

ARTICLE

# Arai Ōsui and the Transnational Reimagination of Civilization in the Late Nineteenth-Century United States

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## Abstract

Civilization discourse hierarchically ordered nation-states and people of different traits, including race and gender, in the Western modern concept of progress. This civilizational ideology of modern nation-states has underpinned narratives of many historical works, including transnational historical studies. This article showcases the ideas and practices of transnationalism that challenged such civilization discourse and pursued a more egalitarian and mutually interdependent vision of the world at the non-state level. This article does so by focusing on the Brotherhood of the New Life, a mixed-race religious agricultural community in late nineteenth-century rural America, and one of its Japanese members, Arai Ōsui, who joined the community after his defeat in Japan's Boshin Civil War. I argue that this non-state transnational perspective illuminates the Brotherhood members' endeavour to free gender and race – the key conceptual underpinnings of the ideology of civilization – from this very discourse. This article further reveals, through Ōsui, that the community's egalitarian ethos developed to instigate new, anti-imperialist, and anti-hierarchical thoughts and actions in early twentieth-century Japan, in opposition to the state's imperialist endeavour to progress.

In November 1983, Ronald Reagan made a historic speech in the Japanese Diet, the first American president to do so:

Being a Californian I have seen many miracles hardworking Japanese have brought to our shores. In 1865 a young Samurai student, Kanaye Nagasawa [1852–1934], left Japan to learn what made the West economically strong and technologically advanced. Ten years later he founded a small winery at Santa Rosa, California, called the Fountaingrove Round Barn and

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Winery. Soon he became known as the grape king of California. Nagasawa came to California to learn and stayed to enrich our lives. Both our countries owe much to this Japanese warrior-turned-businessman.<sup>1</sup>

Reagan selected the Fountaingrove winery as an example of the ‘miracles’ brought to the United States by Japanese immigrants. However, what Reagan completely omitted from this particular story was that the community’s original religious and intellectual vision of world reform behind their winemaking stood in opposition to the Western modern ideology of civilization and progress. The America that a group of Japanese samurai encountered and wished to settle in was not the typical ‘modern’, scientific, rational, and Protestant country that we may associate with the time. Instead, in the heart of rural America, this group practised a radically different moral-religious idea that saw God as both male and female. The samurai and their comrades did not take up the hoe to be exploited by the capitalist modernity of the West but to challenge it.

Reagan was by no means the only statesman to champion the Western modern teleological view of progress. Such a view of civilizational progress has permeated our historiography. This applies not only to the traditional fields of historical studies, such as national and international history, but also to more recent fields, such as transnational history. Transnational history examines the ideas, practices, and institutions that transcend national boundaries in an attempt to overcome the confines of nation-state frameworks and national history.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, most transnational historical studies – as well as many others in different modern history subfields – have, consciously or unconsciously, held up the understanding of ‘civilization’ synonymous with the construction of socio-economically, technologically, and militarily ‘advanced’ nation-states led by Euro-American powers, as the universal teleological definition of progress. Associated with this dominant mode of historical writing tied to the Western civilizational ideology of the nation-state, our history has erased many ideas, actions, and reactions that have fallen outside of the ideological paradigm. Transnational history’s potential to overcome the teleological view of progress has been discussed in the literature.<sup>3</sup> However, it has received scant empirical implementation.<sup>4</sup>

This article presents conceptually and methodologically a competing account of transnational history, detached from the Western modern ideology

<sup>1</sup> Ronald Reagan, ‘Address before the Japanese Diet in Tokyo’, 11 Nov. 1983, *The Public Papers of President Ronald W. Reagan*, Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, [www.reaganlibrary.gov/research/speeches/111183a](http://www.reaganlibrary.gov/research/speeches/111183a) (accessed 23 July 2020).

<sup>2</sup> Historians have discussed the emergence, development, and future direction of transnational history. See, for example, C. A. Bayly et al., ‘AHR conversation: on transnational history’, *American Historical Review*, 111 (2006), pp. 1441–64; Akira Iriye, *Global and transnational history: the past, present, and future* (Basingstoke, 2013); idem, ‘The transnational turn’, *Diplomatic History*, 31 (2007), pp. 373–6; Sheldon Garon, ‘Transnational history and Japan’s “comparative advantage”’, *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 43 (2017), pp. 65–92.

<sup>3</sup> Bayly et al., ‘AHR conversation: on transnational history’.

<sup>4</sup> An exception to this would be Sho Konishi, *Anarchist modernity: cooperatism and Japanese-Russian intellectual relations in modern Japan* (Cambridge, MA, 2013).

of civilization. It showcases this by analysing the aforementioned agricultural community, the Brotherhood of the New Life, in late nineteenth-century rural America. The Brotherhood was a mixed-race religious and agrarian community established by Thomas Lake Harris (1823–1906), who was – in the words of the American philosopher and psychologist, William James (1842–1910) – the ‘best known American mystic’.<sup>5</sup> Emerging in response to a socio-political and moral crisis in Euro-America and Japan, the Brotherhood network sought to revolutionize the course of civilizational progress at the universal scale through the practice of everyday labour, including winemaking, as a direct manifestation of their moral-religious worldview. Given the centrality of the Western modern discourse of civilizational progress, the Brotherhood community has long since disappeared from mainstream historiography.<sup>6</sup>

In discussing their visions and practices, this article employs what I would refer to as a ‘non-state transnational historical perspective’, which challenges our universalizing historiographical tendency tied to Western civilization discourse and enables us to reveal their drive to achieve an alternative universal worldview. The ‘non-state transnationality’ in this perspective is interpreted in two senses: networks and ideas. Precisely, the non-state transnational perspective discloses not only a forgotten network comprising of Japanese, American, and British non-state actors but, more crucially, their shared vision of world reform that tried to transcend nation-states and the Western modern ideology of civilization, in pursuit of a competing conception of universality. The ‘transnationality’ in this approach differs from, and would be invisible in, the study of modern transnational history that is bound by the framework of Japan versus America, Asia versus the West, or non-Western countries versus the West and civilizational ideology; becoming Americanized was not the Brotherhood’s aim. Instead, the account of their non-state, multi-ethnic, and multi-cultural encounters elucidate their firm desire to establish a new moral and ethical construct at the universal scale, unconstrained by racial, national, and gender hierarchies. This construct was founded on the interconnectedness of humanity as a whole and embraced and transcended differences under their ‘Mother–Father God’.<sup>7</sup>

This article embraces this non-state transnational approach by foregrounding the defeated side of Japan’s civil war. It does so by featuring Arai Ōsui

<sup>5</sup> William James, *The varieties of religious experience: a study in human nature* (1902; Cambridge, 2011), p. 12.

<sup>6</sup> There are only a few exceptions to this, including: Herbert Schneider and George Lawton, *A prophet and a pilgrim: being the incredible history of Thomas Lake Harris and Laurence Oliphant; their sexual mysticisms and utopian communities amply documented to confound the skeptic* (New York, NY, 1942); Gaye LeBaron and Bart Casey, *The wonder seekers of Fountaingrove* (Santa Rosa, CA, 2018); and Joseph W. Slade, ‘Historical sketch of Thomas Lake Harris, Laurence Oliphant, and the Brotherhood of the New Life’, in Arai Ōsui Chosakushū Hensankai, ed., *Arai Ōsui chosakushū, bekkai* (Yokohama, 2006), pp. 177–212. Schneider and Lawton, *A prophet and a pilgrim* covers some important primary sources, including the testimonies of former members and neighbours, and contains a collection of the community founder, Thomas Lake Harris’s writings and letters.

<sup>7</sup> Brotherhood members referred to their God as the ‘Mother–Father’ and ‘Father–Mother’ interchangeably. For consistency, this article refers to their God as the ‘Mother–Father’.

(1846–1922) – the only Brotherhood member from the defeated side – who began to seek new ideas of universally applicable, egalitarian morals during the war and relocated to rural America after the defeat.<sup>8</sup> In contrast with the vast scholarship on the American Civil War (1861–5), very limited attention has been paid to Japan’s Boshin Civil War (1868–9), let alone its losers; defeated samurai – particularly those who refused to follow the civilizational ideology of the victorious Meiji state (1868–1912) – have been largely forgotten in the mainstream historiography narrated through the lens of the victors.<sup>9</sup> The Boshin Civil War, generally seen as a domestic incident in Japan, had an important historical meaning outside Japan at the Brotherhood – the community that attracted samurai from both sides of the war and manifested the civil-war context in rural America. Precisely, this article shows, through Ōsui, that it was the hitherto understudied defeated side who continued to pursue the Brotherhood’s egalitarian ethos in opposition to the state-endorsed ideology of Western modernity, further developed the ethos, and ultimately brought it back to Japan.<sup>10</sup> Conversely, for his counterparts who won the civil war and contributed to Japan’s civilizational pursuit as renowned high-ranking officials of Meiji, the Brotherhood was simply a phase in their early lives. Indeed, Ōsui’s encounter with the US counterculture, outside of the state’s diplomatic mission, far transcended a trivial historical episode of one man experiencing rural American life and its eccentric religion. Only through the scope of this defeated samurai, as an integral part of the non-state transnational approach, can we disclose the continued practice of the egalitarian ethos and its legacy developed in early twentieth-century Japan – the birth of a popular, anti-imperial, cultural-intellectual phenomenon instigated by him at the height of the Meiji state’s imperialism.

Further showcasing what the non-state transnational historical approach does, this article particularly sheds light on the community’s race and gender dimensions. I argue that this non-state transnational perspective illuminates their endeavour to free gender and race from hierarchical civilizational discourse. Accompanied by the emerging narrative of social Darwinism that provided justification for capitalist and imperialist pursuits, race came to occupy

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<sup>8</sup> Though born Arai Tsunenoshin Yasuyoshi, this article refers to him as Ōsui, the unique, identifiable self-given pseudonym of this samurai. In principle, Japanese names in this article appear in the order of the family name followed by the first name.

<sup>9</sup> There are only a few works that study the defeated side in English-language scholarship. See Michael Wert, *Meiji restoration losers: memory and Tokugawa supporters in modern Japan* (Cambridge, MA, 2013); Hiraku Shimoda, *Lost and found: recovering regional identity in imperial Japan* (Cambridge, MA, 2014).

<sup>10</sup> Ōsui has largely disappeared from historiography to the extent that no monograph has been published on him in English. Ōsui has also long been outside of mainstream Japanese scholarship, though a team of scholars working on Ōsui have collected, compiled, and decoded his complicated texts. Arai Ōsui Chosakushū Hensankai, ed., *Arai Ōsui chosakushū (The collection of Arai Ōsui’s writings)* (10 vols., Yokohama, 2000–6). Indeed, there are no materials available in which Ōsui, in his own voice, explicates the details of his everyday life at the Brotherhood. Nevertheless, original letters, diaries, and publications written by his Brotherhood comrades, to which this article refers, give us a sense of the community’s everyday life to which he was committed.

the ideological basis of civilizational discussion.<sup>11</sup> The racialized discourse of progress was often gendered, and the hierarchical and bifurcated categories of male and female underpinned the nineteenth-century logic of civilization.<sup>12</sup> This article reveals competing ideas and practices of race and gender at the Brotherhood. Their quest for racial equality offers a non-hierarchical meaning of race. Furthermore, their religious ideas and agrarian life under their ‘Mother–Father God’ not only challenged gender inequality and the roles of women but uprooted the bifurcation of men and women itself.

## I

While nineteenth-century Protestant missionaries were sent across the globe, the forgotten Brotherhood community had a far more global mindset than historians have ever imagined (Figure 1). The Brotherhood’s mission was non-institutionalized, sporadic, and involved people from many countries, such as Americans, British, Japanese, Swiss, Tamil Indians, and Russian Mennonites. They constituted the global movement of the Brotherhood across various actual and potential sites of extended operation, such as the US, Britain, Mauritius, India, and Australia. The American countryside was the movement’s centre and place of birth. The founder, Thomas Lake Harris, established the Brotherhood of the New Life community in the small village of Wassaic (Dutchess County, New York) in 1861, which later moved to Amenia (1863) and Brocton (1867) in rural New York, before relocating to Fountaingrove, Santa Rosa (1875) in California.

The Brotherhood originated as an urgent response to a moral and socio-economic crisis in Euro-America. It was the product of capitalistic and materialistic development, a situation that the group’s founder felt had to be cured immediately. This urge manifested itself in the form of various socialist organizations and religious movements by those dissatisfied with contemporary Christianity. The religious movements echoed the cries of socialist movements and social reformism in nineteenth-century America and, as with Harris, occasionally led to the pursuit of a commune/community that sought to establish a

<sup>11</sup> A multitude of literature has been written on social Darwinism. In the Euro-American context in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, see Mike Hawkins, *Social Darwinism in European and American thought, 1860–1945: nature as model and nature as threat* (Cambridge, 1997). On the discussion of race in Meiji Japan, see Tessa Morris-Suzuki, *Re-inventing Japan: time, space, nation* (New York, NY, 1998), pp. 79–109; Rotem Kowner, ‘Japan and the rise of the idea of race: the Meiji era fusion of foreign and domestic constructions’, in Yoneyuki Sugita, ed., *Social commentary on state and society in modern Japan* (Singapore, 2016), pp. 31–48.

<sup>12</sup> In US history, see Gail Bederman, *Manliness & civilization: a cultural history of gender and race in the United States, 1880–1917* (Chicago, IL, and London, 1995). In modern Japan, as we will see later, the gendered making of progress was accompanied by the state-led sloganeering of *ryōsai kenbo*, or ‘Good Wife, Wise Mother’, to funnel women into supporting the patriarchal nation-state in the domestic sphere. A wide range of studies have discussed *ryōsai kenbo*. See Shizuko Koyama, *Ryōsai kenbo: the educational ideal of ‘Good Wife, Wise Mother’ in modern Japan* (Leiden, 2012); Kathleen Uno, ‘Womanhood, war, and empire: transmutations of “Good Wife, Wise Mother” before 1931’, in Barbara Molony and Kathleen Uno, eds., *Gendering modern Japanese history* (Leiden, 2020), pp. 493–519.



**Figure 1.** The map of the Brotherhood's global reach. The dark coloured pins indicate the locations where the people and/or land were part of the extended Brotherhood movement. The light coloured pins indicate the locations to which the movement *planned* (but ultimately failed) to expand.

new social order. New York in particular, where Harris was raised and the Brotherhood originated, had been a key base of such emerging social and religious movements since the Antebellum period of the 1830s to 1840s. For Harris, the outbreak of the American Civil War further strengthened a sense of moral conviction that the war would ignite a spiritual revolution leading to the improvement of working-class living conditions.<sup>13</sup> Accordingly, he deemed this the perfect time to establish a new community and reaffirm his role as the man to lead the world into a new order. Therefore, the Brotherhood was not intended to be a small religious sect, but rather a movement capable of healing society from capitalist modernity at the universal scale: a movement which, much like Noah's Ark, would navigate through crisis to reach a new age.<sup>14</sup>

This sense of urgency resonated transnationally with Japan's plight during the *bakumatsu* (1850s to 1860s) and the Boshin Civil War. It was after this crisis moment that Ōsui joined the Brotherhood. Indeed, Ōsui's entry signalled the meeting of two civil-war contexts outside of state diplomacy. Japan's *bakumatsu* period was filled with internal and external socio-political unrest. This included: the arrival of US Commodore Matthew C. Perry's 'black ships' at Japan's coastline; the assassination of the shogun's chief senior councillor, Ii Naosuke; soaring prices; devaluation; heavy taxation; economic disparity;

<sup>13</sup> John S. Haller, Jr, *Distant voices: sketches of a Swedenborgian worldview* (London, 2017), pp. 96–7.

<sup>14</sup> Schneider and Lawton, *A prophet and a pilgrim*, pp. xv, 48; Ivan Parker Hall, *Mori Arinori*, reprint edn (Cambridge, MA, 2014), p. 123.

poverty; bankruptcy; high crime rates; earthquakes; droughts; floods; poor harvests; fires; and cholera and measles epidemics. All members of the Japanese population lived through these difficult, uncertain, and unjust times. This led to numerous protests and uprisings by peasants and labourers – often destructive, disorganized, and urgent. It was therefore a time of *yonaoshi*, or world renewal, in which socio-economic inequality, suffering, and injustice had to be rectified. The religious world also reacted to these changing times. New religions, such as Tenrikyō and Kurozumikyō, developed to inspire people through the cruelty of everyday life.

The socio-political turmoil of the *bakumatsu* era ultimately led to the outbreak of the Boshin Civil War, in which Ōsui, the young Northern samurai from Sendai, was deeply embroiled. Together with a few other Sendai samurai such as Tamamushi Sadayū (1823–69) and Wakō Bunjūrō (1842–69), Sendai dispatched Ōsui to the Aizu and Yonezawa domains in the North as the domain's official envoy.<sup>15</sup> Under the leadership of Sendai samurai, the *Ōuetsu Reppan Dōmei* (Northern Alliance) – a coalition of thirty-one Northern domains – was established. Through the alliance, the Northern domains collectively stood up against the Satsuma and Chōshū domains of the Southwest that led the new Meiji government. Even after the official surrender of the Northern domains, roughly 3,000 revolutionaries – including Ōsui, his fellow Northerners, and the shogunate's officers – continued resisting the Satsuma-Chōshū clique at Hakodate in Ezo (present Hokkaido).<sup>16</sup>

However, as the defeat of the Northern revolutionaries seemed virtually inescapable, Ōsui was faced with a harsh reality and consequence of the war – the victors became heroes, and the defeated were made into villains. The Meiji state began to punish Northern revolutionaries in the process of forging a new Japanese nation-state. The sanctions ranged from exile in barren lands in the far north to incarceration and, at worst, capital punishment. Ōsui's teacher at the Sendai domainial school, Ōtsuki Bankei (1801–78), was arrested and incarcerated as a ringleader of the civil war. Even worse, Ōsui's close Sendai colleagues Tamamushi and Wakō were caught and forced to commit *seppuku* (almost synonymous with capital punishment).<sup>17</sup> Similarly, Ōsui was in serious danger as a blacklisted criminal of the Northern forces. It was a 'miracle' that he managed to escape capture and survived.

The severe socio-political upheavals, which continued from *bakumatsu* to the civil-war time, proved that the existing institutions and faiths were malfunctioning. Indeed, as the Sendai Orthodox Church's historical record tells us, it was during this turmoil of the civil war that Ōsui urged, '[w]e must have a teaching (*hō*) that can deal with this time'.<sup>18</sup> As a highly educated samurai, observing the fall of the shogunate's neo-Confucian system that was

<sup>15</sup> Kudō Shōzō, 'Arai Ōsui sensei goshoku, seigo, hoi', in Nagashima Tadashige, ed., *Arai Ōsui sensei* (Tokyo, 1991), p. 4.

<sup>16</sup> Hakodate Shishi Hensanshitsu, ed., *Hakodate shishi tsūsetsuhen 2*, II (Hakodate, 1990), pp. 229–31.

<sup>17</sup> Kudō, 'Arai Ōsui sensei goshoku, seigo, hoi', p. 4.

<sup>18</sup> Sasagawa Seikichi, ed., *Sendai kirisuto seikyōkai sōritsu gojishūnen kinen* (Sendai, 1923), p. 1. The translation of Japanese texts referenced in this article is conducted by the author, unless otherwise noted.

unable to respond to the mass cry effectively, Ōsui likely embraced a firm determination and responsibility to find new moral teachings to guide through the crises. The best, universally applicable moral teaching for *yonaoshi* (world renewal) he found was Orthodox Christianity. In defiance of the state ban on Christianity, he seriously delved into Orthodoxy through the Russian missionary, Ivan Dimitrovich Kasatkin (1836–1912). According to Japan's Orthodox Church's record, Ōsui was fascinated by Orthodox teachings because, in his view, Orthodoxy 'does not have a distinction between the noble and the commoner and between high and low, and it is the Righteous Way (*seidō*) that [one] should understand and acquire'.<sup>19</sup> What inspired Ōsui to study Orthodoxy, despite the severe risk of doing so, seems to have been the principle of egalitarianism that he saw in its teachings.

As we will see, this egalitarianism was precisely what Ōsui would witness and further develop at the Brotherhood in rural America. Beginning with Orthodox Christianity and continuing on to the Brotherhood's teachings, Ōsui sought a non-state method of designing new, egalitarian, moral-religious ideas. Ōsui travelled to the Brotherhood in 1871 with the support of Mori Arinori (1847–89), a former member from Satsuma. Mori had previously been part of the Satsuma domain's secret mission to Britain in 1865 to study its advanced technology and military for Japan's civilizational development.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, after experiencing Japan's socio-political renewal and observing in London, according to his and his countrymen's words, 'the nature of Europe and America', in which 'they completely forget the Way (*michi*) in pursuing personal profits, seize other states and islands, and befriend with the strong while refusing the weak',<sup>21</sup> Mori seems to have been through a radical conversion to the Brotherhood's egalitarian teachings. Ideas surrounding what civilization should mean to Japan were yet unsettled. Thus, these samurai tried out different possibilities, including the Brotherhood's teachings. While the details of why Ōsui joined the Brotherhood through Mori remain unclear, we ought not to see it as an accident that Ōsui, like Mori before him, relocated to rural America. We can infer that, amid the socio-political and moral crisis and the urgent calls for social justice both domestically and abroad, both samurai were seriously exploring a new moral code founded on the egalitarian principle of human relationality.

The Brotherhood was characterized by a remarkable scale of national and ethnic diversity; the Brocton community numbered between seventy-five and one hundred members who originated primarily from England, Scotland, Japan, and different regions in the US.<sup>22</sup> These samurai were vital

<sup>19</sup> Ishikawa Kisaburō, *Nihon seikyō dendōshi*, I (Tokyo, 1901), p. 57.

<sup>20</sup> After the Anglo-Satsuma War (1863) that showcased Britain's advanced militaristic and technological power, the Satsuma domain drastically shifted its political stance from *jōi* ('expel the barbarians') to *kaikoku* ('opening the country').

<sup>21</sup> Kōshaku Shimazuke Hensanjo, ed., *Sappan kaigun shi, chū* (Tokyo, 1968), p. 980. This phrase appeared in a proposal to the Satsuma domain co-authored by Mori and four other Satsuma samurai in the summer of 1867, all of whom soon after joined the Brotherhood.

<sup>22</sup> Many of these members, except for the samurai, seemed to have originally been Baptists who converted to the Brotherhood's teachings. The Americans were more likely from the Southern

members of the Brotherhood, together forming a mixed-race religious and agricultural community unusual in nineteenth-century America. As well as Ōsui from Sendai, the Brotherhood included a total of thirteen samurai from Satsuma, including Mori, and was also keen on recruiting more from Chōshū and Tosa domains, as well as from the official Tokugawa shogunate's student group in Britain.<sup>23</sup> The Brotherhood's interest in Japan was tied to Harris's belief that the construction of a new world order should include the people of Asia where major Christian teachings had a limited reach.<sup>24</sup> Proposing *A prophecy of Japan*, Harris argued that the country would, through its socio-political crisis, be reborn under a *daimyō* (feudal lord) who would be 'drilling himself as a soldier, setting aside all luxury and devoting all his means and power to the good of the people'.<sup>25</sup> This leader could unite the young Japanese and thereby establish the Brotherhood of the New Life in Japan under the motto, 'Christ for Japan'.<sup>26</sup> In particular, '[t]he hope of Japan is in the young men. The old feudal system of Japan is rotten at the heart and very weak', said Harris.<sup>27</sup> He considered it urgent to train the young promising Japanese, who would then return to Japan to embark on their global revolutionary movement.<sup>28</sup>

## II

While Martin Luther and many Protestants upheld *sola fide*, or salvation solely by faith, as their key Christian principle, the Brotherhood emphasized the everyday practice of hard labour as a way to exterminate selfishness and consequently birth a new society. Borrowing the concept of the Swedish scientist and theologian, Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772), the Brotherhood called their everyday labour the 'Use'.<sup>29</sup> This refers to every action undertaken for the sake

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states, who became friends or admirers of Harris during his travels due in large part to his opposition to slavery. Schneider and Lawton, *A prophet and a pilgrim*, pp. 147–50.

<sup>23</sup> One of the closest followers of Harris, Laurence Oliphant (1829–88), made frequent references to Japanese students from Satsuma, Chōshū, Tosa, and the shogunate in his letters to William Frances Cowper between 1867 and 1877. Oliphant travelled worldwide from India and Nepal to Canada, Russia, China, as well as to Japan in 1858 and 1861 as a British diplomatic official. Oliphant's letters to Cowper are accessible at the archival collection Harris–Oliphant papers, 1867–1940, in Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, some of which are reprinted in Hayashi Takeji, *Mori Arinori: higeki e no joshō* (Tokyo, 1986).

<sup>24</sup> Hall, *Mori Arinori*, p. 101.

<sup>25</sup> Thomas Lake Harris, *A prophecy of Japan*, 2 July 1857 [1867], box 21, Harris–Oliphant papers, 1867–1940, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, p. 3. Although *A prophecy of Japan* is dated 2 July 1857, it is likely a typo; given the timing of Harris's encounter with the Japanese samurai, it is presumably 2 July 1867. Hasegawa Seiichi, *Mori Arinori ni okeru kokuminteki shutai no sōshutsu* (Kyoto, 2007), p. 94.

<sup>26</sup> Harris, *A prophecy of Japan*, p. 2.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Hall, *Mori Arinori*, p. 102.

<sup>29</sup> Spiritualism, including that of Swedenborg, had become a popular topic of debate in Europe and North America by the mid-1850s. Haller, *Distant voices*, p. 83. As a youth, Harris was inspired by various religious teachings, including Christian Universalism, Andrew Jackson Davis, and importantly,

of others. Brotherhood members, who initially behaved morally through thought, began instead to do good for others without and before thinking.<sup>30</sup> The members' everyday life involved many hours of hard labour, the Use, ranging from farming and wine production to cleaning and other daily chores, all without pay.<sup>31</sup> Most members were from the upper social classes, including an agriculturist, a cotton plantation owner, a wine expert, a physician, a parliamentarian, and a Baptist minister, in addition to the Japanese members who were all from the samurai class.<sup>32</sup> However, their elite backgrounds were of no consequence to community life, where they wore farming clothes and led a self-sufficient life through the Use, growing vegetables and rearing cattle.<sup>33</sup> Indeed, we can see the sincerity of their egalitarian beliefs in the fact that the members willingly relinquished their class, status, and – if one was fortunate enough to have it – wealth to join the Brotherhood, often donating all of their property to the community. Nagasawa – known as a child prodigy for his academic excellence while in Satsuma – had a radical shift from the former life and began to take care of cattle and milking at the Brotherhood.<sup>34</sup> Similarly, Mori baked bread, cooked, and did laundry – all unthinkable tasks for elite samurai.<sup>35</sup>

This routine work, the Use, served to connect Brotherhood members with God and allowed them to express their religiosity. Ōsui explains:

Except for the farmer we have no corn; except for the baker we have no bread; and except for the cordwainer no shoe. Without eating, without wearing, even the preacher cannot preach, nor worship the Beautiful Life. The practical farmer holding the Bible of the plow in the corn-field, his church, preaches his sermon; the practical baker kneeling humbly before the oven, his altar, reads the gospel of feeding. Setting the needle and thread in motion, a good woman offers her prayer, without counting beads or turning any praying-wheel, nay, without going to church. These people have common-sense, and they love the Lord well.<sup>36</sup>

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Swedenborgianism. For more details, see Schneider and Lawton, *A prophet and a pilgrim*; Arthur Versluis, 'Spiritualism and the American Swedenborgian current', in Cathy Gutierrez, ed., *Handbook of Spiritualism and channeling* (Leiden and Boston, MA, 2015), pp. 40–55. Orthodox Swedenborgians, however, rejected Harris as heretical to their beliefs. Hall, *Mori Arinori*, p. 97.

<sup>30</sup> Senoue Masahito, 'Suwēdenborugu shingaku kara mita Arai Ōsui no shisō', in Arai Ōsui Sensei Kinenkai, ed., *Shirarezaru inochi no shisōka: Arai Ōsui o yomitoku* (Yokohama, 2000), pp. 252–3.

<sup>31</sup> Nagasawa Kanaye, 'Nagasawa Kanaye eibun nikki (3)', Kadota Akira, trans., *Kagoshima Kenritsu Tanki Daigaku Chiiki Kenkyūjo Nenpō*, 27 (1998), pp. 45–52. In addition to the Use, Harris and his followers believed that a yoga-like practice of deep breathing, 'divine respiration' (also called 'open breathing', 'open respiration', and 'internal respiration'), was one of the key methods with which to reach out to the celestial sphere and commune with God.

<sup>32</sup> Schneider and Lawton, *A prophet and a pilgrim*, pp. 148–50.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 158.

<sup>34</sup> Akira Kadota and Terry Jones, *Kariforniia no shikon: Satsuma ryūgakusei Nagasawa Kanae shōden* (Tokyo, 1983), p. 92.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Arai Ōsui, *Inward prayer and fragments* (1896; Kyoto, 1941), reprinted in Fukuda Atae, ed., Kudō Naotarō, trans., *Naikan kitōroku, Ōsui sensei no omokage* (Tokyo, 1984), p. 32.

The lofty goal of world reform thus began with the small steps of daily chores and the associated reform of the inner self through labour. The Brotherhood's emphasis on the individual Use for world rectification stands in contrast to secular socialist movements; Joseph W. Slade points out, '[u]nlike the secular socialist, who believed that perfecting society would perfect man, Harris believed that society could be perfected only after man had perfected himself'.<sup>37</sup>

Importantly, the Use was not only a moral code for everyday life but was also a notion that competed with the hierarchical, Western modern vision of progress. As well as referring to the everyday practice of hard labour, the Use simultaneously referred to the Brotherhood's fundamental ontological and epistemological principle that each organism created by God works for the benefit of other organisms.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, this mutual interdependency serves to make the whole universe one.<sup>39</sup> In the mutually interconnected universe, the path to regeneration lies in the effort to maintain and restore harmony through working for others, not through prayer, repentance to priests, or ceaseless competitions in capitalist modernity.<sup>40</sup> Thus, the Use is inherently 'transnational' in that it emphasizes the organic bonding of different human beings regardless of their nationality, race, class, or gender. It offered the Brotherhood members a moral and intellectual basis of progress liberated from Western modernity. The vision of a symbiotic and interdependent universe, as we will see below, frees gender and race from the hierarchical civilization ideology.

The issues of marriage and sexuality were popular concerns in nineteenth-century American socio-religious communitarian movements.<sup>41</sup> The restructuring of gender relationships was an essential part of challenging the contemporary world order. From the Oneida Perfectionists and Mormons to the Shakers, various groups had attempted to promote gender equality and

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<sup>37</sup> Slade, 'Historical sketch of Thomas Lake Harris', p. 185. Instead of secular socialism, Harris proposed what he called 'theo-socialism', in which individuals must 'nucleate' or co-operate around God in respective communities. Harris criticized utopian and Marxian socialism. For Harris, utopian socialism (including Brook Farm, Robert Owen, and New England transcendentalists) and Swedenborgians failed due to their lack of understanding of economics and the industrial world. While Marxists may have understood them, their over-focus on these topics and foundation on the principle of class conflicts, not co-operation (as with the Brotherhood), would ultimately lead to failure. *Ibid.*, pp. 207–8; Schneider and Lawton, *A prophet and a pilgrim*, pp. 455–6.

<sup>38</sup> Senoue, 'Suwēdenborugu shingaku', pp. 252–3.

<sup>39</sup> Hayashi, *Mori Arinori*, pp. 95–6. The Brotherhood members referred to their community itself as the 'Use', functioning upon this worldview.

<sup>40</sup> Robert C. Fuller, *Alternative medicine and American religious life* (New York, NY, and Oxford, 1989), p. 51.

<sup>41</sup> On the emerging religious communitarian movements in nineteenth-century America and their unorthodox views of sex, gender, and marriage, see Jean Harvey Baker, 'Women in utopia: the nineteenth-century experience', in Gairdner Bostwick Moment and Otto F. Kraushaar, eds., *Utopias, the American experience* (Metuchen, NJ, 1980), pp. 56–71; Lawrence Foster, *Religion and sexuality: three American communal experiments of the nineteenth century* (New York, NY, 1981); *idem*, *Women, family, and utopia: communal experiments of the Shakers, the Oneida Community, and the Mormons* (Syracuse, NY, 1991).

redefine contemporary gender roles and sexuality. The Oneida Community's female members, for example, enjoyed greater freedom than the average woman of the time in that they shared political and administrative power with male members. That said, it should be noted that its founder, John Humphrey Noyes, was ideologically in support of male supremacy.

A critical difference in the Brotherhood's view of gender compared to most of these contemporary groups lies in the androgyny of their idea of God. This conception of a God that is both male and female deconstructs the male-dominant Western civilization discourse. Christianity generally describes God as the Father. In contrast, God in the Brotherhood's teachings – the pinnacle of the symbiotic Use – is 'our Mother-Father' and '[m]ost gracious and merciful Lord-Lady, our Savior-Savioress'.<sup>42</sup> Mother-Father God (also called Father-Mother God, Lord-Lady, and Savior-Savioress) means that God encapsulates both sexes. Thus, God is 'Two-in-One' in their teachings. God is neither Father nor Mother, nor Father and Mother separately, but is both Father and Mother within the same form. For the Brotherhood, God by definition vouches for the equality of men and women in the interdependent universe.<sup>43</sup>

Emerging from the Mother-Father God was the Brotherhood's attempt to overcome the binary structure of male-female. Men and women were expected to acquire both maleness and femaleness in one, as with God, by overcoming their given sex. Harris argues: 'The true priest, with open respiration, both to the mind and heart of the masculine and the feminine spirit, proves the bisexual quality of his inspiration by an equal comprehension of woman and man.'<sup>44</sup> The term 'bisexual' here does not indicate sexual orientation but instead refers broadly to masculinity and femininity in one. Indeed, we would do well to remember that the nineteenth-century context the Brotherhood operated in was a time before the concept of gender emerged as opposed to sex. Harris endeavoured to overcome the original sin of Adam and Eve and the male-female binary by regaining the other half (in his case, female):<sup>45</sup> '[N]o person of either sex can love the Lord with all the heart, mind, soul and strength, without becoming both a will, an understanding, and a person, in whom conjugal love is tabernacle, enshrined, ensouled, and embodied.'<sup>46</sup> Symbolized through the Mother-Father God, not a male God, the Brotherhood therefore rejected both the patriarchy and the bifurcation of man and woman itself.

This ideology was reflected in the members' Use. Although the details of each female member's everyday Use remains unknown, we can state that – in contrast to the persistent issue of unequal pay between men and women in capitalist modernity – there was no hierarchy in pay at the Brotherhood regardless of job types, sex, or race. There was no inequality in pay because

<sup>42</sup> Ōsui, *Inward prayer and fragments*, p. 1.

<sup>43</sup> The Shakers also believed God to be androgynous. However, for them, God's androgyny was embraced through a male Christ and a female Holy Spirit, and gave particular importance to the female side.

<sup>44</sup> Thomas Lake Harris, *Arcana of Christianity: an unfolding of the celestial sense of the divine word, through Thomas Lake Harris, part III. – the apocalypse* (New York, NY, and London, 1867), p. 249.

<sup>45</sup> LeBaron and Casey, *The wonder seekers of Fountaingrove*, p. xiv.

<sup>46</sup> Harris, *Arcana of Christianity*, p. 236.

there was no pay in the egalitarian ethos of the Use.<sup>47</sup> The Brotherhood's alternative view of gender was reflected in their numbers, attracting female members despite the name Brotherhood. Among the 75–100 Brotherhood residents at Brocton, 60–70 were adults, of which 40–50 were women.<sup>48</sup> These female members, together with their male counterparts, worked in their daily labour, transgressing the hierarchical gender ideology of civilization.

The everyday Use of the female members also deviated from the conventional norm of womanhood as mother and wife. In the quest for civilizational progress, there emerged an ever-widening division in gender roles: between men working outside and women taking care of the home and children. Unlike the mundane world of civilization, however, the Brotherhood had a strict principle of celibacy. This principle differed also from the Mormons' practice of polygyny (which it denounced in 1890) and the Oneida Community's practice of 'complex marriage', which referred to group marriages in which sexual relations with multiple members were developed. Whereas a woman gave birth to six children on average in nineteenth-century America, Brotherhood women hardly ever bore children after they joined the community.<sup>49</sup> While celibacy certainly restricted the members' sexual and reproductive rights, it also meant that these women were comparatively liberated from the traditional nineteenth-century role of wife and mother.<sup>50</sup> They were ordained to work for the Brotherhood community itself – and, by extension, the Mother–Father God and humanity as a whole – rather than dedicating themselves to family and household.

As with gender, racial equality was an integral part of the Brotherhood's world reform. In many nineteenth-century American socio-religious communitarian movements, members predominantly (if not entirely) consisted of white Americans. As explained by Lawrence Foster in his study of the Shakers, the Oneida Community, and the Mormons, they 'can be viewed as part of an effort to create a distinctive Anglo-American ethnicity'.<sup>51</sup> Conversely, the Brotherhood was a mixed-race community. The vision of racial equality was promoted through the Use, in which, at Harris's discretion, the members performed their daily chores, even 'dirty' ones, regardless of their race, ethnicity, and nationality. Many members would have to work in unfamiliar and/or uncomfortable fields for their moral and spiritual training (although it was only possible with the help of workers hired from outside).<sup>52</sup> In the realm of agriculture in nineteenth-century America, field workers were

<sup>47</sup> Baker noted a similar practice in the Shakers' community. Baker, 'Women in utopia', p. 61.

<sup>48</sup> Schneider and Lawton, *A prophet and a pilgrim*, pp. 147–8.

<sup>49</sup> Baker, 'Women in utopia', p. 61.

<sup>50</sup> Baker discusses a similar implication of celibacy in the Shakers' context. *Ibid.*, pp. 60–1.

<sup>51</sup> Foster, *Religion and sexuality*, p. 7.

<sup>52</sup> Indeed, there was a certain discrepancy between their ideal and practicality. The Swedish helped cultivate their farmland at Brocton, and for cultivating the vineyards, they employed Chinese labourers followed by Italians and, after 1892, the Japanese. They could commit themselves to the Use, thanks to the help of these labourers. Schneider and Lawton, *A prophet and a pilgrim*, p. 161. Moreover, Schneider and Lawton mention in footnotes that a few black workers were employed as servants at Brocton. *Ibid.*, p. 148. However, no further information is given about

often divided based on racial lines, and the heavier work typically fell to non-white labourers. However, even Laurence Oliphant, former British diplomat and parliamentarian – who was disillusioned with party politics and abandoned his successful political career to join the Brotherhood in 1867 – was not exempt from labour at the community.<sup>53</sup> To purify the ‘sins’ of his political life, Harris assigned the former parliamentarian from white British high society to clean a cattle cabin and carry dirt and rubbish as his first job.<sup>54</sup> On another occasion, Oliphant ploughed the vineyard with a hoe for a total of ten hours in a day.<sup>55</sup> As with gender, there was no racial disparity in pay because there was no pay. Furthermore, at one point Oliphant lived together with two samurai members from Satsuma, Sameshima Naonobu and Yoshida Kiyonari, and four American members (two males and two females).<sup>56</sup> Such a cross-racial cohabitation would have been virtually unheard of in nineteenth-century Euro-America and Japan.

Their alternative view of race is best epitomized by the fact that the head of viticulture (winegrowing), the community’s largest project, was assigned to the former Satsuma samurai Nagasawa. Moreover, its second-largest project, the Fountain Grove Press, was headed by Ōsui rather than Caucasian Euro-American members.<sup>57</sup> Conventionally, viticulture was known as one of the most imperialist and colonialist fields of agriculture and was thought to show the civilizing power of the West. Viticulture had accompanied Western colonial expansionism from the British colonization of Australia to the French colonization of Algeria.<sup>58</sup> It was the ‘white’ grape-farmers who represented elegant viticulture. Juxtaposing this ‘white’ Euro-American viticulture, the Brotherhood’s mixed-race viticulture, led by a Japanese member, invalidated white supremacy as a defining feature of civilization. Working under a transnational, symbiotic, and egalitarian ethos, the Brotherhood members attempted to liberate race, and the hierarchically racialized agriculture and viticulture, from civilization discourse.

### III

What became of the Japanese samurai members afterwards? What results did the Brotherhood’s teachings yield in Meiji Japan? To answer these questions, we must examine closely the victors and vanquished of the Boshin Civil War, particularly the latter.

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them, their working conditions, or whether the Brotherhood continue employing them after the Brocton period; this makes it difficult to discuss them in detail.

<sup>53</sup> See Laurence Oliphant, *Episodes in a life of adventure: or, moss from a rolling stone* (New York, NY, 1887), pp. 342–3.

<sup>54</sup> Schneider and Lawton, *A prophet and a pilgrim*, pp. 127–8.

<sup>55</sup> Laurence Oliphant to William Frances Cowper, 1867, in Hayashi, *Mori Arinori*, p. 241.

<sup>56</sup> Laurence Oliphant to William Frances Cowper, 1 Dec. 1867, in Hayashi, *Mori Arinori*, p. 226. While it seems that male and female members often lived separately (in line with their celibacy principle), this was not always the case as we can see in Oliphant, and importantly in Harris.

<sup>57</sup> The Fountain Grove Press published Harris’s numerous religious and spiritual writings. LeBaron and Casey, *The wonder seekers of Fountaingrove*, p. 92.

<sup>58</sup> Erica Hannickel, *Empire of vines: wine culture in America* (Philadelphia, PA, 2013), p. 15.

Broadly put, the Satsuma samurai escaped *for* the civil war, while Ōsui escaped *from* it. The ideology of nation-state and patriotism held sway with the Satsuma samurai, and many of them parted from the Brotherhood after less than a year in the late spring of 1868 shortly after the outbreak of civil war. According to Nagasawa, this departure happened after a quarrel over whether one should support Japan or the US if the two countries ever went to war.<sup>59</sup> Harris argued, ‘if [the war] happened, we should fight for God... There is no distinction between the US and Japan. We should fight for justice just following God’s order.’<sup>60</sup> For Harris, national differences were irrelevant in the face of God, and God comes before country.<sup>61</sup> Although he was not against patriotism itself,<sup>62</sup> his argument seems to have been unacceptable to the majority of the Satsuma samurai, leading to their quarrel and split from Harris.

Becoming high-ranking officials in the Meiji state was the last straw in their defection. Indeed, due to their background as highly educated samurai of the victorious Satsuma domain who had defeated the Tokugawa shogunate, they were likely to be chosen for key positions in the Meiji state regardless of the Brotherhood’s moral and religious training. In addition to Mori becoming Japan’s first minister of education, Matsumura Junzō was later appointed vice-admiral of Japan’s Imperial Navy, Sameshima as ambassador to France, and Yoshida as ambassador to the US, to name a few of the many former Brotherhood members’ official positions. They became a crucial part of the so-called Meiji Oligarchy who governed the state at the top and were thus subsequently immersed in the state’s making of the Western modern mode of progress. This made it impossible for them – whether they wished to or not – to publicly practise the religion of the Mother–Father God.

It is worth mentioning, however, that Mori, one of the Satsuma samurai most faithful to the Brotherhood, may have partially retained its moral teachings as a code of ethics.<sup>63</sup> Not only did Mori bring Ōsui, an opponent in the Boshin Civil War, to the Brotherhood but he also promoted freedom of religion and the abolition of the samurai privilege of wearing swords. Moreover, he had Japan’s first ‘Western-style’ wedding based on a mutually agreed contract between him and his bride. We could infer that these were, at least in part, a legacy of the Brotherhood’s egalitarian ethos that he brought back to early Meiji Japan. However, even Mori eventually shifted his interests to more practical and secular issues, particularly the establishing of Japanese nationals as the proper subjects of the Japanese empire, and his move towards social Darwinist Spencerian thoughts.<sup>64</sup> When the statesmen turned to maximizing national interests, the Brotherhood’s teachings of harmonious co-existence

<sup>59</sup> Washizu Shakuma, *Nagasawa Kanaye ōh den*, in Kadota Akira, ed., *Kagoshima Kenritsu Tanki Daigaku Kiyō*, 14 (1990), p. 29.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> See Harris, *A prophecy of Japan*, p. 3.

<sup>63</sup> See Hall, *Mori Arinori*, chs. 3–7. Having been through the Brotherhood’s intensive training in the New York countryside, Mori (and Sameshima) returned to Japan on Harris’s orders in June 1868 during the Boshin Civil War, ready to perform their Use.

<sup>64</sup> For more details, see *ibid.*; Hasegawa, *Mori Arinori*.

under the Mother–Father God were not useful for – and could easily be considered as being in opposition to – the state-led vision of progress. Thus, for the Satsuma samurai, the Brotherhood was more or less a phase in their early lives in search of new ideas of civilization and progress, before they fully committed themselves to the state-led construction of a modern Japanese nation-state.

It was Ōsui from the defeated North, rather than the victorious Satsuma samurai, who consistently adhered to the Brotherhood's egalitarian ethos – and further developed his own vision by building upon it – through his twenty-eight years of moral training in rural America. The very basis of his moral-religious teachings lay in the symbiotic view of the universe under the Mother–Father God, which he termed the 'Infiniverse'.<sup>65</sup> This term, of Ōsui's own invention, likely refers to the wide, undivided, and infinite nature of the universe under the Mother–Father God and is inherently transnational in that it embraces all the differences of nationality, race, ethnicity, and gender in one. Thus, instead of being a Japanese national or becoming an American citizen, Ōsui sought 'citizenship in God's Infiniverse'.<sup>66</sup> For Ōsui, it was not imperial and social Darwinist competition that humans ought to pursue, but interdependency and harmony in the universe – or Infiniverse – beyond national boundaries.<sup>67</sup> Ōsui's worldview belonged to neither Japan nor the US and transcended the hierarchical binary of West and non-West in civilization discourse.

Ōsui's transnational vision of the Infiniverse categorically rejects such indicators of masculine progress, including wars, imperialism, and colonialism, which offer a normative logic of Western modernity as a legitimate and justifiable means of international relations. He argues:

It is clearly a mistake for a governor of one state to try to reform the policy of other states, while the people under him are dissatisfied with his internal management and are inharmonious. So with a king – who should above all things give peace and comfort to his people – it is contrary to the spirit of brotherhood, if he should deal with either the national or international affairs by such methods as carnal war, endangering and destroying the lives of men, be they his armies or his enemies.<sup>68</sup>

For Ōsui, the focus should be on the rectification of themselves rather than directing, disturbing, or even conquering others. Humility was an essential step towards revolutionizing the world: 'The logic is, always, to search inside first: a man should search things first in himself, – good or evil, sufficient or deficient, analysing the elements and their conditions.'<sup>69</sup> Critically lacking humility and disturbing the symbiotic co-existence of humanity, war should

<sup>65</sup> Arai Ōsui, *Second book of fragments* (1897; Kyoto, 1941), reprinted in *Naikan kitōroku*, p. 63.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> Ōsui, *Inward prayer and fragments*, pp. 14–15.

<sup>68</sup> Ōsui, *Second book of fragments*, p. 96.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 97.

be an impermissible act, regardless of the reasoning behind its justification. Ōsui presses:

He [a king] may be an honest man, and may probably mean well, and think he is justified; but – unless every possible and rational means in his power of avoiding the war has been employed and is absolutely exhausted – he lacks one essential thing, the humane wisdom that works peace for his people and humanity.<sup>70</sup>

Furthermore, upholding this competing universal and egalitarian moral construct in opposition to the masculine imperial state, Ōsui continued to embrace gender equality. Thus, while Mori and many educators of the time supported *ryōsai kenbo*, or ‘Good Wife, Wise Mother’, as an official girls’ educational principle, Ōsui made an unprecedented, cynical reference to *ryōfu kenfu*, or ‘Good Husband, Wise Father’.<sup>71</sup> With the sloganeering of *ryōsai kenbo*, the state aimed to raise women who would support the patriarchal nation-state by acquiring domestic skills and caring for their family members, thereby protecting the country on the home front. By contrasting the state-sponsored claim of ‘Good Wife, Wise Mother’ to ‘Good Husband, Wise Father’, Ōsui highlighted not only its absence but the unequal expectation placed on men and women, which the education system perpetuated. To him, the unequally gendered education was a mere reflection of the male desire to pursue masculine imperial progress.

Ōsui’s absolute rejection of war and the masculine logic of civilization stands in opposition not only to imperialist Meiji policy (as represented by the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–5), but also to Harris, who was inconsistent and self-contradictory in relation to the Brotherhood’s teachings. Harris, on the one hand, claimed a *daimyō* ‘will declare himself neutral and a peacemaker in all Japanese conflicts’ while he simultaneously supported the *daimyō* establishing a ‘Military College’ and ‘Japanese Divine Army’ that would suppress all opposition.<sup>72</sup> At times, he expressed social Darwinist views and even came to support America’s colonization of the Philippines and imperial expansion as ‘the schoolmaster of races’ during the Philippine-American War in 1899.<sup>73</sup>

Harris’s contradictions, made all the more visible by Ōsui’s consistency, exemplified why the Brotherhood project in rural America stalled. Its members had to abandon all earthly obsessions that would hinder their spiritual development, including hierarchies based on race, nation, and gender, and work on an equal basis to realize their mutually interdependent Use. Nevertheless, Harris saw himself as the pivotal man who was chosen by God to fight spiritually for heaven against hell; and through him, good and evil on the Earth

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> See Arai Ōsui, *Arai Ōsui chosakushū*, ed. Arai Ōsui Chosakushū Hensankai, II (Yokohama, 2000), pp. 216–17.

<sup>72</sup> Harris, *A prophecy of Japan*, p. 1.

<sup>73</sup> Thomas Lake Harris to Edwin Markham, 5 Apr. 1899, qu. Schneider and Lawton, *A prophet and a pilgrim*, p. 487.

battled each other for the benefit of all. His patriarchy and exceptionalism were reflected in his own activities in the Brotherhood. For instance, while many members engaged in arduous everyday labour with hands, Harris spent most of his time studying, writing, administrating, and in a trance at his luxurious residence.<sup>74</sup> Indeed, Harris's exceptionalism contrasts with Ōsui's embrace of humility as a key step towards healing the world. Ultimately, Harris became a target of a religious and sexual scandal in 1891. Over 100 international media reports in San Francisco, Chicago, New York, and London raised mounting scepticism that Harris seemed preoccupied with money-making and, despite his avowed principle of celibacy, had relationships with various women under the guise of searching for a celestial counterpart.<sup>75</sup> It is unsurprising that Ōsui emphasized, potentially as a critique of Harris's alleged actions, that men and women should work on the regeneration of sexuality by overcoming their lustful nature: an important step for achieving the divine maleness and femaleness of God in one.<sup>76</sup>

Ōsui left the community for Japan in 1899 after Harris's scandal, and also after the community transformed its purpose from a religious to a non-religious one. The Brotherhood's winemaking – which was still on a small, experimental scale when Ōsui and Satsuma samurai joined the community – developed gradually to become big business by the mid-1880s, producing thousands of gallons annually thanks to the use of the advanced, steam-headed technology.<sup>77</sup> After Harris's departure (following the scandal) in 1892, Nagasawa, the only remaining Satsuma samurai, began to take control of the community, eventually inherited all of the Brotherhood's vineyards, and further developed the wine business into one of California's largest wineries – a 'miracle' in Reagan's words. He did so by employing Japanese labourers in 1892 and bringing his relatives from Japan in the mid-1890s. In short, as

<sup>74</sup> Schneider and Lawton, *A prophet and a pilgrim*, p. 186; John E. Van Sant, *Pacific pioneers: Japanese journeys to America and Hawaii, 1850–1880* (Urbana, IL, 2000), p. 87.

<sup>75</sup> On the media scandal, see 'Miss Chevallier's story', *San Francisco Chronicle*, 13 Dec. 1891, in Schneider and Lawton, *A prophet and a pilgrim*, pp. 534–43; Joshua Paddison, 'Disorderly doctrines: religion, race, and the Fountaingrove sex scandal of 1891–1892', *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era*, 14 (2015), pp. 475–502. Harris's teaching of celestial counterparts states that one has a counterpart of the other sex in the celestial world. Although Harris was married on Earth, he insisted that, as a true counterpart, he was married to his celestial being, Lily Queen, and had children with her. Women were the central matter for Harris in a highly essentialized, and occasionally contradictory, manner. This was reflected in Lily Queen who had two conflicting sides: 'one was cruel and frowning, the other beneficent and smiling'. Slade, 'Historical sketch of Thomas Lake Harris', p. 188.

<sup>76</sup> Ōsui, *Second book of fragments*, pp. 114–15.

<sup>77</sup> Slade, 'Historical sketch of Thomas Lake Harris', p. 204. Harris established 'Lay, Clark and Company' (headquarters in Santa Rosa and New York), which sold the bottles of their brand 'Fountain Grove Wine' in eastern America and internationally in the 1880s and onwards. It became the first Californian wine to be commercially sold in Britain and was also sold in Japan. *Ibid.*; Kadota and Jones, *Karifornunia no shikon*, p. 118; Thomas Pinney, *A history of wine in America: from the beginnings to prohibition* (Berkeley, CA, 1989), p. 334.

Gaye LeBaron describes, ‘the “Jesus Ranch”, as the townspeople had come to call it, became the “Jap Ranch”’.<sup>78</sup>

For Reagan and countless others, the flourishing wine industry at Fountaingrove was a miracle and a success story of Japanese immigrants achieving the ‘American Dream’. Managing one of the largest wineries in California, the Japanese were now becoming ‘civilizers’ in the West. This capitalist success, however, seems to have conflicted with Ōsui’s lifelong commitment to establishing a universal moral and religious construct. Indeed, while he had worked closely with Nagasawa for their everyday labour (the Use) during his early days,<sup>79</sup> it seems that he hardly interacted with Nagasawa and most Brotherhood members during his final years, staying alone in a retreat eight miles away from the community.<sup>80</sup> Although Ōsui never disclosed detailed reasons for his departure, it seems that the Brotherhood’s ‘capitalist success’ marked the end of his training in rural America.<sup>81</sup>

However, Ōsui’s departure illuminated a new chapter of the revolutionary endeavour; through Ōsui, the Brotherhood’s legacy was introduced and further sophisticated in early twentieth-century Japan. Many returnees from Europe and America, including former Brotherhood members from Satsuma, became celebrities in Japan and served the Meiji state or other established institutions. Ōsui, by contrast, returned after almost three decades and remained in the non-state field of moral-religious training. Inspired by Ōsui’s anti-imperial and anti-hierarchical vision of the transnational Infniverse of Mother-Father God, a number of grassroots networks of people practising Ōsui’s ideas of progress emerged, each with their own expertise and unique take on his philosophy. Indeed, they flocked to study under Ōsui in the very apotheosis of the Meiji state’s imperialism during and after the Russo-Japanese War. These non-state actors included university students, educators, housewives, medical doctors, farmers, thinkers, artists, and lawyers.<sup>82</sup> People of different professions and social strata begged to study Ōsui’s moral-religious teachings and stayed regularly at his barrack-like hermitage in suburban Tokyo.

The direct and indirect results of these included blind and deaf education for local children in Japan’s northernmost island of Hokkaido, where these children had been disenfranchised in state imperial education; strong urges of ‘Nonwar’ (*hisen*) when the state and intelligentsia supported the Russo-Japanese War; and Japan’s pioneering environmental movement, led by the political-ecological activist Tanaka Shōzō (1841–1913). Tanaka critically addressed not only ecological-human damages caused by Asia’s largest Ashio

<sup>78</sup> Gaye LeBaron, ‘Fountaingrove: an old winery’s link to Eden’, *Golden Gate North Magazine* (1972), pp. 23–5, 32–3, at p. 32.

<sup>79</sup> See Nagasawa’s diary printed in Akira Kadota, ‘Nagasawa Kanaye kenkyū III’, *Kagoshima Kenritsu Tanki Daigaku Kenkyū Nenpō*, 9 (1981), pp. 75–100.

<sup>80</sup> Harimoto Hideshi, *Arai Ōsui no hito to shisō: ningen keiseiron* (Tokyo, 1996), p. 29.

<sup>81</sup> Kadota Akira posits a similar conjecture in his short writing (in Japanese). See Kadota Akira, ‘Arai Ōsui to Nagasawa Kanaye’, in Shumpūsha Henshūbu, ed., *Ōsuiro shūsei* (Yokohama, 2014), p. 139.

<sup>82</sup> For some of these followers of Ōsui and their recollections on him, see Arai Ōsui Chosakushū Hensankai, ed., *Arai Ōsui chosakushū*, VIII (Yokohama, 2003).

Copper Mine, but more crucially, the state-endorsed imperial ideology that underpinned the copper production. What has rarely been emphasized is the fact that he was a passionate follower of Ōsui's teaching. In the early 1900s, soon after his return from the US countryside, Ōsui reacted to Tanaka's protest and developed an intellectual comradeship with him. In fact, Tanaka frequently came to stay at Ōsui's hermitage and studied his teachings of the Mother-Father God.<sup>83</sup> Accompanied by Ōsui's moral-religious mentorship, Tanaka continued to act against the Meiji state's pursuit of civilization, which, in his view, did not bring progress but retrogression and even 'Japan's death' (*bōkoku*).<sup>84</sup> This attitude stood in stark contrast to the Meiji state and intelligentsia's celebration of the strong and masculine Japanese empire. For Tanaka, the country was dying under the Meiji state's governance, which failed to protect its people's well-being and the symbiotic human-natural world in its quest for materialistic and civilizational achievements. The ultimate embodiment of his continued critique was when, in opposition to the state's policy of converting Yanaka village (near the mine) to a flood control reservoir, Tanaka relocated to this village and remained there until the end of his life, despite the state's forceful demolition of houses and the village's constant inundation. Indeed, Ōsui's departure from the 'civilizing' Brotherhood community was not the end of the story, but rather the beginning of a new chain of anti-imperial ideas and cultural-intellectual phenomena in early twentieth-century Japan.

#### IV

At a time of socio-political and moral turbulence in Britain, the US, and Japan, the paths of initially disparate non-state actors crossed unexpectedly in the American countryside. This signalled a collective effort to revolutionize the world order. The non-state transnational approach taken in this article has elucidated that the Brotherhood's religious and agrarian experiments posed a sharp critique of the white, male, Christian civilization of the West, and presented a serious attempt to replace such a civilization with a new egalitarian system. Their agriculture was conducted under the Mother-Father God in pursuit of such a new universality – not under a male God, the Star and Stripes, the Rising Sun, or the Union Jack. The new symbiotic and egalitarian vision of the world was embraced most fully by the defeated civil-war samurai, Ōsui, who travelled abroad to find a non-state, universal moral and religious construct. This forgotten samurai encountered an equally overlooked counterculture in rural America and fostered anti-imperial ideas and activism in early twentieth-century Japan – at a time when the Meiji state and its intelligentsia were promoting masculine imperial progress.

This article has laid the foundations for further exploration of this forgotten universal-scale envisioning of a new world order and its socio-cultural

<sup>83</sup> On Tanaka's thoughts and his everyday life, including his interaction with Ōsui, see Tanaka Shōzō, *Tanaka Shōzō zenshū*, ed. Tanaka Shōzō Zenshū Hensankai (20 vols., Tokyo, 1977–80).

<sup>84</sup> Tanaka referred to 'Japan's death' (*bōkoku*) multiple times in his writings. See, for example, Tanaka, *Tanaka Shōzō zenshū*, ed. Tanaka Shōzō Zenshū Hensankai, XVIII (Tokyo, 1980), p. 261.

influences felt across the globe. As the map in [Figure 1](#) suggests, future studies could locate and examine more areas and groups either directly or indirectly involved in this reformation attempt. Conceptually and methodologically, the discovery of non-state, transnational co-operation would be a useful starting point from which to reconfigure modern transnational history, which has long been masked by the Western modern discourse of civilization and progress.

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