

Taisho Consumer Society

- New, fluid relationships
- Space of the city, Tokyo
- New art: “I-novel”
- Akutagawa Ryunosuke
- *ero-guro-nansensu*
- Edogawa Rampo



- *Mobo/Moga*
- “*Taisho chic*”
- *Osaka Elegy* (1936)



Ero-Guro

- Defamiliarizes the everydayness of capitalism
- Reveals the grotesque right in front of us

Classic Gold Standard

- Basis of international money and trade
- Built on autonomy of central banks and international finance
- Strained by WWI expenses and rebuilding
- Deflationary and undemocratic
- Japan on gold in 1897

1920s retrenchments and retreats

- Desperate attempt to restore currency to prewar par
- Required severe cuts amidst existing recession
- “Frugality campaigns” and the enlistment of women in economic initiatives
- Failed attempts in Europe and Japan
- Gold restored in 1930 by PM Hamaguchi
- Discovery of “effective demand” problem

“Retrenchment Ditty”

1929

Even the blooming flower must close
isn't it so?

Now it's time to close the open purse
(That's right, absolutely!)

[Chorus]

It's the time, it's the season
all together, hand in hand (yes!)
Let's retrench, let's retrench....

Induced Deflation

Keynes, 1936

Now what does this mean in plain language? Our problem is to reduce money wages and, through them, the cost of living.... By what *modus operandi* does credit restriction attain this result?

In no other way than by the deliberate intensification of unemployment. The object of credit restriction, in such a case, is to withdraw from employers the financial means to employ labour at the existing level of prices and wages. The policy can only attain its end by intensifying unemployment without limit, until the workers are ready to accept the necessary reduction of money wages under the pressure of hard facts.

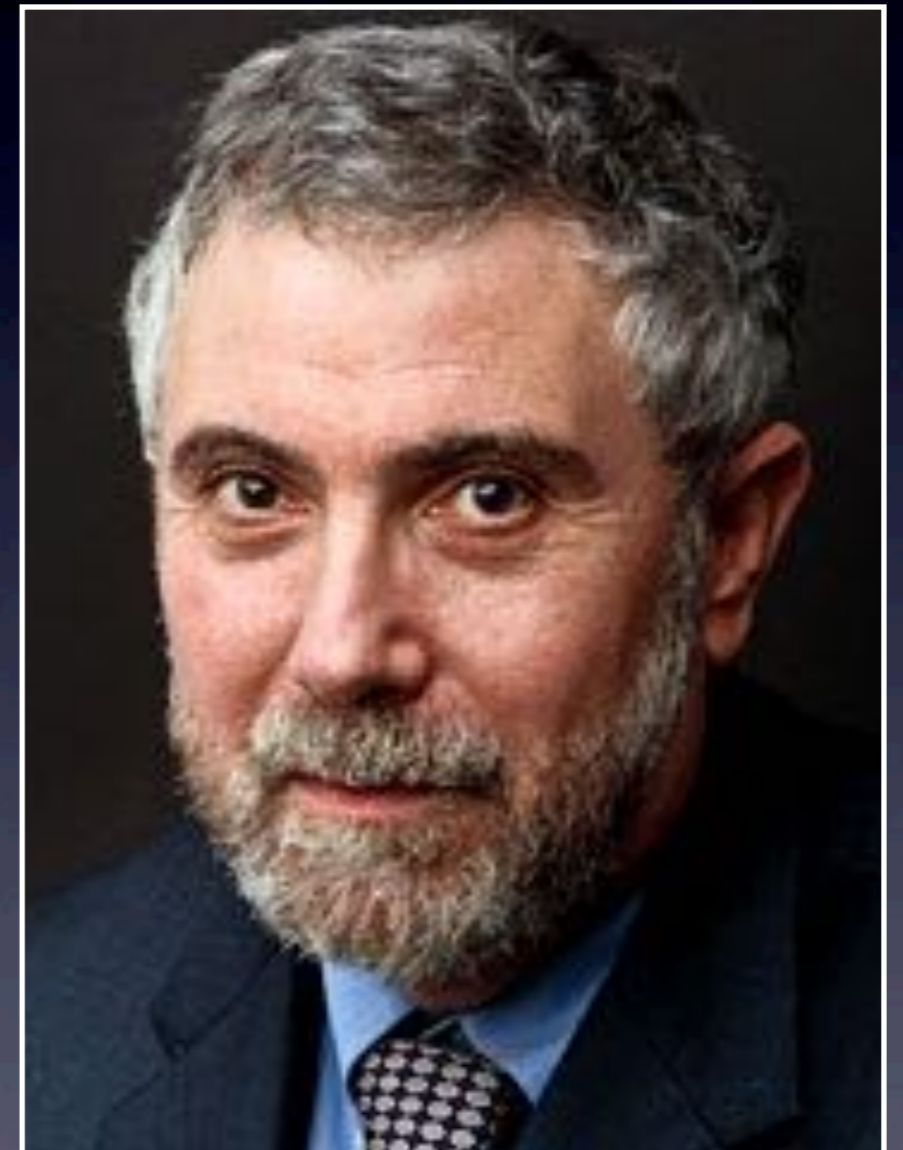
Induced Deflation, or “Austerity Programs”

...Iceland seems, if anything, to be doing better than [Ireland]. Its economic slump was no deeper than Ireland's, its job losses were less severe and it seems better positioned for recovery. In fact, investors now appear to consider Iceland's debt safer than Ireland's. How is that possible?

...Iceland has...benefited from the fact that, unlike Ireland, it still has its own currency; devaluation of the krona, which has made Iceland's exports more competitive, has been an important factor in limiting the depth of Iceland's slump.

None of these heterodox options are available to Ireland, say the wise heads. **Ireland, they say, must continue to inflict pain on its citizens — because to do anything else would fatally undermine confidence.**

NOV 25, 2010 NYT



Anti-*zaibatsu* movements

1. Bury the traitorous millionaires
2. Crush the present political parties
3. Bury the high officials and nobility
4. Bring about universal suffrage
5. Abolish provisions for inheritance of rank and wealth
6. Nationalize land and bring relief to tenant farmers
7. Confiscate all fortunes above 100,000 yen
8. Nationalize big business
9. Reduce military service to one year

Unification of Military, Culture, and Economic Expansion

1931-1945

- International Collapse of the Gold Std 1920s
- Great Depression 1929
- Fascist putsches 1930-2
- Manchurian Incident September 18, 1931
- Establishment of Manchukuo, 1932
- US leaves Gold; Hitler to Power in Germany, 1933
- 2.26 Incident 1936
- Rape of Nanking 1937
- Pearl Harbor December 1941
- Hiroshima and Nagasaki August 1945

Anti (liberal) capitalist violence 1930-36

- Prime Minister Hamaguchi assassinated 1930
- Manchurian Incident Sept. 18, 1931
- *Ketsumeidan jiken* and *Go ichi go jiken*, March to May 15, 1932
- *Ni ni roku jiken* (二二六事件) Feb. 26, 1936

Shōwa shin

Kita Ikki, *Outline for the
Reorganization of Japan,*
(1919)

Kita's *Outline*

Section I: The People's Emperor

Suspension of the Constitution. In order for the emperor and the entire Japanese people to establish a secure base for the national reorganization, the emperor will, by a show of his imperial prerogative, suspend the constitution for a period of three years, dissolve both houses of the Diet, and place the entire nation under martial law.

Kita's *Outline*

Section I: The People's Emperor

Note: A coup d'état should be regarded as a direct manifestation of the authority of the nation, that is, of the will of society. All the progressive leaders have arisen from popular groups. They arise because of political leaders like Napoleon and Lenin. In the reorganization of Japan there must be a manifestation of the power inherent in a coalition of the people and sovereign.

Kita's *Outline*

Section I: The People's Emperor

The Restoration of the People's Freedom: The various laws that in the past have restricted the freedom of the people and impaired the spirit of the constitution—the Civil Service Appointment Ordinance, the Peace Preservation Police Law, the Press Act, the Publication Law, and similar measures—will be abolished.

Rationalization of Production and Consumption and the General Mobilization for Total War

1930 Industrial Rationalization Bureau: reduce wasteful excesses of free competition by promoting cartels and trusts

1931 Important Industries Control Law: legalized creation of industry-wide cartels that could fix members' output, prices, market shares, and conditions of entry. Cartels established in coal mining, electric power, shipbuilding, and textiles

1938 Mobilization Laws

1940 Imperial Rule Assistance Association (IRAA)

1942 General Mobilization Law

Manchukuo

New Socio-Economic Order

Tosei-ha vs. Kodo-ha

- Kodo-ha largely exhausts itself in 2.26 Incident
- Tosei-ha and Tosei-bureaucrats are in charge (Tojo)
- New *zaibatsu* (lacking banks)
- Manchukuo as new socio-economic order more advanced than even Japan
- **Autarky**



Manchukuo, 1932

Ishihara Kanji

- Architect of Manchurian Incident Sept., 18, 1931
- Architect of Pan-Asian Empire against Stalin
- “Total War” with Soviets
- “Final War” with US
- Replaced by Tojo by 1937



Ishihara Kanji, May 1931

The Value of Manchuria and Mongolia

A world dominated by the five superpowers that emerged from the Great War in Europe will eventually be united into one system. A struggle for supremacy between the United States, as the representative of the West, and Japan, as the champion of the East, will decide who will control it.

The basic principle of our national policy must be to acquire rapidly what we need to qualify as the champion of the East.

Ishihara Kanji, May 1931

To overcome the current economic depression and to secure what we need to become the champion of the East requires rapidly expanding the borders necessary to maintain our sphere of influence. Although the Manchuria-Mongolia region is not suited to the solution of our population problem or endowed with sufficient natural resources for Greater Japan, at the present moment the solution of the so-called Manchuria-Mongolia problem should be our first priority....

Kishi Nobusuke

- Architect of Manchukuo's "Five Year Plan"
- Minister of Commerce and Industry, later Munitions, 1940s
- Unindicted war criminal in Sugamo



New Socio-Economic Order for Total War

- Military planning for another war with Russia/Soviets since 1905
- Control Laws for strategic industries starting in 1918
- Nomonhan attack on Soviets May-June 1939
- Disastrous Defeat
- Move to “Strike South” position to secure access to resources for another try

New Socio-Economic Order

- Technology + National Spirit (work ethic)
- Requires expertise in management
- Requires creation of worker with spirit of self-sacrifice for public good (propaganda)
- Total War planning is always in the background