

***Doxa*, Common Sense, and Everydayness in Miki Kiyoshi's Works: A Critical Account**

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Abstract:

This paper explores the notions of *doxa* (ドクサ) and common sense (常識) in the works of Miki Kiyoshi, particularly his *Introduction to Social Science* 『社会科学概論』 (1932) and *Introduction to Philosophy* 『哲学入門』 (1940), as well as other small journalistic pieces. I aim to show that Miki sought to counter the academic and elitist disdain toward common sense by characterizing it as an active form of social knowledge. After examining these texts, I will turn to Tosaka Jun's analysis of the concept and examine Miki's position from the perspective of Tosaka's principle of everydayness (日常性). Then I will compare it to Miki's position as stated in his *Philosophical Anthropology* 『哲学の人間学』 (1933–1937). In the final section, I will reflect on the limits of Miki's notion of common sense and its possible expansions.

Keywords: *Miki Kiyoshi, Tosaka Jun, common sense, doxa, everydayness, social knowledge*

1. Introduction

Is common sense a mere passive result of ideology or a phenomenon able to generate its own structural changes? In this paper, I aim to show that the concept of common sense occupied a central place in Miki Kiyoshi's work. This concept undoubtedly reflected Miki's conviction that philosophy should not establish a strict boundary between popular knowledge and enlightened knowledge. On the contrary, as a writer, Miki was always an advocate of culture as a tool for the formation of citizenship and a better society. However, a careful analysis of common sense also reveals the weaknesses of Miki's philosophy. It should be recognized that this has already been pointed out by Goto (2007), who analyzed the concept of common sense in the work of Tosaka Jun (Miki's younger colleague). Although they shared a similar intellectual atmosphere and interests, Tosaka became a severe critic of his friend after he noted that Miki's philosophy was becoming increasingly moderate. Nevertheless, they shared some philosophical convictions. As Goto pointed out, "the focus on common sense [both as 共通感覚 and 常識], and the concern about the loss of ground [were], in a sense, the common

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denominators at the meta-level of their individual differences, and in this sense Miki and Tosaka could be said to have been in agreement” (Goto, 2007, 74). In this paper I will dig deeper into the differences between these two authors to show the limits of Miki’s approach.¹

Instead of referring to Miki’s *Logic of the Imagination* 『構想力の論理』, which is Miki’s most well-known work, I would like to refer specifically to other less-referenced texts, such as *Introduction to Social Science* 『社会科学概論』 (1932)², *Introduction to Philosophy* 『哲学入門』 (1940), and *Philosophical Anthropology* 『哲学の人間学』 (1933–1937), together with some short journalistic pieces.

Although I reflect critically on the evolution of Miki’s thinking about common sense, I am more interested in the role that common sense played in the philosophical *milieu* of that time, drawing attention to the field of the everydayness and its possible innovative and creative potential. Looking closely at Miki’s work, it is possible to identify a constant interest in the concept of common sense and even a certain semantic evolution; thus, in the second and third sections of this paper, I trace Miki’s reflections on common sense between 1932 and 1940. In the fourth section, I introduce Tosaka Jun’s critical analysis of common sense, briefly comparing it with Gramsci’s and contrasting it with Miki’s. I aim to show that Tosaka’s idea of everydayness forces us to critically re-evaluate the limits of Miki’s philosophy. In the fifth section, I introduce Miki’s own understanding of everydayness, particularly focusing on his *Philosophical Anthropology* and his article “Journalism.” In the final section, I use Miki’s and Tosaka’s formulations to suggest a possible field in which this investigation could be useful and to point out the limits of Miki’s notion of common sense.

2. *Doxa* as a Form of Social Knowledge

Common sense is a vague concept. From a liberal institutionalist perspective, it refers to some basic faculties that individuals possess, such as the perception of information available in their environment, the ability to reason, and some subjective preferences that shape their choices. From a sociological point of view, it is a social construct that underpins the activities of different groups. The philosophical notion of common sense has a long history. Some authors, such as Aristotle, used the term to highlight the relationship between perceptual capacities. The ‘αἴσθησις κοινήν’ in *De Anima* III¹ (425a27–28) does not refer to a sixth sense but, rather, a ‘central sense faculty’ that coordinates all the other senses (see Fritz and Polansky, 2018: 136). Nevertheless, in his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle opened the door to a notion of common sense that reflects generally accepted knowledge in a given community (Rh. 1355a). Concerning the complex evolution of the term, it is also important to mention the so-called Scottish ‘philosophy of common sense’ espoused by Thomas Reid, who regarded the concept as “those propositions that properly functioning adult human beings in worlds like ours explicitly believe or take for granted in their ordinary activities and practices” (Cuneo and Woudenberg, 2004: 4). We will encounter Reid’s formulation again in the fourth section on Tosaka.

1 Also, Odagiri (2020) highlighted the importance of Miki’s notion of everydayness.

2 This title can certainly be confused with Miki’s 1929 work 『社会科学の予備概念』, which was translated as *Introductory Concept of Social Science* (Piovesana, 1997: 183) and *Preparatory Concepts in the Social Sciences* (Townsend, 2009: 153). Instead, Wirtz (2020: 76) used *Preparatory Concepts in Social Science* to translate 『社会科学概論』. Although the titles are similar, I decided to use *Introduction to Social Science* to translate 『社会科学概論』.

Miki's concept of common sense did not center on the systematics of self-evident propositions but, rather, on their essential sociality and pragmatism. The work *Introduction to Social Science* was published in the series *Philosophy* edited by Iwanami Shoten. This book was strongly influenced by the sociological work of Max Weber and Karl Mannheim, the latter of whom was Miki's tutor during his time in Heidelberg. The term 'social knowledge' (社会的知識), which Miki employed throughout the book, referred to the forms of knowledge that circulate in a society. This was also similar to what Mannheim called a 'sociology of thought.' The thesis of Mannheim's most famous book *Ideology and Utopia* (first edition 1929), which certainly inspired Miki, was that some modes of thought can only be understood by analyzing their social origins, accounting for what he termed 'pre-scientific knowledge':

Hence it is to be regarded as one of the anomalies of our time that those methods of thought by means of which we arrive at our most crucial decisions, and through which we seek to diagnose and guide our political and social destiny, have remained unrecognized and therefore inaccessible to intellectual control and self-criticism [...] The significance of social knowledge grows proportionately with the increasing necessity of regulatory intervention in the social process. This so-called pre-scientific inexact mode of thought, however (which, paradoxically, the logicians and philosophers also use when they have to make practical decisions), is not to be understood solely by the use of logical analysis. (Mannheim, 1979: 1–2)

Ironically, even sociology, while trying to provide rational explanations for social phenomena, has to admit that some social processes do not rely on a purely 'rational' understanding of facts or decision-making. This point seemed especially important for Miki. He was interested in the more fundamental forms of thought disseminated in a social context; thus, he wrote:

For example, common sense [常識] is often seen as just pre-scientific knowledge and is not always a subject of special interest for philosophers, but common sense has a special existence that can never be seen merely as pre-scientific. As a form of social knowledge, common sense is of almost incomparable importance to the form of knowledge about nature. (MKZ 6: 292)

In his description, Miki pointed to two basic forms of social knowledge: *doxa* and *mythos*. Far from dismissing these forms as pre-scientific (in the sense of 'non-scientific'), Miki insisted that they should be regarded as proper scientific objects of study and sources of cognition. While *mythos* (i.e., myth) refers to the form of knowledge that proliferates in a period of political anxiety, *doxa* (belief, opinion) refers to the 'normal' state of a society, and Miki explicitly included common sense as a component of *doxa* (MKZ 6: 295).

Doxa expresses a givenness—what is 'already' (既に) a given in a society—as knowledge. Since it is a mere assertion, Miki argued that *doxa* provides no value in terms of truth or falsehood. It does not provide truth (真); it establishes correctness (正しさ). Of course, this does not hinder a 'correct' *doxa* from being true, but truth and *doxa* belong to fundamentally different 'modes' of being (MKZ 6, 298). This is because *doxa* could be different; it is not eternal in the sense of ideal truth, and the contingency of *doxa* is historical and contextual. For this reason, *doxa* should not be understood as an individual opinion but, rather, as something social, which Miki saw as politically relevant.

The condition enabling *doxa* to exist as social knowledge is what Miki called a society in a ‘normal state’ (常態), with a tendency toward an equilibrium that can maintain social stability. This is what distinguishes an organic historical period from a critical one (MKZ 6: 301). Common knowledge is necessary for the reproduction of society, and it operates through the repetition of customs and practices, but this is not its only function. It is also the field supporting the social communication of science. In this sense, Miki’s *doxa* was not opposed to science: ‘What is necessary for the social *praxis* is not formative knowledge, but rather the knowledge that reaches a conclusion’ (MKZ 6: 302). This is what Miki called the ‘making of common sense’ (常識化), which refers to knowledge that can be expressed in the form of a ‘slogan’ (スローガン) (MKZ 6: 302).

Since science can become *doxa*, there is also the possibility of *doxa* becoming science. Nevertheless, in this case, *doxa* becomes a dogma; it ceases to naturally incorporate new elements and begins to operate teleologically to maintain social cohesiveness. In science, there is an element of pursuit that keeps a field perennially open to new theories. When common sense becomes fixed, it becomes a dogma because the limit it sets ‘is not inherent in the essence of science’ (MKZ 6: 304); hence, dogma is not a real science because it excludes new discoveries and paradigm shifts.

As mentioned earlier, *doxa* is only to be thought of in relation to its counterpart—*mythos*. Later, in his text, Miki stated that, since human consciousness mediates between fact (事実) and being (存在), and *doxa* and *mythos* offer two ways of relating to this dialectic: while *mythos* refers to consciousness of the transcendental discontinuity between fact and being, *doxa* posits awareness of its internal continuity. Fact and being played a central role in Miki’s book *Philosophy of History* 『歴史哲学』 (1932), but they also rested on an idea that anchors all his works: the basic experience (基礎経験), a pre-discursive existential realm of experience, which cannot be reduced to the order of objective being. *Doxa* and *mythos* are the two basic cognitive social attitudes that communicate with this primitive level of existence.³ Of course, Miki was more interested in *mythos*, which has transformative potential, whereas *doxa* tends to reinforce conventions; thus, *doxa* was given the name ‘*gesunder Menschenverstand*,’ which has some of the negative connotations of German idealism. As suggested earlier, ‘it is possible to see that, because *doxa* contains both sensible and judgmental elements, they can easily be joined or, rather, dogmatized [ドグマ化] as scientific knowledge within itself’ (MKZ 6: 309). Conversely, *mythos* is intuitive, based on will and action, meaning that it is able to transcend the reality of the ontic staticity. This explains the temporal nature of *mythos* versus the spatial character of *doxa*. *Mythos* acts as a vertical index of historical moments of crisis but cannot survive without further institutionalization. It is temporal because it provides a foundational myth—a story about origins (see MKZ 6: 308). By contrast, it can be said that *doxa* is spatial because it underpins tradition, providing a wider social basis for conventions. It does not provide a historical narrative but, rather, a set of beliefs that are ‘already there,’ around which people can gather in everyday life.

3. Common Sense and Philosophy

In 1932, the editor of the journal *Tettō* 『鐵塔』 confronted Miki with the question “Can philosophy be [made] easy?” (see the homonym text in MKZ 6: 461–463). He responded with a brief opinion essay arguing that philosophy is, in fact, difficult due to the nature of the questions it asks and

3 The final version of *Introduction to Social Science* was amended in 1941. Interestingly, some parts that mentioned the concepts of myth and *doxa* were, in fact, added at this point (see the “Postscript”, MKZ 6: 262–263).

that, as a specialized discipline, like others, it cannot avoid the use of technical jargon. This does not mean that philosophy should be elitist. Miki's own attitude always opposed the elitism of philosophy. He claimed, for example, that the classics are normally easier to read than philosophical manuals, because classics address key questions more directly. Miki's hostility toward elitism was evident in his increasingly active participation in the public sphere.

Some years later, in 1936, in his column "One topic a day" 「一日一題」 for the evening edition of the *Yomiuri Shinbun* 『讀賣新聞夕刊』, Miki wrote a piece called "The Common Sense of Society" 「社会の常識」, which explicitly reflected this position.⁴ Therein, he protested against some forms of utopian aristocratism that disdained the ideas of the people (民衆). He wrote: "Such aristocracy is quite common when reformers develop out of moral inspiration or conviction, not based on objective recognition of the connection between social organizations" (MKZ 16: 106).⁵ For him, although common sense was not synonymous with truth, truth was always 'hidden' within common sense.

Later, in 1940, Miki published his *Introduction to Philosophy* 『哲学入門』, resulting from a series of lectures he gave in 1938. As the title indicates, this book was directed at a general audience rather than specialists. His *Introduction to Philosophy* was another example of Miki's anti-elitist attitude, both on account of its accessible style, but also because it dealt directly with the problematic relationship between common sense and philosophy. He dedicated an entire section to the notion of common sense, which he defined as follows:

Common sense is the accumulation of social experience, and many of our actions are carried out according to common sense. Common sense is, firstly, active [行為的] knowledge. Common sense is said to be practical, but practical means empirical and active. Actions, such as actions in the environment, are technical [技術的], and common sense is always technical knowledge. Practical also means everyday-like [日常的], and common sense relates to daily life and is characteristically everyday-like. (MKZ 7: 33)

It should be stressed that, for Miki, as Nishida's student, experience is never merely passive; hence, this 'accumulation of social experience' did not refer to an imposed sedimentation of habits but, instead, to an active self-construction of traditions. In this sense, common sense is 'active,' as evidenced by the 'negative resistance' through which common sense sometimes manifests. The pragmatism of common sense reminds us of Miki's concept of *doxa*, since he also defined the nature of common sense as assertive and organic, which is a condition for maintaining socio-spatial cohesion, although it may vary from place to place. While the common sense of one society can contradict the common sense of another society, within one society, common sense functions harmoniously: 'In a certain society, one common sense does not collide with another common sense, and if it collides, it is not common sense' (MKZ 7: 36).

4 The text was reprinted in Miki's collection *Epoch and Morals* 『時代と道徳』 (1936).

5 The article was published in March, one month after the general election. Miki referred to the political defeat of the conservative party Rikken Seiyūkai (立憲政友会), and the favorable results of the recently formed socialist party (社会大衆党), as resulting from the 'negative resistance' of people's common sense. He called the Shakai Taishūtō 'proletarian,' although it was, in fact, a moderate left party. He also mentioned the so-called February 26 incident, in which a group of young officials from the Imperial Army attempted to seize power. He interpreted the 'silence' of the people as a general fatigue with politics and political parties (see MKZ 16: 107).

Despite the similarities, Miki seemed to exclude the disruptive element of *mythos* from this new formulation, emphasizing social homogeneity at the cost of diminishing revolutionary potential. However, this is only partially accurate. Although it is true that Miki failed to develop here his notion of *mythos*, he employed the term ‘critical spirit’ (批判的精神) to refer to the internal tendency toward change that arises in a society and pushes common sense to its limits, destroying it. Hence, common sense always reinvents itself, as old conventions are replaced by new ones (see MKZ 7: 39).

Science, driven by the critical spirit, transcends common sense because it elevates it to a logical, theoretical, and abstract point of view. However, as mentioned before, common sense cannot be eliminated. Miki explained that cultural progress results from the scientification of common sense (MKZ 7: 41),⁶ and it is here that technology comes into play:

As science becomes technology and enters into everyday life, it enters into common sense. Electricity becomes common sense for electric lights and trains, but not knowing about electricity indicates a lack of common sense.⁷ This is because common sense is originally knowledge from a position of action, and science also takes a position of action in [the case of] technology. The fact that common sense and science are different does not mean that it is impossible or meaningless to make science common sense. It is important for the progress of common sense and the development of science to make science common sense, but it requires a special method. It is not common sense to disrespect science just because it is different, and it is also unscientific to think that common sense can be completely replaced by science. (MKZ 7: 42)

Technology appears here as a mechanism mediating science and common sense. The mention of technology is not surprising, since in 1938, Miki published a text about technology in the journal *Thought* 『思想』 that would become the third chapter of his *Logic of the Imagination*.⁸ These thoughts would be expanded in 1941 in his *Philosophy of Technology* 『技術哲学』. Regarding *Introduction to Philosophy*, it seems evident from the passage quoted above that Miki’s notion of technology was rather broad, since it referred to the capacity of humans to mediate between a subject (主体) and an object (客体) or the environment (環境) (see MKZ 7: 202).

For Miki, the common ground underpinning common sense, technology, science, and even philosophy was action, since action mediates between a subject and an object, transforming the world by transforming the subject at the same time; thus, ‘philosophy is the unification of science and life by mediating between the position of science and the position of common sense itself’ (MKZ 7: 66).

4. Tosaka’s Analysis of Common Sense

Another author who was actively engaged during this time with the concept of common sense was Tosaka Jun, Miki’s younger colleague. In 1935, Tosaka published what is now his best-known

6 An idea that we found already in *Introduction to Social Science*.

7 Miki plays with the expression 非常識 (a negation of common sense), which can be translated as ‘senselessness’ or ‘irrationality.’

8 Actually, Miki also reflected on the relationship between common sense and technology in his *Logic of the Imagination* (see, for example, MKZ 8: 187–188).

work, *Japanese Ideology* 『日本イデオロギー論』, which included the text “Analysis of Common Sense” 「〈常識〉の分析」 (an essential text for understanding Tosaka's articulation of his theory of ideology).

Alongside Miki, Tosaka defended the philosophical rehabilitation of common sense, declaring that, “in fact, according to Japanese academics these days, common sense is always something negative, so they think that, for example, science, and art are being vulgarized [卑俗化] and popularized [通俗化]” (TJZ 2: 260). Nonetheless, as we will see, his elucidation differed from that of Miki in many respects. For Tosaka, academic philosophy unwittingly faced the internal paradox of the concept:

Common sense has two contradictory aspects when contemplated commonsensically [常識的]. On the one hand, it means non- (or anti-) scientific, non- (or anti-) philosophical, non- (or anti-) literary, etcetera - a negative or anti-knowledge. On the other hand, it means, by contrast, established, normal, socially applicable, practical, sound, and common knowledge. (TJZ 2: 251)

Instead of separating these meanings, Tosaka tried to consider the internal tension of the concept. What is seen as its normative side had its origin in the particular conservatism of the Scottish conception of common sense. While other traditional rationalists argued that every human being is armored with the faculty of reason, they also argued that this faculty should be trained, corrected, and improved. Conversely, according to Tosaka, Reid's concept of common sense relied on the assumption of an already perfected and fixed capacity that cannot be changed. Tosaka recognized the classist and historical origin of this concept (TJZ 2: 256–257), but what was more problematic for Tosaka was another assumption: the idea that common sense can be thought of as an ‘average’ of the common sense of all individuals in a society.

In simple terms, if such a thing were possible, it would not be the same as summing up all the knowledge individuals have and calculating the average amount of knowledge from the total. If, in a given group of people, a minority acquires a higher level of knowledge (for example, by studying), this does not mean *per se* that the common sense of the whole group improves. Moreover, even if common sense is understood as ‘average common sense,’ this does not explain how real common sense works. Consequently, Tosaka drew attention to the ideal aspect of common sense; to its function as an ideal or goal. Like bourgeois electoral systems, argued Tosaka, public opinion does not reflect the real interests of the majority but, instead, works as a norm that pushes opinion in a certain direction (see also Schäfer, 2012: 26–27). We can thus affirm that the two conflicting sides of the concept of common sense have their source in the social tension between aristocratic and bourgeois understandings of the term.

To surpass the limitations of this commodified concept of common sense, Tosaka's proposal involved rethinking it from the perspective of what he called ‘everydayness’ (日常性)—a central notion of his philosophy: ‘Regarding the regulation of common sense going beyond the regulation of quantitative averageness and the majority, it comes down to what can be called the principle of everydayness that I mentioned previously’ (TJZ 2: 264). In his 1930 text, “The Principle of Everydayness and Historical Time” 「日常性の原理と歴史的時間」, he pointed out that history should be considered in terms of the concrete actuality of daily activities and practices, as exemplified by workers' temporality. Workers have to finish their work ‘today,’ and are not allowed to think in

terms of wide, ideal historical time (see Tosaka 2013a: 13; TJZ 3: 101–102): their *locus* of praxis is the everyday (see also Harootunian, 2019: 227).

Nonetheless, how does everydayness relate to the debate surrounding common sense? For Tosaka, it was clear that journalism played a central role in this regard. A newspaper functions as a porous medium to express the contingencies of everyday life. He wrote: “This journalistic function of a newspaper, which opposes the academic function, is the most accessible proof of the principle of everydayness” (TJZ 2: 264). For Tosaka, the true manifestation of common sense was to be found in the activity of critical journalism—not journalism that reproduces the views of the dominant class, but journalism that evaluates reality from the quotidian perspective of the working class. Journalism is, therefore, not only something to be consumed; it is a necessity of the masses themselves who are embedded in the temporality of daily occurrences (on this, see also Schäfer, 2013: 156–162). For this reason, Tosaka stated in his “Theory of the Journalist” 「ジャーナリスト論」 (1934) that, in a certain sense, every person must be a journalist (see TJZ 4: 156).

It is not surprising that Tosaka’s theory of common sense has been compared more than once—sometimes with reservations—with Gramsci’s concept (see, for example, Schäfer, 2012: 26; Chino, 2017; Crespín Perales, 2021: 61–62). Gramsci also tried to find political potential within ‘*senso comune*.’ One of his notebook entries read as follows:

First of all, therefore, it must be a criticism of ‘common sense’, basing itself initially, however, on common sense in order to demonstrate that ‘everyone’ is a philosopher and that it is not a question of introducing from scratch a scientific form of thought into everyone’s individual life, but of renovating and making ‘critical’ an already existing activity. (Gramsci, 2008: 330–331)⁹

For Gramsci, the many ‘common senses’ (because each social class has its own) are heterogeneous, and he recognized the tendency of dominant ideologies, such as liberalism and Catholicism, to orient and shape common sense, in its different forms, in their own interests. Common sense is, therefore, inherently incoherent and fragmentary (Gramsci, 2008: 419). Nevertheless, Gramsci found a ‘healthy nucleus’ of what he called ‘good sense’ within common sense; that is, “a contemptuous attitude to the abstruseness, ingenuity, and obscurity of certain forms of scientific and philosophical exposition” (Gramsci, 2008: 423). Of course, this attitude was still unformed and should be developed with the help of organic intellectuals (see Crehan, 2016: 49).

It seems that one of the differences between Tosaka and Gramsci, on the one hand, and Miki, on the other, is that Miki did not problematize the internal tensions of common sense. His theory of common sense therefore contained some uncritical elements. Moreover, Tosaka developed a critical mistrust of Miki’s lack of social consciousness. One year after the publication of his analysis of common sense, Tosaka published “Miki Kiyoshi and his Philosophy” 「三木清氏と三木哲学」—a short essay in which he respectfully but firmly criticized Miki’s thinking. This essay complemented another article in which Tosaka criticized the humanist stream of thinking: “Humanism and Materialism in Modern Japan” 「現代日本のヒューマニズムと唯物論」 (1937).¹⁰ Tosaka maintained

9 The notebooks were written between 1929 and 1935. This particular passage corresponds to *The Study of Philosophy*, written in 1932 (see Cospito, 2011: 904).

10 Both texts were reprinted in Tosaka’s book *Japan as Part of the World* 『世界の一環としての日本』 (1937).

that humanist intellectuals (including Miki) turned Marxism into common sense, using it as an important lesson but claiming, nevertheless, that it was something that had already been overcome: 'People of culture with a mission to expand and develop common sense, such as Japanese middle-class intellectuals, have completely turned what should be the common sense of the masses into a kind of fashionable intellectual thinking' (TJZ 5: 119). The argument also claimed that the particular sensibility of these middle-class authors toward people's common sense is suspicious if their axis of examination remains external to the class society. This can result in a kind of messianism, which is external to common sense because it talks *about* common sense while neglecting the internal social cracks within it.

It is true that Miki seemed to speak on behalf of the state, or at least from the position of a 'person of culture' (文化人) who believed that he was talking *to* the state.¹¹ For example, when he defended the importance of cultural policies in making culture more accessible (see MKZ 16: 115–117 [1936]), he was speaking as an actor with a voice in the public sphere. Also, unlike Tosaka, he claimed that it is crucial for the government to assess the people's cultural standard and improve it: 'Due to this lack of awareness [about cultural standards], cultural policies that should improve the culture will instead degrade the culture, and despite the efforts of advocates, no effect will be achieved' (MKZ 16: 301–302 [1938]). Miki's main concern was that the government should take account of people's common sense: common sense changes, and good politicians are those who are able to identify these changes and accommodate them (see MKZ 16: 461 [1940]).

5. The Problem of the Everydayness

Nevertheless, the concept of everydayness was not alien to Miki and could be found, for example, in his *Philosophical Anthropology* 『哲学の人間学』, which was rewritten and corrected many times between 1933 and 1937. Although it should have been published by Iwanami, Miki abandoned the project (see the "Postscript", MKZ 18: 535–538). This document was, however, extremely important and can be seen as a direct prequel to Miki's *Logic of the Imagination*. The second chapter of this work, entitled "The Historicity of Human Being," is especially interesting for its reconstruction of Miki's philosophy of common sense and its relation to everydayness.¹²

According to Miki, two historical dimensions should be distinguished: 'world historicity' (世界歴史性) and 'everydayness' (日常性) (MKZ 18: 193). From the standpoint of the traditional philosophy of history, everydayness is not of historical significance; rather, there are the big events (battles, catastrophes, social revolutions, etc.) and big personalities (heroes, kings, leaders, etc.) who guide the rudder of history. These 'big' events are then separated from the 'small' anecdotal events of everyday life, meaning that traditional historians tend to confuse 'real history' with 'world history' (i.e., that which is of global significance).

Tosaka scholars debate the significance of his critique of Miki; some argue that critiquing Miki after his release from prison was a way of protecting him from being associated with communism (see Goto, 2007).

11 This is not merely in a figurative sense, since between 1936 and 1940, Miki was a member of the *Shōwa Research Association*, which is usually defined as a group of organic intellectuals who represented the official discourse of Prime Minister Konoe.

12 This chapter was, in fact, a re-elaboration of the 1935 article, "Anthropology and Philosophy of History" 「人間学と歴史哲学」. Large parts of this article were actually reproduced without changes in the *Philosophical Anthropology*. Also, Odagiri (2020) highlighted the importance of Miki's notion of everydayness.

By contrast, Miki argued that everydayness should not be excluded from history: “Everydayness is an ordinary and self-evident premise of history, and as such, it easily escapes the attention of historians and is always neglected in historical narratives” (MKZ 18: 200), because it involves no hero, no important event, and no quotidian context. Nevertheless, it could be said that everydayness is the ‘ground’ (地盤) of history (MKZ 18: 200): “Anecdotes are not rare in the human world, and a mind that is attentive and understanding will find anecdotal things everywhere” (MKZ 18: 200). All historical events are embedded in the activities of everydayness.

Although everydayness is the *ground* of world history, it seems unreasonable to consider it a *cause* of world history. Notwithstanding, if not directly, it can be said that everydayness can function as an ‘indirect’ cause of historical events (MKZ 18: 201), again because there can be no world-historical event isolated from the sphere of ordinary life. Because everydayness is inescapable, it is something which history inevitably incorporates; hence, Miki stated that the relationship between everydayness and history is not ‘linear,’ but ‘circular’ (MKZ 18: 201). History feeds back into the everyday, and vice versa: the everyday changes the structural surface of historical events, while events transform the macro-structural conditions of the everyday. This idea reminds us of the communication between center and periphery stressed by Habermas. For him, the decisions of the political and legal system require ‘communication flows’ (*Kommunikationsflüssen*) from the non-institutionalized periphery to establish their legitimacy (see Habermas, 1994: 432). We could add that global events are also legitimized by the everyday. Miki would agree with this, but he highlighted that these two levels should be integrated: “Thus, the circular connection between the two is not merely a relationship in which the world-historical is at the center of history and the everyday is at its periphery” (MKZ 18: 202).¹³ Rather, everydayness is always negotiating with history.

For the same reason, Miki argued, the everydayness is not only the ground, but also the goal or objective of history: “The logical value of the universal validity of culture must include the meaning of everyday life” (MKZ 18: 202). Historical changes tend to change the structure of everyday life; otherwise, there would be no relationship between the two spheres. Every revolution is intended to be a revolution of the fundamental structures of a society; therefore, the *kairos* (カイロス) of historical time is the instant at which the external and the internal, destiny, and freedom, the global and the quotidian, meet (see MKZ 18: 212–213).

It is easy to see that what Miki called everydayness was somehow related to the concept of common sense. Effectively, Miki confirmed this assumption:

Common sense as such has more inherent value in the realm of human and everyday actions than in the natural world. In other words, common sense is knowledge that is organically

13 This affirmation could be interpreted as a critique against Kōsaka Masaaki, who in his book *The Historical World* 『歴史の世界』 (1937, although some of its chapters were published before) distinguished precisely between the ‘center’ and the ‘periphery’ of history: ‘The historical periphery is the world of everydayness’ (Kōsaka, 2002: 80). On the other hand, Miki’s notion of circularity can certainly be expanded upon; for example, Matsui, in a recent paper on Nakamura Yūjirō, described a similar dynamic regarding the constitution of institutions: ‘[...] [E]ach being never exists in a space without timeless and objective mechanisms, but in highly condensed time that contains micro moments which consist of highly contingent potentiality. It can be rephrased in the case of social fields that institutional forms are always reproduced moment by moment. In other words, institution is not formed based on causal relationships of meanings, but reproduced in every moment by every single individual, and we form an image of society in each moment’ (Matsui, 2020: 147).

linked to the everydayness, and the essence of common sense, its value, and its limits can be revealed by studying the essence of everydayness. (MKZ 18: 203)

Although this quotation adds little to the definition of common sense, it is relevant for bringing the two concepts (common sense and everydayness) together. It could be said that everydayness is the historical aspect of common sense. Through sedimentation, common sense becomes part of a social identity; hence, the 'everydayness is the sediment of history, its foothold' (MKZ 18, 212). This process crystallizes customs. Customs do not belong only to the realm of *logos*, but also to the realm of *pathos*; that is, customs are not just a product of the intellectual faculties of humans, but also a result of their emotional and collective situatedness. This shows that common sense is not constructed simply by the mechanisms of ideology, but also through the existential and ontological dimensions of humanness. Customs are 'logical-pathetical' and, in that sense, they are an expression of *nomos* (ノモス) (MKZ 18: 208). Common sense can therefore achieve higher degrees of cohesion that support historical structures. But are other, more direct forms of action based on common sense?

One concrete expression of common sense in the everyday sphere is journalism. We saw that, for Tosaka, journalism played a central role in mediating political agency. Miki also addressed this phenomenon, in the 1938 article "Journalism" 「ジャーナリズム」. In this text, Miki evaluated the impact of journalism on students, in opposition to 'academism.' From the perspective of academia, the press—and, we could add, the media in general—have the potential to undermine the value of academic research and distract students from their educational goals. Miki specifically referred to 'general magazines' (『中央公論』、『改造』、『日本評論』、『文藝春秋』) as opposed to specialized academic journals (see MKZ 14: 115):

The first thing to note about journalism is the distinction between this kind of vulgarization and true enlightenment. To be able to make this distinction, one must be academically informed, but to be trapped in academism and to reject popularization in general is to fail to understand the social function of learning. Learning should not be the monopoly of specialists but should be liberated to become a social force among the general public. Students are also encouraged to absorb knowledge outside their own field of study through journalism. In this way, students can acquire the common sense that they must have as members of society, and it is necessary for them to understand the meaning of their own speciality correctly. Generality as a characteristic of journalism does not only mean popularity; rather, it implies direct relevance to the daily lives of ordinary people. (MKZ 14: 115–116)

The intrinsic logic of academia leads to specialization and segmentation. The press, by contrast, admits the general and establishes a more intimate relationship with readers by addressing their everyday problems. In the face of skepticism regarding mass culture, Miki pointed out its pedagogical potential, but this could also be a limitation of journalism. For Miki, this educational function of journalism seemed to be linked to the formation of public opinion and had no purpose beyond the formation of a certain civil epistemic framework: 'The everyday is related to actual life, and therefore, to action. Common sense is also about this kind of everyday knowledge, and therefore, active knowledge' (MKZ 14: 116–117). Although common sense is knowledge oriented toward praxis, as we saw in *Introduction to Philosophy*, this praxis exists within the limits of *doxa*; it is praxis required as a

civil standard.

Here we can clearly grasp a distinction between Miki and Tosaka. For both Miki and Tosaka, the battlefield of history existed in the present. For both, everydayness and common sense possessed important historical significance, but their terminology differed somewhat. For Miki, the everydayness was the ‘ground’ (地盤) and framework of history; for Tosaka, the everydayness was the ‘principle’ (原理) of historical time, meaning that everydayness not only provides the substratum of historical events, but determines history itself by *driving* historical events. Tosaka illustrated this idea with a practical example. If we consider the performance of two different tasks, such as reading a book and writing an article, we need criteria to determine which task should have higher priority. If we decide to postpone one task, there is always the chance of a new task emerging the next day:

So, no matter what I write, I must finish this manuscript today. Under the aegis of today’s circumstances, the previous *evaluation* of the of the two jobs *collapses*. The sense of vision that comes from the presentness of today, from the character of the now, constructs an independent *priority of values*. Because of this, I cannot be allowed to measure the value system embedded in the reality of today with the categories of tomorrow. (Tosaka, 2013a: 14; TJZ 3: 102)

For Tosaka, the everydayness was not a mere framework of possibilities, but a materiality determined by the conditions of capitalist production: the everydayness as a temporal heterogeneity, rather than a homogeneous field of possibilities. For Miki, as we have seen, the everydayness was circular and spatial, like *doxa* (see MKZ 18, 354). It functioned, precisely, as a coherent space of possibilities, but it ultimately lacked the autonomy to construct its own values.

These problems were also mirrored in their understanding of journalism. In his 1931 text, “The Academy and Journalism” 「アカデミーとジャーナリズム」, Tosaka coined the term ‘theoretical journalism’ (see Tosaka, 2013b: 38; TJZ 3: 146), which resulted from the systematic exclusion of professors from his universities in Japan, forcing them to seek other means of subsistence, such as the press. (Miki being a clear example of this). The dualism presented by Miki in his 1938 text seemed to ignore this form of journalism. Certainly, although Miki sought to find a balance between academia and journalism, he did not, unlike Tosaka, conceive the idea of proletarian journalism (see Tosaka 2013b, 49; TJZ 3, 153).

Journalism for Miki could be a tool for transforming common sense. As he stated: “If common sense is everyday knowledge in the sense of customary, then journalism does not stand for common sense, but journalism is the basis for new common sense” (MKZ 14: 120). Because journalism focuses on the new - on what is new every day - journalism is not purely a reproduction of the everyday, but rather a dissemination of newness; thus, journalism can adopt different agendas and help to modify public opinion.

In summary, both Miki and Tosaka tried to rehabilitate the dimension of the everydayness and its historical relevance. Nevertheless, as we saw, there were also significant differences between the two authors. Miki conceived everydayness as the ground of world history and a mere ‘indirect’ cause of macro-historical events. Journalism did not emerge directly from everydayness, but was external to it, feeding on it and able to influence it. For these reasons, it seems that Miki’s praise of everydayness was relative. It was the *ground* of the historical world, rather than its *principle*. Harootunian highlighted this critique, simultaneously pointing out Miki’s achievement:

The different and mixed temporalities signaled by the everyday and world history were restructured and smoothed into a narrative succession supposedly illustrating the inevitable maturation of time, its 'ripening' (*zeitigen, kairos*) [...]. In other words, Miki sacrificed the temporality associated with the sentient claims of everyday life - experience and memory - to the higher necessity and abstraction of narrative movement and the final (Hegelian) revelation of history's meaning. Regardless of his decision to employ the unity of the three categories in a linear progression representing the achieved 'ripening' (*jijuku, jukusuru jikkan*) of history's reason - the world historical - he, nevertheless, opened the path to recognizing the aporia of differing and distinct temporalities belonging to the separate spheres of everydayness and world history and the necessity of pursuing historicity from within the precinct of the everyday. (Harootunian, 2019: 230)

I will return to the 'differing temporalities' overlapping in Miki's conception of history in the final section, which will evaluate his concept of common sense from a wider perspective.

6. Conclusion: The Limits of Miki's Notion of Common Sense

As far as we have been able to demonstrate, the concept of common sense ran through much of Miki's work. Indeed, one could say that Miki was a philosopher of common sense. Not only his work, but his person and his activism, embodied the conviction of an opponent of academic elitism who believed that culture and knowledge should be used for the common good.

It is not my goal here to evaluate or defend Miki's political collaborationism. It is quite clear that some aspects of his later thinking, especially after 1935, aimed to justify Japanese imperialism.¹⁴ His concept of common sense tended to echo this political development. While in 1932, in *Introduction to Social Science*, the concept of *doxa* was still dialectically related to the transformative potential of *mythos*, a more homogeneous notion was evident in his *Introduction to Philosophy*. Unlike Tosaka, Miki was not interested in the internal tensions of common sense because he grasped the concept as a holistic social phenomenon. Nevertheless, I would like to emphasize Miki's constant focus on reappraising common sense as an element of culture, technology, and even philosophy. For him, philosophy itself should be grounded in the pragmatism of common sense.

From this perspective, disregarding social *doxa* in philosophical narratives would constitute an unnecessary epistemological reduction. The social validity of *doxa* in one society implies multiple other valid *doxas* in other societies. In this respect, as the Argentinean philosopher Rodolfo Kusch

14 Harrington, for example, showed that Miki's role in the *Shōwa Research Association* was far from merely that of an 'engaged intellectual' and contradicted some of his earlier critiques of Japanism. His conclusion is worth quoting: "For it must be remembered that most of Miki's writings outside these manifestos [of the *Shōwa Research Association*] are characterized by a sustained criticism of virtually everything for the lack of dialectical mediation, negation, and sublation. This operation most frequently takes the form of a critique of particularism in favor of an unspecified universalism, one that had yet to be produced. While this strategy could be very effective for avoiding censorship, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that Miki's constant positing of an impossible, abstract universalism resulted ultimately in the empty concept of cooperativism, which contributed, nonetheless, to the justification of imperialist violence throughout East Asia" (Harrington, 2009: 68). Kim (2007) also demonstrated a similar reading. In this regard, I agree with Stromback's reflections regarding Miki's 'quasi-idealism' and its limits (see Stromback, 2020: 133–138).

once wrote, “In Europe, ‘*doxa*’ and ‘*noesis*’ are closer. They have a cultural continuity. And our problem [in Latin America] is that we live with Western *noesis* and know nothing about our *doxa*, because we segregate it. But it turns out that living is *doxa*; that is, opinion, and culture” (Kusch, 1976: 100). Miki’s attack on elitism was also an attack on the Western-oriented language of the academy. In a global geopolitical context, many *doxas* have been replaced by the logic of the Global North and its capitalist realism because they have been unable to generate large-scale technological profits. However, in the same way Miki did not understand ideology as false consciousness (see Stromback, 2020; Wirtz, 2020), *doxa* was seen as an active process rather than a passive one; thus, intertwined cognitive, social, economic, institutional, and technological processes underpin common sense and enable us to understand the circulation of social knowledge in a dynamic way.

Common sense, as Miki envisaged it, is plastic and porous. It is a practical form of knowledge that is distributed across the entire social spectrum, regardless of social class. But what is the value of talking about common sense, *doxa*, and everydayness in our contemporary world? During Miki’s times, the printed press was the main medium for the expression of common sense, and Miki’s theoretical toolbox seems too modest and outdated to be applied to the dynamics of the new media. Twitter or Facebook, for example, function as interfaces that enable the active participation of users in the process of content creation and news circulation, simultaneously acting as platforms for commodifying, monetizing, and regulating that circulation. To some extent, as Tosaka predicted, every person can be a journalist in the modern world, but perhaps at the cost of a loss of credibility for journalism and the proliferation of so-called fake news. The academic discourse, more segmented than ever, has thus been able to stay afloat. However, the temporality of daily exchanges on social networks is characterized nowadays by a greater degree of acceleration and fragmentation. Everydayness has to be investigated through new scopes of analysis adapted to new forms of precarization (implying new forms of working relationships). As an example, the everydayness described by Tosaka centered on the working day of the proletariat. To that temporality, we can now add the much more contingent and multilayered temporality of the UberEats or Amazon workers, and of freelance workers without fixed hours (the so-called ‘precariat’), who nevertheless work against the clock. In this sense, the everydayness is divided into much smaller productive fragments, which we can perhaps term an ‘everyminuteness’ or a *bitification* of time.

However, despite the anachronisms, it seems that the social circulation of non-institutionalized knowledge is necessary to bring about profound structural changes. Miki and Tosaka, in this sense, agreed that common sense is an autonomous space: “Common sense has its own norm (independent of the level of knowledge, etc.). If we follow this norm, it is only natural that other things cannot be on the right side of common sense itself in terms of being consistent with this norm” (TJZ 2, 260–261). This autonomy is what makes possible the emergence of critical public opinion. Standing expressed this succinctly:

Sociologist and philosopher Jürgen Habermas, lamenting the fragmentation of the public sphere, has harked back to the eighteenth century of London’s coffee houses, the salons of Paris and Germany’s ‘table talks’. His view, infused with nostalgia, is that the public sphere was killed by the welfare state, mass media, public relations and the undermining of parliamentary politics by political parties. Implicit is a belief that if only we had well-informed coffee-house denizens, democracy would revive. (Standing, 2011: 108)

The ideal of this already illustrated common sense is contradictory. Common sense should not be reduced or compared to 'higher' forms of social knowledge. In the same way, we could add that the magazine culture Miki and Tosaka had in mind evolved disparate ramifications as the sphere of public debate moved to other technologies such as the Internet. In a sense, Miki was right to point out that common sense involves sedimentation and is continually re-appropriating the content of other social levels. It should not be underestimated that our individual actions also respond to internalized sedimentation structures, and Miki's perspective on our 'pathetic' passivity should therefore not be disregarded. My criticism of Miki is rather that he was unable to articulate more powerful logics of social agency in the sphere of common sense and everydayness (as Tosaka or Nakai Masakazu tried to do). This was clearly reflected in the closing words of his *Introduction to Philosophy*:

But we cannot create history at will, and our purpose must be objective. As a formative element in a formative world, our actions always have a vocational meaning. The call of the world to us is our mission. The vocation is missional, and the mission is also historically and socially limited according to some occupational ability. But what is merely objective cannot be considered a mission. A mission exists when the call from outside is a call from within, and the call from within is a call from outside. A mission is conceivable when what is truly intrinsic to oneself is mediated by the transcendent, and when what is mediated by the transcendent is truly intrinsic to oneself. To act according to such a mission is to work formatively in the world in response to the call of the world, and at the same time to work the self formatively. It is to make the most of oneself by killing off the self [自己を殺すこと], and to make the most of the environment by making the most of oneself. Humans are missional beings. (MKZ 7: 194)

Here, the 'mission' (使命) is the point of contact between the external (global) and the internal (everyday). It is clear that this internalization occurs at the expense of everyday life, which is subordinated to the world historicity. The temporality of the everydayness is displaced by world historicity. In other words, the everydayness must sacrifice itself for world history. Ultimately, then, under the banner of this 'mission,' Miki seemed to neglect the internal logic of *doxa* and its transformative potential.

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