



How Global Academic Stratification Affects Local Academies: The Inflated Role of Knowledge Reception in the Philosophy Discipline in Modern Japan

Matthew M. Chew

Department of Sociology, Hong Kong Baptist University

Kowloon Tong, Kowloon, HKSAR, China

Tel: 8-52-3411-7132 E-mail: mmtchew@hkbu.edu.hk

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Abstract

Sociologists of knowledge find that academic stratification is present among individual scholars, genders, networks, fields, and all kinds of scientific organizations, while communications scholars have been studying global cultural asymmetry for a long time. Yet few researchers have explored the global dimension of academic stratification. In this essay, I approach global academic stratification through examining one of its major negative impacts on academies in culturally peripheral countries. I investigate how the inflated function of foreign knowledge reception in peripheral academies leads to distorted academic organizational developments. I draw on historical data on the philosophy discipline in modern Japan to illustrate this negative impact. I find that academic publishers in modern Japan exploited the inflated function of knowledge reception, enriching and empowering themselves to the point that they became a major network base, sponsor, and decision-maker of the discipline.

Keywords: Modern Japan, Academic stratification, Academic globalization, Academic publishers, Global hierarchy

1. Introduction

Sociologists of knowledge, examining academic stratification mainly in the national context, find that academic stratification is present among individual scholars, genders, networks, fields, and all kinds of scientific organizations (Zuckerman, 1988: 526). Those in the top stratum command a disproportionately large share of the material, human, and symbolic resources of a discipline, and their abundant resources in turn enhance their ability to produce research of superior quality and to remain in the top stratum (Merton, 1968; 1988). This stratification is caused by meritocratic and fair standards of resource allocation as well as particularistic and unfair ones (Allen, 1990; Bedeian and Feild, 1980; Cole, 1978; Crane, 1970). If academic stratification is prevalent and not completely fair in the American domestic context, one would expect academic stratification in the global context to be even more severe because numerous additional factors including national boundaries, cultural differences, communication and logistic complications, and academic networking difficulties are present to obstruct meritocratic mobility in the global context.

Media scholars have paid much attention to the issues of cultural imperialism, global cultural asymmetry, media imperialism, and the global digital divide (Schiller, 1992; Tomlinson, 1999). Because academic knowledge is not considered to be a media product and the academy not as a media organization, media scholars have not extended examination of global cultural asymmetry to the area of academic knowledge. Yet if media products such as serious news can be international stratified, there is no reason to assume that academic products such as research monographs are entirely immune from international stratification.

Although global academic stratification has not been systematically studied, it is a daily experience of academics outside the US and Western Europe. It is manifested in numerous structural aspects such the predominance of American and UK universities (eg. in the two world rankings of universities), the use of the English language as the defacto official academic language, or the lion's share of US-based academic journals in scholarly databases and citation indices (Marginson and van der Wende, 2007). Global academic stratification is a central part of the reality of contemporary academia and it is becoming increasingly salient in the context of accelerating globalization. This essay aims to contribute to our understanding of global academic stratification through examining one of its major disruptive effects on peripheral academies: inflation of the knowledge reception function in local academic organizations.

It is my research design choice to approach global academic stratification through its effect rather than through providing empirical evidences to demonstrate that it exists. It is because I want to bracket contested theoretical definitions of stratification, hierarchy, and inequality as well as normative judgments of whether stratification is just or not. Additionally, I will not in this essay trace the origins of global academic stratification or explicate its sustaining mechanisms, though I think they are worthy undertakings for future research. What I wish to focus on is how global academic stratification practically impacts on the less developed academies of the world. With such a focus, I do not only clarify an unexplored aspect of global academic stratification, I also indirectly illustrate that global academic stratification exists and that it practically matters to knowledge production.

2. Global academic stratification impacting on peripheral academies

Academic organizations in a globally central country and those in a globally peripheral one can face very different institutional circumstances, operational functions, and legitimation opportunities even though the organizations in the two countries are similarly endowed. For example, the flagship universities of wealthy East Asian countries such as contemporary Japan, South Korea, and China enjoy huge budgets and highly-trained staff. Yet these universities host no internationally prestigious academic journals and they can hardly compete with Harvard or Cambridge in world university rankings.

Leading academic organizations in globally central countries perform the most rewarding and prestigious functions such as working on research frontiers and hosting leading journals. Those in the lower strata, peripheral countries are pressured to perform the less rewarding functions. For example, leading academic organizations in the periphery are compelled to divert resources from research frontiers to the less rewarding functions of translating, localizing, and disseminating the latest knowledge products from the center. They also have to invest a great deal of material and symbolic resources in cultivating a basic level of professional autonomy and cultural legitimacy in their own domestic social contexts. The negative impacts are often exacerbated by the self-reinforcing mechanisms of academic stratification. Once a global division of academic functions is formed and tacitly acknowledged, academic organizations in the global center will keep pursuing research frontier work while those in the global periphery will keep focusing on the less rewarding functions. As time goes on, academic organizations in the center become increasingly better equipped than those in the periphery in producing knowledge of superior quality, which in turn reinforces and justifies their occupation of the top international stratum.

3. An inflated role of peripheral academies: reception of knowledge produced in the academic center

There is a not very rewarding function of academic organizations that is often greatly inflated in the academic periphery: the reception of knowledge products made in the academic center. Knowledge reception is a regular component of the distributive and gatekeeping functions of academic organizations. It is present in most types of academic organizations, both in academic centers and peripheries. But in the context of peripheries, the reception of knowledge produced in academic centers represents a compulsory and particularly heavy workload. The element of gatekeeping is weak and reception is relatively passive. Notice that scholars and their organizations in academic centers have much more freedom in dealing with knowledge produced in the peripheries — that is why they can often afford to choose to ignore them. That is, these academic organizations have the option to choose to minimize their foreign knowledge reception function. This is especially true in the humanities and the social sciences, where foreign knowledge reception requires difficult prerequisites in terms of language and background knowledge.

With the knowledge reception function inflated, academic organizations in the periphery gear their activities and structure towards the dissemination of knowledge to audiences. Because of the additional technical requirements of cross-national communication such as translation, it takes a substantial amount of specialized resources and organizational restructuring to adapt themselves to the inflated function. This in turn strains their limited organizational resources. The negative consequences of the inflated function of reception are very visible and they are discernible in a wide range of organizations in the discipline of philosophy in modern Japan.

Dedication of organization resources to the inflated function was observable in libraries, departments, and professional journals and associations. Although a large portion of books in most libraries were in the native language, all leading universities had to make the effort to acquire a sizable Western language collection. The library of Kyoto Imperial University, for instance, increased the volume of its collection of Western books from 12 percent to 33 percent of the total from 1900 to 1940, and that of the library of Waseda University stayed at approximately 33 percent throughout the period (Kyoto Daigaku fusoku toshokan 1961:90, Waseda Daigaku toshokanshi hensan iinkai 1991: 254-5). Since domestic books were sometimes obtain for free from publishers and the prices of foreign books were higher than domestic ones, the actual percentage of funds of acquisition spent on Western books should have been even higher than those figures. For instance, the library of Waseda spent more than half of its funds for book acquisition on foreign books in the 1930s. While professional journals were supposed to be a channel for disseminating original research, some philosophical journals let translations of Western philosophical works occupy a considerable amount of their space and a few were actually specifically oriented to the translation and introduction of Western philosophy. Examples included

the journals *Riso* and *Koza*. Professional associations also devoted a significant amount of their resources to translation.

4. Academic publishers and knowledge reception in the philosophy discipline in modern Japan

The inflated receptive function impacts on the peripheral academy as a whole, affecting all major types of organizations in an academy including universities, academic departments, professional associations and journals, libraries, academic publishers, and research institutes. An important consequence is that the organizational types that are more structurally suited to perform knowledge reception than others in the organizational set are able to capitalize on the inflated function and gain a disproportionate share of resources of the discipline. With their increased share of resources in the discipline, they also tend to encroach on organizational functions that are originally specialized by other types of academic organizations. Academic publishers played such a role in the philosophy discipline in modern Japan. In this section, I examine how Japanese academic publishers extensively enriched themselves through the inflated function of knowledge reception and how their success distorted the distribution of authority and academic functions in the organizational ecology.

There are two organizational features of academic publishers that allow them to profit from the inflated function of knowledge reception more than others types of academic organizations. First, the specialized resources and organizational structural changes required by an academic publisher to adapt and take on an inflated receptive function are minimal. The academic publisher is originally an organization that specializes in knowledge distributive functions rather than productive ones. It does not maintain a specialized staff of academics, a library, or other overhead that would need serious institutional re-orientation in case of functional change. Second, an academic publisher is more capable than other organizations of nullifying the negative effects of the inflated knowledge receptive function on it. This inflated function jeopardizes the production of original knowledge, but the degree of originality of works that academic publishers publish is not highly dependent of two of the main goals of academic publishers: financial profit and socio-cultural influence. Most of the operations of an academic publisher — the printing of books, editorship, and administration — are also indifferent to the degree of originality of works they publish. In contrast, originality is essential to other academic organizations that focus on knowledge production as a main goal.

4.1 Academic publishers in modern Japan

In modern Japan, university presses were present but were neither extensively developed nor very receptive to philosophical works. For instance, the Waseda University Press was one of the largest university presses at the time, but it has not chosen to publish the philosophical journal organized by its own department of philosophy. Four commercial academic publishers — Iwanami shoten, Risosha shuppanbu, Omura shoten, and Kobundo shobo — developed a powerful presence in the discipline of philosophy. The establishment and growth of the first three especially heavily depended on their being able to profit from the increasing demand for Western philosophy.

Established in 1913, the Iwanami Press was the oldest, most financially successful, and most powerful in the discipline of philosophy among the four (Iwanami, 1964; Iwanami shoten, 1983). It expanded into many academic fields throughout the modern decades and became the largest academic publisher in modern Japan, but its initial success came from profitable publications on Western philosophy. The young intellectual and publisher Iwanami Shigeo started the risky publication project, the Iwanami Series on Philosophy, in 1915. His fledgling publishing business could have easily gone broke if the series was unprofitable, but he was convinced that the liberal cultural atmosphere in early 1910s Japan has created great demand for serious publications on Western philosophy. The magnitude of its success turned out to be phenomenal and it transformed Iwanami overnight into a financially established and prestigious academic publisher (Abe 1960: 140-3). The volume of sales went so much beyond expectation that the first three volumes of the series exhausted the paper supply reserved for all twelve volumes. The success prompted Iwanami and other publishers to invest in large projects of publication on Western philosophy.

Similar to Iwanami, Risosha and Omura presses gained business take-offs through doing large publication projects on the introduction and translation of foreign philosophy. The Risosha Press was a medium-sized publisher established on the financial and institutional basis of the intellectual journal *Riso*. The journal was established in 1927 by Okawa Seiichi, a lecturer and former graduate of the department of philosophy at Waseda. It focused on introducing foreign thought to a general intellectual audience. The first several issues gained immediate success both in terms of financial profit and popularity among the educated public. In editorials of the first few issues of *Riso*, it was said that reader response was unexpectedly enthusiastic. *Riso* apparently sold well as it was regularly announced that specific issues ran out and the journal could not accept any more back orders. Shortly after, Risosha Press turned into a publisher that specialized in publications of philosophy and social thought. Omura Gunjiro organized a journal, *Koza*, in 1919 that dedicated specifically to translations of important Western philosophical texts (Ide, 1963: 240-6). Since it lasted only until 1925, its influence on the discipline of philosophy was not as visible as the others, but its dependence on the inflated demand for foreign philosophy was similar to Risosha and Iwanami.

All of the four publishers gained academic authority and encroached on the functions of other major types of academic

organizations in the philosophy discipline in various ways. First, they became a key player in the production of knowledge through administering many large publication projects. Second, they gained significant command over the rewards system through providing a large amount of material resources to philosophers in terms of jobs and grants. Third, they played an importance role in the dissemination of research through operating house journals that feature philosophy as the primary subject. Fourth, they acted in the capacity of philosophical associations that provided cohesive institutional environment for scholarly networks. I elaborate each of the four processes below.

4.2 Publication projects and book series

There were many large publication projects of translations and introductory guides of Western philosophy in modern Japan. Although these publications did not have much claim to originality, most of them were packaged as more than mere reiterations of Western philosophy. They were marketed as serious, professional, and specialized knowledge. The first Iwanami Series on Philosophy provided a blueprint for subsequent publication projects. It featured introductory summaries of major fields in Western philosophy, a task that did not allow many personal and original elements, but the works were all written by highly recognized figures in their respective fields. The authors, including Abe Yoshishige, Abe Jiro, Ueno Naoki, Nishida Kitaro, and Tanabe Hajime among others, have gained professional reputations through original research and were too established to be regarded as mere translators. Most subsequent projects followed the example of the first Iwanami series and employed established philosophers as authors and/or very prominent philosophers as series editors.

The number of these publication projects was large and their coverage was broad. Iwanami's first project of translation of foreign philosophy was the Selected Works of Kant that began in 1925. The 18-volume series was edited by chaired professors of Tokyo Imperial and was translated by emerging young philosophers. A comparably large-scale project was the Complete Works of Hegel, the publication of which lasted from 1931 until after the Second World War. The second Iwanami Series on Philosophy was published between 1929 and 1932. Many series of lectures on various fields came out between 1930 and 1939. The first was a 12-volume series on intellectual thought and the seventh was an 18-volume one on philosophy. Miki Kiyoshi and Nishida Kitaro, the most recognized figures in the two respective fields at the time, were employed as editors of the two series. Translations of individual philosophical texts of the modern period, such as those of the German neo-Kantians, were continuously published by Iwanami since 1915. Several of them came out every year in the 1920s. The first project of translation of Risosha Press was a 20-volume Series on Major Modern Western Philosophical Works that began in 1929. It was edited jointly by Kaneko Chikusui and Kuwagi Genyoku, the leading Western philosophers in Waseda and Tokyo Imperial respectively. Individual German philosophy texts and a Series on Current European Philosophy began publication in the following years. Introductory guides that Risosha produced included a Lecture Series on New Philosophy, one on Anthropological Thought, a World History of Thought, and a Series on Philosophical Questions. In the short life span of the Omura press, it organized two publication projects, including a Series on Major Philosophical Texts and a series on Contemporary Essays on the Humanities. Its house journal can also be seen as a large and collective project of translation. Omura commissioned a group of established philosophers to translate philosophical monographs in small instalments and filled the issues of *Koza* with them. Kobundo was not as aggressive in organizing projects on Western philosophy because of its ties to indigenous schools of philosophy. It was responsible for only one series of translations on modern Western philosophy.

Because of the large number and wide scope of these book projects, they represented a considerable amount of the productive efforts of the philosophical community and allowed publishers to become as involved as others in the organization set in the productive function of the discipline. If not carried out under the initiation, administration, and funding of Iwanami, Risosha, and Omura Presses, the production of works in these projects would have been different. Some of these translations and introductory guides to philosophy would not have been written and others might have been produced at a slower rate, for example. The choice of works to be introduced would have also been less affected by the owners of academic presses, the series editors, the editorial staff of the presses, and the demand of the educated public.

4.3 An alternative reward system

The financial success of publication projects on Western philosophy guaranteed that editors, translators, and summarizers of Western philosophical works were in great demand. Japanese philosophers found themselves a rich and stable source of material rewards in academic publishers, a source that rivalled more conventional sources such as salaried positions at universities. Academic publishers functioned as major arbiters of rewards that are quite independent of the community of professional philosophers and the educated public audience. The Iwanami Press was most capable of functioning as an autonomous power in the rewards system of the discipline. Its behavior resembled research institutes that funded philosophical research without regard of immediate profit. Iwanami would discuss with established philosophers the appropriate kind of publication project to undertake and suitable philosophers to involve. Once those decisions were made, Iwanami would start making monthly payments to designated philosophers even before they wrote a single page.

The case of Tanaka Michitaro, a prominent specialist in Greek philosophy, illustrated this vividly. The young and yet to be established Tanaka was recommended to Iwanami for the job of translating the works of Plato. Tanaka, however, did not hand in the assigned translation until decades after the scheduled deadline (Tanaka, 1987). Although he already had received many months of commission without producing any work, Iwanami did not stop the funding or ask him to refund the commission. The case of Miki Kiyoshi demonstrated how the rewards of academic publishers constituted a significant alternative source of support to philosophers. Although recognized as a promising young philosopher in the 1920s, he failed in his bid for the position at Kyoto Imperial and hence was deprived of a chance to receive training abroad. Iwanami appreciated his potential and sponsored him to do several years of study in Europe. When Miki returned, he served as the chief editor of *Shiso* and various projects of Iwanami. Miki might not have been as successful and respected without training in Europe and exposure through the Iwanami press. Many other philosophers received small grants from Iwanami. When Watsuji Tetsuro, Tanabe Hajime and others left Japan for study abroad, they received a significantly large sum of *senbetsu* (pocket money to the departee) from Iwanami. From 1934 to 1936, Iwanami distributed special research grants, each worth a thousand yen, to ten scholars and students. Nishida Kitaro's niece and Tanabe Hajime were on the list. A large fund was established in 1940 through the private donation by Iwanami for supporting young scholars in fields including philosophy, with Nishida and Tanabe as two of the managers of the fund (Abe, 1960: 443-462).

4.4 House journals

The distributive function of academic publishers originally focuses on the publication of monographs, whereas that of professional academic journals lies in the gatekeeping of research through journal carriage. Even though academic publishers may contribute to the technical printing of professional journals, academic publishers do not usually control them. However, Japanese academic publishers encroached on the functions of professional journals in philosophy by producing house journals that featured philosophy as their major theme. The house journal *Koza* (Lectures) of Omura press was completely dedicated to philosophy, Risosha's journal *Riso* (Theory and Thought) also started out with a singular focus on philosophy but gradually extended to general intellectual thought as well, and Iwanami's *Shiso* (Thought) covered the humanities broadly with a discernible emphasis on philosophy.

These journals have been considerably successful in the competition with professional ones for manuscripts, readership, and prestige. Although *Riso* and *Shiso* catered to general intellectuals in addition to the professional community of philosophers, they were treated by professional philosophers as two of the most prestigious professional journals. Their prestige as a distributive channel for philosophical research was second only to *Journal of Philosophy and Philosophical Research*, the two leading professional journals of philosophy in modern Japan. Regular contributors of *Riso* and *Shiso* overlapped with those of *Journal of Philosophy and Philosophical Research*. Among their frequent contributors were Nishida Kitaro, Kuwagi Genyoku, and Kaneko Chikusui, the most prominent philosopher at Kyoto Imperial, Tokyo Imperial, and Waseda respectively. That even these three figures had to submit fairly frequently to the house journals despite the concurrent need to support their own department based professional journals showed how attractive these house journals were.

Established, operated, and funded by academic publishers, the house journals were partly autonomous from control by the discipline and community of philosophers. Most of the editors of *Riso* and *Shiso* were highly talented scholars that for one reason or another did not obtain a faculty position in philosophy departments. For example, the three most important editors of *Shiso*, Miki Kiyoshi, Watsuji Tetsuro, and Hayashi Tatsuo, were regarded as talented philosophers but also as renegades of the discipline who had ventured too far into general intellectual and cross-disciplinary activities. Another evidence of the relative autonomy of the house journals was the case of the journal *Shicho* (Tides of Thought), the predecessor of *Shiso*. Abe Jiro, an established liberal philosopher, convinced Iwanami and several fellow philosophers to organize *Shicho* in 1917. Iwanami decided to close down the journal in 1919, however, because he felt that it belonged too much to Abe and did not adequately coincide with the views and interests of the Iwanami press (Ikimatsu, 1981). *Riso* cultivated an image that distinguished itself from both the discipline and the general intellectual audience. It functioned as an informant on the latest trends of Western philosophy for both audiences and it later claimed to cover indigenous trends of philosophy as well. Most of its issues were organized around a philosophical topic or figure that had received recent attention in the West.

4.5 Providing an alternative organization basis for professional networks

As academic publishers controlled a large amount of rewards and wielded them autonomously in the discipline, philosophers formed networks on the basis of academic publishers as they would on the basis of professional organizations such as academic associations and professional journals. The network around Iwanami was sufficiently identifiable to earn the slightly derogatory appellation 'Iwanami batsu' (Iwanami clique). It outgrew from the earliest group of collaborators in Iwanami's large publication projects and from Iwanami's higher school friends who subsequently became philosophers. It was composed mostly of associate and chaired professors in Tokyo Imperial, Kyoto Imperial, and other imperial universities. The clique helped to reinforce the authority of these departments at the

expense of those in private universities. Another facet of the power of the Iwanami clique was illustrated through the Haraoka Incident. Haraoka Zoroku was offered a position in the newly established Tohoku Imperial, but members of the clique felt that the offer was unfairly secured through Haraoka's personal connection to the dean of Tohoku and that it upset the seniority system among the different generations of Tokyo Imperial graduates. Watsuji Tetsuro, a member of the clique and a senior to Haraoka, wrote a scathing critique of Haraoka's work that resulted in the withdrawal of the offer to Haraoka. The influence of the clique reached a peak around the early 1920s and gradually dissolved as a younger generation of scholars including Miki Kiyoshi and Hayashi Tatsuo replaced older philosophers as the chief editors of Iwanami.

Philosophers associated with Risosha did not form a very identifiable network because it did not offer as much resource as Iwanami. Nonetheless, it was clear that a specific group of younger and less established philosophers at Waseda, Kyoto and Tohoku Imperial, and Tokyo Arts and Sciences gained support from Risosha. Their articles were featured frequently in Riso and they became authors of publication projects initiated by Risosha. Omura press was too short-lived to have set up a network around it, but it gained the support of Ide Takashi, a professor of Tokyo Imperial. In contrast to the three Tokyo based academic publishers, Kobundo operated in the city of Kyoto. It cultivated connections to philosophers at Kyoto Imperial and convinced many members of the Kyoto school of philosophy to publish their works through it and to work for it as editors. Even Nishida Kitaro and Tanabe Hajime, long time contributors to Iwanami, began to publish their monographs through Kobundo beginning from the 1930s.

Apart from the four academic publishers, a book seller in modern Japan took advantage of the large demand for Western knowledge and gained a disproportionate amount of academic authority. Booksellers usually hold a negligible amount of academic authority, but Maruzen Book Company, the largest book importer in modern Japan, ascended to a recognizable presence in the discipline of philosophy through its efforts of importing Western books and journals. Maruzen accepted orders from individuals for purchases, published a monthly journal of information on Western books, and became the most convenient channel through which philosophers obtained specialized foreign publications. Although academics at the time often complained about its high prices, they prized it as an exceptionally bold and prescient selector of Western texts. Philosophers came to trust what was available in the bookstore as an approximate reflection of current trends of the discipline in the West. It became as important a gatekeeper in determining what and when philosophers read as libraries. And it also carried important books that libraries had overlooked. Its influence on the academic disciplines led philosophers to coin the term 'Maruzen-ism' in 1920s (Ide, 1963: 98).

5. Comparisons with the philosophy discipline in modern China

A comparison of the modern Japanese case to the modern Chinese one is instructive. Heavily influenced by old dynastic scholarship standards and practices, modern Chinese philosophers were generally less eager to internalize the latest philosophical developments in the West than modern Japanese philosophers (Chew 2005). One of the results was that academic publishers in modern China could not capitalize on an inflated knowledge reception in the discipline of philosophy; knowledge reception never became as inflated a function as it did in modern Japan. Many departments of philosophy in China, including those at Peking National, Qinghua, and Yenching, have more than half of their undergraduate courses specializing in topics in Western philosophy (Beijing Daxue zhexue yenjiuxi, 1994; Xiao, 1987). Translations of Western philosophical work and introductory guides to Western philosophy occupied a significant percentage of the publications on philosophy in modern China, but to a lesser extent than that in modern Japan (Chew, 2000). Professional associations devoted some of their resources to translation. For instance, one of the few projects organized by the Chinese Philosophical Association in its short reign was the establishment of a national 'Committee on the Translation of Western Philosophical Works.'

Academic publishers in China did not prosper from foreign knowledge reception as much as Japanese ones did. While the big five publishers, including Shangwu, Zhonghua, Shijie, Kaiming, and Dadong presses, published more translations and introductory works of Western philosophy than others, their establishment and success did not depend on the publication of philosophical publications. Translations and introductory works to Western philosophy never gained a conspicuous presence as they did in Japan. Many of them were published without much editorial planning or as a part of general projects on Western academic texts. For example, translations of Kant, Fichte, and Hegel were published through a general translation series, Great Books of the World. There were few publication projects on philosophy apart from the one edited by Zhang Dongsun and published by the Shijie press. Although publishers were responsible for the mechanical process of publication, professional associations, departments, and individual philosophers initiated and administered most of these projects. For example, the Chinese Association of Philosophy organized an ambitious series of translation of Western philosophy and a part of it was published by Zhonghua. The rewards that academic publishers offered to philosophers were not especially rich. Whereas a philosopher in modern Japan who was willing to translate or write introductory guides to Western philosophy could expect to receive commissions as he began writing for a publisher, those in modern China could not. In some cases, they instead had to pay a deposit to the publisher for the publishing cost (Hou, 1985: 33). The five publishers did not cultivate close

personal ties to philosophers or establish house journals that focused on philosophy. The house journal of Shangwu, *Dongfang zazhi*, was comparable to *Shiso* as the foremost general intellectual journal in their respective countries. But in contrast to *Shiso*, articles on philosophy were not especially favored and the chief editors of the journal did not network with the discipline of philosophy.

There was an exceptional group of small publishers and booksellers that made full use of the demand in Western philosophy to cultivate themselves into a challenge to other academic organizations in the discipline, however. Most of these were the numerous socialist publishers who focused on Marxist philosophy and social thought. The most important of them include *Shenghuo* and *Dushushenghuo* presses, and there were an additional number of tiny, local, or short-lived ones. For example, there were thirteen affiliate publishers under *Shenghuo*, and five under both *Dushushenghuo* and *Xinzhì*. They did not have stable financial resources but they had ample organizational support and audience. Many of these publishers were run and supported by Marxist intellectuals and communist activists. Social enlightenment and political influence, instead of profitability, constituted the main criteria in their operation. Translation and introductory works in Marxist philosophy attracted a large extra-professional audience composed of students and the politically conscious public. The larger ones among these publishers were fairly successful at creating an alternative organizational space in the discipline to challenge mainstream professional organizations of philosophy. For instance, the journals *Dushushenghuo* and *Shenghuo* carried the very successful series of introductory articles to philosophy, 'Dazong zhaxue' (Philosophy for the People), written by Ai Siqi in the 1930s. The publishers provided the distributive channel upon which Ai could critique philosophers positioned in university departments. The series catapulted the young Marxist intellectual Ai to fame and brought professional appeal to Marxist philosophy. Another example was that intellectual journals including *Dushushenghuo* and others organized by the socialist publishers initiated and disseminated the important 'Debate on New Philosophy' that lasted from 1931 to 1934.

6. Conclusion

Viewed from the conventional perspective of intellectual history, academic publishers' important role in the philosophy discipline in modern Japan may well be regarded as interesting and even positive. At a first glance, those academic publishers did not appear to do anything harmful; they were only reacting to the educated public's demand for Western philosophical works. Even though they gained power over the philosophy discipline and control over professional philosophers, they did not appear to abuse it. Additionally, they provided an extra source of material resources for the discipline. However, viewed from the perspective of the sociology of knowledge, modern Japanese academic publishers were interfering with disciplinary coherence, which in turn could disrupt scholarly network-building and complicate the processes of knowledge production. They were also setting up alternative rewards systems and organizational bases that fragment the disciplinary community. In the context of global academic stratification, modern Japanese academic publishers exploited the inflated function of knowledge reception to enrich themselves. Although they utilize their wealth and power to contribute to philosophical knowledge production, they did so in a particular way that reinforces global academic stratification. For example, by investing singularly and heavily on translations and introductions to Western philosophy, they unintentionally discouraged modern Japanese philosophers to focus on original knowledge and research frontiers.

The modern Japanese case that I analyzed is historical, but the findings based on it are also relevant to peripheral academies in the present. The foreign knowledge reception function is still much more inflated in the academic periphery than the academic center. While information and communications technological advances are probably lowering the per unit resources needed for receiving foreign knowledge, faster and more voluminous foreign knowledge reception is also expected. For example, the enormous amount of library resources required for acquiring Western academic journals is still a practical difficulty for peripheral academies. The reception of foreign knowledge still involves translation efforts and background understanding. That is why the scholarly communities of academic centers still import far less foreign knowledge than those in academic peripheries do. Academic publishers' exploitation of the inflated function of knowledge reception may perhaps not be replicated in contemporary times; their success in modern Japanese philosophy was specific to a particular discipline, nation, and historical period. But the inflated function of foreign knowledge reception could keep on burdening knowledge production in peripheral academies and further reinforcing global academic stratification.

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