walking the true human path with wonderful emotional clarity. Death for me genuinely now holds no fear or problems at all, and I just feel overflowing with the exhilaration of life” (Odagiri, 1970: 35).

### **The process of projection**

The Kamikaze soldiers who projected themselves into Japan’s future were also in anguish about death. “I have been very much unable to express on paper etc. the truth about my emotions since I was nominated to be a Kamikaze soldier until I hurl myself at the enemy. This mental state should be kept by those who have had the relevant experiences, but should not be written down” (Todai Senbotsu Gakusei Shuki Henshu Iinkai ed., 1947: 175). Some Kamikaze soldiers considered that they were dying for the advent of a free Japan. “From here, I am happy to sacrifice my life simply for a free and independent Japan” (JWDSMA, 1995: 376). Others felt themselves fortunate to be present at the dawn of a new era. “I actually feel that I’m lucky now – I’m in a good era by chance. I strongly feel that I’m at the leading edge of a great history, and I believe it really is a tremendous honor” (JWDSMA, 1995: 356). They thought that they would be sacrificial lambs of the era. “We are merely expendable. We are just pieces of stone in a seawall, facing the force of an enemy surging forward as surely as the ocean waves.

However, these also form important cornerstones in building part of this great world. We are happy to die.” (Association of Hakuo Bereaved Family, 1992: 169). Some soldiers “shelved” everything and “confronted death.” “When I board the *Kaiten* [human torpedo] and leave the mother ship, right there is a world of one person only amidst the vast ocean. When I grip the automatic detonator, whether I operate it or not is a decision based only on the familiarity of one. When you think about it, it is a world without any impediment” (JWDSMA, 2003: 374). At this moment, the war had left their minds.

These Kamikaze soldiers began from the fear of death, and before dying moved back and forth between fear and freedom, the era, and confronting death (refer to the arrows in Figure 2). Some Kamikaze soldiers may have moved back and forth to all of these three positions. It was precisely through each and every one of the stages of this process that they felt the trembling anguish between (attachment to) life and (fear of) death. The length of the process varied depending on the individual (overall, the process of projection may have been longer than the process of martyrdom, which was based on the dominant norms of the era.) However, these Kamikaze soldiers believed in freedom, accepted history, confronted death, or, in a form unlike all of the above (running out of time to resolve themselves to death), completed the carrying out of their deaths.

### **The same types of deaths**

Thus, the Kamikaze soldiers passed away in deaths of martyrdom or projection. They varied in the meaning of their deaths, what they entrusted themselves to, and how they “eliminated” the fear of death. But on the other hand, their deaths were similar. Firstly, they experienced the same anguish of death. This anguish had three causes; firstly, it was not easy to break away from the attachment to life; secondly, it was not easy to sweep away the fear of death; and thirdly, it was not easy to determine the meaning and direction of death. Next, soldiers who employed both martyrdom and projection experienced the same types of processes regarding death. All of the Kamikaze soldiers began from the fear of death, and moved back and forth between one or multiple processes, being a *belief* (loyalty or freedom), a *transcendent force* (destiny or the era), and *disconnection from their own thoughts* (complete abandonment or confronting death). Kamikaze soldiers who had successfully put themselves through one process or the other smiled as they boarded their aircraft, gallantly waving to the people there. (To the order to commence attack) “There it is! While we were waiting, without realizing it we had been jauntily singing and joking around, completing our preparations quickly” (Odagiri, 1970: 27). Kamikaze soldiers who had been unable to successfully put

themselves through one process or the other continued to harbor the fear of death, showing distressed expressions as they boarded their aircraft. “As they boarded their aircraft, the Kamikaze soldiers became incontinent, went weak at the knees and could no longer stand, and fainted. The engineers lifted them up, pushed them into the cockpit, and made them take off” (Hosaka, 2005: 228). After commencing their missions, some even “despite finding the enemy ships did not plunge into them, trying to land on the surface of the sea nearby” (Ohnuki, 2006: 16). Overcome by anguish, “some young soldiers could not cope with the fear of their impending death, and even prayed for the final moment to come soon because they wanted to be liberated from that distress as quickly as possible” (Ohnuki, 2006: 13). Strong willpower was required to overcome death, and the barriers to serenity were high. “Death is not at all difficult. But how to spend the stage before death is difficult. The strength or weakness of your willpower can either stay clean or be sullied. I want mine to stay clean until I die” (Kitagawa, 1967: 151). Finally, the image of the next world was the same for imperialists and liberalists – they all believed that life and death are the two faces of the same coin. They believed that if they died, they would be reborn and return to their families. “Tamao has not died. Even if his body is not present before us all, he is definitely here with us. He is smiling at us and protecting our home, with our late father and older brother Yasukuni [Shrine]” (Matsugi, 1994: 188). Because they experienced the same type of process leading to death, deaths through martyrdom and projection were not separated by much. “‘Wadatsumi’ and this book... are not divided by the Great Wall of China” (“Wadatsumi” refers to a work containing many handwritten notes by liberalists. “This book” refers to a work containing many handwritten notes by imperialists.) (Odagiri, 1970: 312).

## **VI Passing on the experience**

Focusing on the deaths of Kamikaze soldiers, this paper has described the (outline of the) structure of meaning of death and the process of carrying out death. The paper has constructed typologies of their deaths, and then aggregated them and contrasted them as deaths through martyrdom and deaths through projection. Notably, while deaths through martyrdom and deaths through projection take completely opposite directions, this paper has demonstrated how, at the same time, they were only minimally separated. The deaths of Kamikaze soldiers were unique from both objective (the circumstances in which soldiers died in Kamikaze missions) and subjective (the consciousness of Kamikaze soldiers) standpoints. Thus, analysis of Kamikaze soldiers cannot be

generalized into analysis of the war dead overall. In addition, this paper is an analysis of the deaths of Kamikaze soldiers from the specific perspective of “the diversity and typologies of death;” it merely aims to present one hypothesis. Nevertheless, by doing so, this paper has demonstrated the significance of attempting to interpret the deaths of Kamikaze soldiers from their own perspective. Passing on the experience of Kamikaze soldiers becomes possible precisely through the accumulation of analysis based on this approach. The experience of war cannot be authentically passed on (only) through beliefs and emotions. Firstly, various facts regarding the experience must be gathered, organized, and laid out logically. Next, text must be created from those facts which depicts the experiences of the people concerned using their own words. Only once this has been achieved can the real image of the experience of war become distinct. This paper is an attempt at doing so. The work of war sociology is far from complete, and this author also hopes to continue work in this field using the life history method in analysis of handwritten notes. Part of this will involve repeatedly revisiting the meaning-world of the Kamikaze soldiers. By doing so, the author hopes to renew and advance the hypothesis of this paper.

## Notes

- 1) The first attack of pilots hurling themselves and their aircraft at the enemy was during the attack on Pearl Harbor on the morning of December 7, 1941 (local time). There were also various definitions of Kamikaze (*tokkō*). However, “Kamikaze missions” generally refers to those which begun from this time.
- 2) What sorts of images of Kamikaze soldiers have been depicted? These were prescribed by what types of images of Kamikaze soldiers were sought after the war (Fukuma, 2007: 11). Based on a specified analysis framework (which is itself a choice), this paper first deconstructs the existing images of Kamikaze soldiers and then reconstitutes them.
- 3) Ideas for Kamikaze weapons included “a fuse which, once airborne, could never land again” and “after takeoff, when a rope inside the aircraft was pulled, both landing wheels would fall off, an arrangement which meant the aircraft could never land again” as “aircraft which can absolutely do nothing else but ram into things” (Kusayagi, 1972: 76-77). On April 1, 1945, a plan was issued which meant the entire Naval Air Corps would shift to Kamikaze tactics (Morimoto, 2005: 247).
- 4) Kusayagi (1994: 262) criticizes actions such as Kamikaze tactics as not being the product of any particular psychological state, but as “possibly what happens when

people who are 'locked into' an organization or institution allow their thought processes about their own position to stagnate.”

- 5) Kamikaze tactics were extensively covered in the newspapers. The first Kamikaze mission was reported on the front page of the Asahi Shimbun on October 29, 1943 as “The fierce loyalty of God’s eagle shines brilliantly in the World! The soldiers of the *Shikishima* team of Kamikaze Special Attack Squad captured the enemy fleet at the strait of *Suluan* island and hit the target deady. Both of aircraft and pilot exploded to the enemy ship. Its escort ship confirmed the fighting result. Toyota commander of the Allied Fleet declared their meritorious deed to the whole army.”
- 6) Kamikaze soldiers were initially granted special treatment, but as the Kamikaze missions continued, their treatment deteriorated. This involved a change in the image of Kamikaze soldiers within the military. “Kamikaze missions, which have become commonplace, no longer have any special significance for the officers at military headquarters and senior officers of higher-ranked units. They do not attempt to understand the emotions of the attacking soldiers, and conduct the farewell ceremonies mechanically, only giving perfunctory briefings or words of encouragement” (Watanabe, 2007: 236).
- 7) From May to July 1945, the “Campaign to Honor Special Attack Squads and Further Support Bereaved Families” was held, and “Associations to Honor the Spirit of Special Attack Squads” were established in municipalities from which Kamikaze soldiers had come (Morioka, 1995b: 284).
- 8) In addition, while on standby before commencing their attacks, Kamikaze soldiers received special treatment such as being allowed “freedom” of action and being provided with alcohol and special meals (Morimoto, 2005: 197).
- 9) The same report includes detailed cautionary points about how to prevent the morale of Kamikaze soldiers from falling (Ikuta, 1977: 210-212).
- 10) 271 (34.0%) of the 796 Kamikaze aircraft attacks launched near the Philippines are said to have returned (Hattori, 1995: 581). The most common cause of Kamikaze soldiers returning was substandard aircraft. Many Kamikaze aircraft also made forced landings before reaching the enemy.
- 11) “It is written there (the Imperial University Newspaper – note added) that the sight of us is beautiful. I wonder if that is really the case” (JWDSMA, 2003: 344). They were suspicious of a populace (common people) which revered them as Gods (Hosaka, 2005: 223).
- 12) “If I am alive, then of course [I would look after you], but even if something were to

happen to me, Father and Mother, you need not worry about your old age” (Matsugi, 1994: 214). However, that calculation did not sully the “selfless fidelity” of the Kamikaze soldiers’ martyrdom.

- 13) In the afore-mentioned survey by the Army Aviation Headquarters, the psychological state of the Kamikaze soldiers directly before commencing their missions was reported as “they are so unwilling to “die in vain” to deliver the certain military achievements expected, their sensitivity to various equipment failures is increasing, and they are turning back in increasing numbers” (Ikuta, 1977: 211). (It can be thought that) the Kamikaze soldiers themselves were strongly “unwilling to die like in vain.”
- 14) The military thought of Kamikaze missions as one type of tactics. “The military headquarters overall did not think that they could retrieve the war situation through the use of Kamikaze tactics” (Morimoto, 2005: 41). Even from only this, the inhumanity of death as a Kamikaze soldier is conspicuous. By contrast, there is the interpretation that the Kamikaze missions were intended to accelerate peace-making by impressing on the United States the ferocity of the Japanese attitude to resistance (Morimoto, 2005: 208). There is also the interpretation that Kamikaze tactics made the United States military hesitate about invading the Japanese mainland, and that led them to prepare for the atomic bombings (Ikuta, 1977: 250).
- 15) Morioka (1995b: 286-287) calls this the “disaggregation of the value complex.”
- 16) Hosaka (2005: 215) calls nationalism which places value on nature and the traditions and culture of the community “substructure nationalism,” differentiating it from “superstructure nationalism,” the ultranationalism of the military high command.
- 17) The awareness of *ie* (family, household) could not possibly exist without pride and conflict toward *seken* (the public, the world at large) (Inoue, 2007: 93). The head of the family was also powerless in the face of *seken* (society) with a hardened nationalist atmosphere. Ostracism was waiting for those who were unpatriotic, and being branded as such extended across the entire family.
- 18) Kusayagi (1972: 125-127) argued that the small value of love for blood relatives and the large value of love for the country are in concentric circles to each other, and that this relationship was created by empire education on a foundation of Confucian thought.
- 19) Ohnuki (2003: 24) called this “false recognition.” “Coming from different standpoints, the Kamikaze soldiers and the State did not notice that they were extracting different meaning from the same symbol.”

- 20) Among airmen in the military toward the end of the war, a soldier (not Kamikaze soldier) took Lenin's *The State and Revolution* (a banned book) and "tore out the pages one by one and read them in the toilet, and then tore up the pages into tiny pieces and threw them out, or in some cases ate them" (Hayashi, 1967: 229).
- 21) Morimoto (2005: 192-195) contrasts the Kamikaze soldiers, who had "no escape from the jaws of death," and the crew of the escort aircraft (which guided and covered the Kamikaze aircraft to the enemy targets), who had "narrow escapes from the jaws of death," depicting the misfortune of the former (nominated to their role by chance) and the good fortune of the latter.

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