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AKIKO KOSAKA

**SEITARO KUBOTA'S
THINKING ABOUT
POVERTY**

A PIECE OF JAPANESE SOCIAL WORK HISTORY

Seitaro Kubota's thinking about poverty

A piece of Japanese social work history

Akiko Kosaka

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to outline the ideas about poverty developed by Seitaro Kubota, a government official who insisted on the need for the state to intervene in poverty between the 1890s and the 1930s. The frame of reference I use is *senjo rekishigaku* (postwar historical science), a historical paradigm widely used in Japan. To understand Kubota's thinking about poverty, I use texts written by him that discuss poverty, such as journal articles. I periodize his thinking about poverty into three phases, according to the ways in which he problematized poverty: 1) poverty as a hindrance to the development of the state (1899–1909); 2) poverty as a social question (1910s); 3) poverty as an ethical question (1920–1935). In the first period, Kubota suggested a poverty intervention system where the primary value was benefit to the state. He insisted on prioritizing interventions in the poverty of workers and children during this period. However, he also insisted that frail elderly people and those with terminal illnesses or physical impairments should be provided with food and clothing in designated institutions. During the 1910s, Kubota adopted a social reform approach and regarded poverty as a malady that was inherent to the capitalist economic system. He mainly advocated the provision of economic protection to the working class to protect them from falling into poverty during this period. From 1920 onward, Kubota started

to take a social solidarity approach and to emphasize that relief should be provided to people living in poverty on ethical grounds.

In the process of identifying the transformations in Kubota's thinking about poverty, I also identify a fundamental element of the concept that did not change: his view of how poverty was generated. Kubota understood that the causes of poverty were constantly created in the capitalist economic system. Even though he identified the root cause of poverty in the capitalist economic system, he did not argue that this system should be replaced with something else, as socialists did. Instead, he insisted that the capitalist system should be maintained and the state should always be aware of poverty and update its poverty measures, since there was always a chance that new forms of poverty might emerge.

Keywords: Seitaro Kubota; poverty; poverty intervention; social work history; *sengo rekishigaku*; Japan

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TIIVISTELMÄ

Tämän tutkimuksen tavoitteena on tarkastella Seitaro Kubotan käsityksiä köyhyydestä. Kubota oli valtion virkamies, joka vaati valtiota puuttumaan köyhyyteen 1890– ja 1930–lukujen välisenä aikana. Käytän viitekehyksenä sengo rekishigakua (sodanjälkeinen historiatiede), joka on Japanissa laajalti käytetty historian paradigma. Kubotan ajattelun ymmärtämisessä hyödynän hänen kirjoittamiaan tekstejä köyhyydestä, kuten lehtiartikkeleita.

Jaottelen hänen ajattelunsa köyhyydestä kolmeen vaiheeseen sen mukaan, miten hän problematisoi köyhyyden: 1) köyhyys valtion kehityksen esteenä (1899–1909); 2) köyhyys yhteiskunnallisena kysymyksenä (1910–luku); 3) köyhyys eettisenä kysymyksenä (1920–1935). Ensimmäisessä vaiheessa Kubota ehdotti köyhyydentorjuntajärjestelmää, jonka ensisijainen arvo oli se, että valtio hyötyisi järjestelmästä. Hän piti tärkeänä, että tänä aikana interventiot priorisoitaisiin työväestön ja lasten köyhyyteen. Hän painotti kuitenkin tuolloin myös sitä, että määrättyissä laitoksissa on tarjottava ruokaa ja vaatteita heikkokuntoisille vanhuksille ja niille, joilla on parantumaton sairaus tai fyysinen vamma. 1910-luvulla Kubota omaksui sosiaalireformistisen lähestymistavan ja piti köyhyyttä kapitalistiselle talousjärjestelmälle luontaisena sairautena. Tällä aikakaudella hän kannatti taloudellisen suojan turvaamista työväenluokalle, millä ehkäistäisiin heidän ajautumisensa köyhyyteen. Vuodesta 1920 lähtien

Kubota alkoi keskittyä yhteiskunnalliseen solidaarisuuteen ja korostaa, että köyhyydessä eläville tulisi tarjota apua eettisin perustein.

Tunnistaessani muutoskohtia Kubotan köyhyyteen liittyvässä ajattelussa, tunnistan myös olennaisen elementin hänen käsityksestään, joka ei muuttunut: se, kuinka köyhyys syntyi. Kubotan ymmärryksen mukaan kapitalistinen talousjärjestelmä tuotti jatkuvasti köyhyyden syitä. Vaikka hän tunnistikin kapitalistisen talousjärjestelmän köyhyyttä synnyttävänä perimmäisenä syynä, hän ei nähnyt, toisin kuin sosialistit, että kapitalistinen järjestelmä pitäisi syrjäyttää. Sen sijaan hän vaati, että kapitalistinen järjestelmä tulisi säilyttää. Valtion tulisi olla tietoinen köyhyydestä ja päivittää köyhyystoimenpiteitään, sillä aina oli myös mahdollista, että köyhyys saisi uudenlaisia muotoja.

Avainsanat: Seitaro Kubota, köyhyys, köyhyyden torjunta, sosiaalityön historia, *sengo rekishigaku*, Japani

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Akiko Kosaka

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1 INTRODUCTION

This study explores the ideas about poverty developed by 窪田静太郎 (Seitaro Kubota), a government official who problematized poverty and advocated for state poverty intervention from the middle of the Meiji period (1868–1912) onward. During this period, the Japanese government's attitude toward poverty intervention underwent a transformation, a process that Kubota himself explained in his article 救護法實施に際し本邦救済制度の過去を憶ふ (“In the time of enforcement of the new relief law, I look back on past poverty relief systems in Japan”) written in 1932. The article described how the Meiji government disliked the idea of state poverty interventions because they believed that poverty relief made people lazy when Kubota started to engage with poverty issues at 内務省衛生局 (Bureau of Hygiene at the Ministry of Home Affairs) in the 1880s. However, as the article explained, the government's rejection of poverty interventions changed when the poverty of the bereaved families of soldiers who had fought in the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905) became an issue. It described that the government started to provide these bereaved families with economic protection, which was later extended to working-class people more widely.

When I started my research, I hypothesized that by analyzing the ideas about poverty developed by Kubota, whose period of engagement with poverty intervention issues overlapped with the period when the state's thinking about poverty intervention was transformed, I would be able to map the developmental pathways of the state's poverty intervention systems. I likewise surmised that I would be able to present a “rough sketch” of a pioneering period in Japanese social work through an analysis of Kubota's thinking about poverty, since poverty intervention was major issue with which Japanese social work engaged from its inception.

The significance of my study is that it presents a piece of early Japanese social work history that is little known outside of Japan, since there is very little literature on Japanese social work history written in languages other than Japanese. For example, I was able to identify only a handful of such literature (e.g., F. Ito, 2011; Y. Ito, 1995; Matsuda, 2021; Sasaki, 2010) through my searches

of popularly used English-language social-science research databases such as EBSCO, Scopus, and ProQuest. By writing this study in English, I intend to make the history of Japanese social work known to academics and others with an interest in the topic around the world. Another intention is to make a contribution to the diversification of social work history literature written in English, since the overwhelming majority of this literature is about anglophone countries.

The aim of my research is to understand Kubota's thinking about poverty through a historical research paradigm called 戦後歴史学 (*sengo rekishigaku*, postwar historical science). This has been a dominant paradigm in historical science in Japan since the end of the Asia-Pacific War (Narita, 2012b, p. 4). I describe it in a nutshell, including its origins and its basic components, in Chapter 2. In the same chapter, I also explain what it means to analyze Kubota's thinking about poverty through this framework, including my reasons for choosing Kubota as the object of my research, as well as the justifications for my research question and my overall research design. Chapter 3 consists of a review of existing studies of Kubota's thinking about poverty. Based on the findings from my literature review, I designed my procedure for analyzing Kubota's thinking about poverty, including decisions about which materials to use and how to access them. These decisions are described in Chapter 4. In Chapter 5, I provide three written accounts that can help to understand the background of Kubota's thinking about poverty. These accounts are his biography, the poverty interventions made by the Meiji government, and the ideas about poverty prevention developed by 後藤新平 (Shinpei Goto), who has been identified as a major influence on the young Kubota's thinking about poverty (Ikeda, 1983; Jiang, 2011a, 2011c; Nakamura, 1980; Yoshida, 1980). The results of my analysis of Kubota's thinking about poverty are presented in Chapter 6. I summarize my findings and indicate the implication for further research in Chapter 7. Please note that in this book, old Japanese characters that were impossible to transcribe were changed to modern Japanese characters. (引用や文献名などに際してはできる限り原文と同様の字体を用いたが、変換不可のものに関しては、新字体、現代かなづかいに変えた。)

2 SENGO REKISHIGAKU AS A RESEARCH PARADIGM

Edward Hallett Carr's description of history is my inspiration for conducting historical research. That is: "It [history] is a continuous process of interaction between the historian and his facts, an unending dialogue between the present and the past" (Carr, 1961/1986, p. 25). From this quote, I understand that history is not just about analyzing the past, but also about humbly learning from it. I use this viewpoint as a foundation in seeking a research paradigm for describing Kubota's thinking about poverty. By paradigm, I mean a collection of presumptions and cognitive positions commonly understood by a scientific society (Given, 2008). The paradigm I chose to use is *sengo rekishigaku*. The fundamental idea of this paradigm was formed during the period from just after the end of the war until the 1960s, but it still has a significant influence on contemporary historical science in Japan (Narita, 2012b, pp. 3–4). The reason I have chosen *sengo rekishigaku* as a research paradigm is that it treats history as a subjective matter. According to *sengo rekishigaku*, history is not value-free. Rather, this paradigm fully acknowledges that a historian's research is steered by their 問題意識 (*mondai ishiki*, problem consciousness) (Narita, 2008/2012a, p. 47). Since the paradigm of *sengo rekishigaku* is little-known outside of Japan, I will first explain it in its historical context by reviewing how it came into being after the Asia-Pacific War. I will then explain what I mean when I say we must understand Kubota's ideas about poverty within the *sengo rekishigaku* framework.

2.1 Origins of *sengo rekishigaku*

As the term itself indicates, *sengo rekishigaku* was a new paradigm that emerged soon after Japan's defeat in the war. Toyama¹ (1968) explains that until that point, academic historians had remained aloof from wider society (p. 8). He points out that one reason for their ivory tower attitude

¹ Shigeki Toyama (遠山茂樹) is one of the renowned historians of *sengo rekishigaku* (Narita 2012b, p. 4).

was the government's persecution of historians whose research results were regarded as having had an unfavorable impact on people's way of thinking. One of the examples Toyama gives of this persecution is the case of Kunitake Kume. Kume, a professor at the Imperial University, was removed from his position in 1891 after he published an article titled 神道は祭天の古俗 ("Shintō is an old ritual of enshrining"), which concluded that Shintō was merely an old East Asian custom and not a religion.

Another example of the persecution of historians was the banning from publication of the series 日本資本主義発達史講座 (*The course of development of Japanese capitalism*), an analysis of the development of Japanese society from Marxist perspectives, some of the authors of which were detained by the police in the 1930s. After the Public Order and Police Law came into force in 1925, those who were seen as followers of socialism or communism became targets for detention.

After the war, however, academic historians were liberated from the restrictions that had formerly prevented them from exercising their academic freedom. Amid the social and political reforms taking place in war-damaged Japan, academic historians felt remorse over the bystander attitude their discipline had previously adopted. For example, 皇国史観 (*kōkokushikan*)—an emperor-centered perspective on history that emphasized the superiority of the Japanese Empire by claiming that the line of emperors had remained unbroken (Heibonsha, 2001)—had dominated the content of history education in schools, and academic historians had not intervened to contest it.

The democratic postwar atmosphere also increased academic historians' awareness of their science's responsibility to society (Toyama, 1968, p. 16). Academic historians realized that their science had an important part to play in society. They took on the new social responsibility of eradicating *kōkokushikan*, creating a new national history, and disseminating it to wider society² (Nagahara, 2003, p. 143). Soon after the war, these academic historians started writing history to enlighten the Japanese people (Gluck, 1995, p. 16). Their determination to interact with the people around a new national history was

² For example, academic historians helped the Ministry of Education and the Allies to dismantle the previous content of history education in schools, and they wrote new history textbooks for school-aged children.

a natural outcome of the new Japanese Constitution, which came into force in 1947 and declared popular sovereignty.³ The pursuit of democracy and the sovereignty of the people was a significant change in postwar Japan: under the previous (Meiji) Constitution, sovereignty had belonged to the emperor, and the people had been his subjects.

Postwar academic historians wrote history from a critical perspective with the intention of imparting new knowledge about the past to the people. Gluck (1995) labels these historians the postwar progressives, and they included Marxist historians, 近代主義者 (modernist⁴) historians, and historians of 民衆史 (popular history⁵) (p. 12). Although they were all influenced by Marxism's historical materialism, there was diversity in their approaches to the past and their methodologies (Gluck, 1995, pp. 12, 16). For example, the modernist historians' main focal point was the Japanese Empire's deviation from the Western European model of modernization, and they argued that the new democratic Japan should focus on realizing that model (Nagahara, 2003, p. 156). One scholar of popular history, Irokawa (1977), opposed the modernist historians' view of Western European modernization as a universal standard because of the implication that the non-Western world was uncivilized or backward (p. 238).

Despite the differences in their methodologies and their approaches to the past, these postwar historians shared some fundamental commonalities. First, they conceived of time as linear, flowing from the past toward the future, and they understood the changes caused by the passing of time as progress

³ Later, the 1990s saw the rise of 歴史修正主義 (neonationalist historical revisionism), which either denied Japanese military atrocities or presented them as isolated incidents. (Senda, 2001, p.24). This period also saw criticisms of *senjo rekishigaku* among academic historians (Senda, 2001, p. 28). In short, it is a criticism of the role of *senjo rekishigaku* in creating an exclusive national epic in which the narratives formed by *senjo rekishigaku* had been only made by people who identified as Japanese for people who identified as Japanese (Narita, 2010, p. 13).

⁴ Tobe (2016) treats Hisao Otsuka, Takeyoshi Kawashima, and Masao Maruyama as modernist social scientists who contributed alongside *kōzaha* Marxist historians to the formation of *senjo rekishigaku* (p. 139).

⁵ This trend started in the 1960s (Narita, 2012b, p. 6). The defining feature of popular history is that it narrates history by shedding more light on unsung people than on well-known historical figures (Narita, 2012b, p.7).

(Narita, 2008/2012a, p. 42). For postwar historians, the most important factor in this conception of time was that the past was gone, but the present and future could be grasped and changed. For example, Masanao Kano, who is regarded as one of the key historians of postwar Japan, explained that postwar historians had a firm belief that the fundamental qualities of society had to change, and they saw the academic discipline of historical science as having a responsibility to be actively involved in historical processes rather than taking a bystander attitude (Kano, 1996/2008, pp. 204–205). This meant that historians had to actively engage in society rather than staying within their ivory tower. They used history-writing as a platform to propose a new social, political, and economic vision for postwar Japan (Gluck, 1995, p. 12).

For postwar historians, historical research thus became an intentional act that fully reflected their *mondai ishiki*⁶ (problem consciousness), which stemmed from the historian's critical reflection on the time in which they lived. That is to say, the starting point of any historical study was problematization—the posing of some aspect of contemporary society as a problem. Toyama (1968) states that the focus on *mondai ishiki* was a new phenomenon that emerged after the war (p. 22). He explains that in previous times, any clear indication of *mondai ishiki* in historical research was to be avoided, because it was regarded as interfering with objectivity. Since positivism had been the orthodox methodology of historical science until the end of the war, historians were expected to have an objective attitude toward their own research (Toyama, 1968, p. 7).

Indeed, as Ryuichi Narita points out in a roundtable discussion among historians, from the beginning of its establishment as an academic discipline in the 1880s, Japanese historical science had been heavily influenced by Leopold von Ranke's positivism, which was translated as 実証 (*jissshō*) (Zadankai, 2006, pp. 196–197). His famous phrase “wie es eigentlich gewesen” (how things actually were) was mainly understood to mean that history demanded exclusively factual information about the past (Stern, 1970, p.57). Ranke's

⁶ The term *mondai ishiki* is not just historical-science jargon. It also frequently appears in colloquial Japanese, where it refers to an attempt to make a certain phenomenon into a matter of concern and a willingness to do something to resolve or alleviate it (Sanseidō, 2019).

influence entrenched academic historians' solidly objective attitude toward their studies: they regarded it as their duty to reconstruct the past based on their chosen historical sources, and to leave no trace of their own personal values in their studies.

Postwar academic historians' emphasis on *mondai ishiki* overturned this objective attitude toward history-writing, but it did not oust positivism completely. Positivism continued to play an important role in their work. For example, postwar historians were always at great pains to conduct thorough reviews of existing literature on their research topic (Narita, 2008/2012a, p. 42). This was because such reviews informed them about previously established knowledge and controversies around their topic. Postwar historians would critically analyze these issues in existing studies, and they would design their research method on the basis of that analysis. Positivism also prevailed in their systematic manner of selecting and analyzing historical source materials. Backed up by this positivist process of data selection and analysis, the historians would then formulate their own individual writings (Toyama, 1968, p. 22).

2.2 Understanding Kubota's thinking about poverty through the frame of *senjo rekishigaku*

Using *senjo rekishigaku* as a frame of reference means that I understand history-writing as a series of intentional acts by the historian that originate in their *mondai ishiki*. Based on their *mondai ishiki*, the historian determines what and how past matters to be researched (Narita, 2008/2012a, p. 47). In *senjo rekishigaku*, there is a clear linkage between the past and the present, and historical study is regarded as a series of acts taken in seeking for wisdom that can then be used to understand contemporary matters from different angles. To explain how I use *senjo rekishigaku* as a frame of reference to understand Kubota's thinking about poverty, let me start by explaining my own *mondai ishiki* and how it brought me to Kubota and his thinking about poverty as an object of study. Like the academic historians who wrote just after the war, my aim is to provide a written account of the past that is shaped by my critical view of contemporary society. The matter I wish to problematize in

contemporary Japanese society—simply put, my *mondai ishiki*—in this study is the excessive emphasis on 自己責任 (*jiko sekinin*, personal responsibility) in public discussions of poverty. *Jiko sekinin* means attributing a consequence to an individual's personal judgment and making the individual responsible for that consequence (Iwanami shoten, 2008, as cited in Utsunomiya, 2014, p. 14). The emphasis on *jiko sekinin* in public discussions of poverty enables a rhetoric according to which, since poverty is the individual's own fault, breaking out of the cycle of poverty is the individual's responsibility. This rhetoric provokes harsh public sentiments toward those who seek public assistance (Kinoshita, 2017, pp. 9–10).⁷ It also downplays the state's responsibility to advance social welfare and the social security system, including interventions in and the prevention of poverty, which are guaranteed under Article 25 of the Japanese Constitution.⁸

Utsunomiya (2014) points out that the frequent and emphatic invocation of *jiko sekinin* is a somewhat new phenomenon: it started in the 2000s. He states that the term *jiko sekinin* first appeared in the sixth edition of the popular Japanese dictionary 広辞苑 (*Kōjien*), published in 2008 (p. 14). Yuasa similarly suggests that the emphasis on *jiko sekinin* started in the 2000s. In a coauthored book (Shimizu & Yuasa, 2010), Yuasa states that the emphasis on *jiko sekinin* became magnified under Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi (2001–2006), who pursued a series of economic reforms, including the privatization of the public sector (pp. 12–13). Yuasa explained that Prime Minister Koizumi justified these reforms on the basis of the prevailing economic theory of that time, that is trickle-down economic theory, according to which the granting of benefits to the affluent will eventually benefit all the other economic classes too.

I regard the emphasis on *jiko sekinin* in public discussions of poverty as problematic. As Utsunomiya (2014) points out, the insistence on *jiko sekinin*

⁷ For example, Kinoshita (2017) states that those who receive livelihood assistance are stereotyped as freeloaders (pp. 9–10).

⁸ Article 25 of the Japanese Constitution states: "All people shall have the right to maintain the minimum standards of wholesome and cultured living. In all spheres of life, the State shall use its endeavors for the promotion and extension of social welfare and security of public health" (Ministry of Justice, Japan, n.d.).

tends to ascribe all aspects of poverty to personal factors and prevents a holistic understanding of the dynamics of poverty, especially in relation to its social-structural causes. For example, *jiko sekinin* obscures the root causes of poverty among the working poor, that is, those who live below the poverty line even though they are employed. In cases such as the working poor, for whom employment does not secure an adequate standard of living, poverty should not simply be regarded as a personal issue. Instead of deploying *jiko sekinin*, I propose to understand poverty from the vantage point of social-structural factors, looking to the structures of society to identify the causes of social issues.

To break the spell of the emphasis on *jiko sekinin*, and to highlight the importance of approaching poverty from a social-structural perspective, I decided to look toward the past. In other words, just as the postwar historians wrote history for a better future, I intended to produce a historical narrative that would inspire a public discussion of poverty. To this end, I began by reviewing the literature on the history of Japanese social work with an emphasis on poverty. The literature I reviewed included (but was not limited to) 日本における社会福祉のあゆみ (*Development of social work in Japan*) by Yoshimasa Ikeda (1994), 日本の社会福祉思想 (*Social work idea in Japan*) by Kyuichi Yoshida (1994), and 日本の救貧制度 (*Poverty relief system of Japan*), edited by Nihon shakai jigyo daigaku kyūhin seido kenkyū kai (1960).⁹ From this literature review, I learned that poverty started to receive public attention in the 1880s (Ikeda, 1994, p. 72). I also learned that while the Meiji government maintained its laissez-faire attitude toward poverty despite the public's attention to the issue, a few officials in the Ministry of Home Affairs started to take action to counteract the laissez-faire approach (Ikeda, 1983). The trailblazer was head of the Bureau of Hygiene, Shinpei Goto, who is known to have proposed schemes to safeguard workers from falling into poverty (Yoshida & Okada, 2000, p. 240). There was also a young official named Seitaro Kubota, who started to engage in poverty interventions under Goto's supervision (Ikeda, 1983; Yoshida, 1980, Yoshida & Okada, 2000, p. 240). I noted these unusual

⁹ A summary of the findings from this literature review appears in Chapter 5, Section 5.2.

officials, who tried to intervene in poverty when noninterference was de facto government policy. I surmised that understanding their ideas about poverty and poverty intervention might offer some insights to change the excessive emphasis on *jiko sekinin* in discussions of poverty in contemporary Japan.

Between the two officials, I decided to focus on Kubota's thinking about poverty in this study. There were two reasons I chose Kubota. First, Kubota was engaging in poverty intervention issues at the same time as the government started to address poverty as a social problem that required public intervention. This is different from the period of Goto's engagement with poverty intervention issues, which lasted until his resignation as head of the Bureau of Hygiene in 1898 (Tsurumi, 1937, p. 810). During Goto's time, the government was very reluctant to intervene in poverty due to its fear that poverty relief would make the poor lazy. However, the government's hardline attitude changed at the time of the Russo-Japanese War, when the plight of families whose breadwinners had died in battle became impossible to ignore (Kubota, 1932/1980g). Around the same time, the government also recognized that poverty interventions had beneficial effects, such as preventing the spread of socialism among workers (Kubota, 1935/1980m). Once the government recognized these aspects of poverty intervention, it started to develop poverty intervention systems.

The second reason I chose Kubota was that he did not seem to be a well-known figure in Japanese history. Although Goto is known for his advocacy of state protection to prevent low-wage earners from falling into poverty,¹⁰ and multiple studies of Goto are available, including a biography (Tsurumi, 1937), Kubota does not seem to have received sufficient recognition in Japanese history. The number of existing studies on him is limited. Kubota played a role in efforts toward public poverty interventions, but his thinking about poverty is yet to be investigated.

My *mondai ishiki*—contemporary Japanese society's emphasis on *jiko sekinin*—drew my attention to Kubota. Taking him as the figure to be researched, my research question was: "How did Kubota understand poverty?"

¹⁰ For example, in 國家衛生原理 (*The principle of state hygiene*), published in 1889, Goto argued that since low-wage earners were the most important workforce for the state, they should be protected from falling into poverty.

The main task of this study was to interpret his thinking about poverty: how he thought about and perceived poverty along a broader spectrum, including his definition of poverty and his suggestions regarding poverty intervention measures.

I followed the methodological tradition of *senjo rekishigaku* to understand Kubota's conception of poverty. Therefore, I first reviewed existing studies of Kubota's thinking about poverty to find out if there were any established facts or controversies about it. The matters of note that I found in existing studies were rigorously deployed to design my research. The materials I used to interpret Kubota's thinking about poverty were his published texts on the topic. My systematic selection and analysis of materials is described in Chapter 4.

3 REVIEW OF EXISTING STUDIES ON KUBOTA'S THINKING ABOUT POVERTY

To find out whether there existed any previous studies on Kubota's thinking about poverty, I sought and reviewed previous studies on topics related to Kubota, such as social welfare, public health, and labor policy. To find these studies, I relied on online data services that are widely used to search scientific texts written in Japanese, such as CiNii and J-STAGE. I also accessed the Japan College of Social Work Library's Online Public Access Catalogue and the National Diet Library's Online Catalogue.¹¹ The main keywords that I used for the online searches included but were not limited to Kubota's full name and the names of the projects and activities in which he was involved. I also went through the titles of articles in *社会事業史研究 (Academic Journal of Historical Studies of Social Welfare)*, one of the few journals focusing on the history of social welfare, so that I would not miss any important studies on Kubota.

My search revealed that the number of previous studies on any aspect of Kubota or his work is limited. Brief descriptions of Kubota occasionally appear in historical studies on social welfare (e.g., Kato, 2019; Yoshida, 2015; Yoshida & Okada, 2000), public health (e.g., Hirai, 2008; Nakamura, 2018), and labor policy (e.g., Noguchi, 2019; Soeda, 2010). Jiang (2011b, 2011d) thoroughly reviews Kubota's leading role in preparatory research for the Factory Act in the early 1900s. He also explores Kubota's principal labor policy ideas,¹² concluding that Kubota's fundamental focus was on the maintenance of the social order and the avoidance of workers' unrest (Jiang, 2011b).

The number of studies discussing Kubota's thinking about poverty is very limited (e.g., Ikeda, 1983; Jiang 2011a, 2011c; Nakamura, 1980; Noguchi, 2000).

¹¹ The Japan College of Social Work Library is well known for its valuable archive collections of social welfare history.

¹² Jiang (2011b) uses the Japanese word *社会政策*, which can be literally translated as "social policy." However, since his study is on Kubota's engagement in preparatory research for the Factory Act, I have chosen instead to translate this term here as "labor policy."

In the review that follows, I categorize these studies into two groups according to the periods on which they focus. The first group consists of studies that cover Kubota's thinking about poverty throughout his life. The second category includes studies focusing on Kubota's thinking about poverty during his early career.

3.1 Studies on Kubota's thinking about poverty throughout his life

The pioneering study of Kubota is 窪田静太郎論集 (*Seitaro Kubota's collected works*), published in 1980. This collection, which contains major texts by Kubota, was edited by the Japan College of Social Work (Nihon shakai jigyo daigaku). The editors were concerned at the lack of knowledge about Kubota in the history of Japanese social welfare, especially his theoretical contribution to the development of Japanese social work (Nihon shakai jigyo daigaku, 1980, p. ix). As a starting point for a comprehensive study of Kubota that they intended to conduct later,¹³ the editors collected texts by Kubota that were scattered across various journals, such as articles, published speeches, and interviews (Hirata, 1980). Since this was long before the introduction of online library cataloguing systems or digitalized library materials, these texts were difficult to find and access. The editors had to visit multiple libraries to seek and obtain Kubota's writings (Hirata, 1980). It is commendable that the editors obtained the texts manually before the digitalization of library materials.

The volume contains 58 texts by Kubota. At the end of the collection (pp. 528–542), there are three commentaries. The first is 社会保険・工場法・住宅問題 (“Social insurance, Factory Act, and housing issue”), a review by Kazuhiko Yokoyama of Kubota's writings on social insurance, the Factory Act, and

¹³ For example, while looking for texts by Kubota, the editors found that Kubota's family owned a prodigious number of his personal diaries and memos (Hirata, 1980). In 1992, some diary extracts written between 1938 and 1942 were published as a book titled 窪田静太郎戦時下手記:自分はどうな人間だったか (*Seitaro Kubota's wartime diary: The person I have been*).

workers' housing. The second commentary, 「公的救済」について ("About public poverty relief"), written by Yuichi Nakamura, reviews Kubota's texts on poverty interventions. The last commentary, 窪田静太郎と社会事業 ("Seitaro Kubota and social work") by Kyuichi Yoshida, mainly discusses Kubota's position in the history of Japanese social work. Yoshida (1980) explains that Kubota was the successor to Shinpei Goto, whom Yoshida describes as the founding father of social work administration; Kubota engaged in implementing the poverty intervention schemes Goto envisioned. Yoshida also designates Kubota as the pioneer of social work administration: Kubota was the heir to Goto's ideas, which saw low-wage earners as the source of the prosperity of the state and emphasized the importance of state-instituted systems to protect their health. For example, Yoshida argues that Kubota's prioritization of labor protection over poverty relief in 貧民救済制度意見 ("Opinion on the poor relief system"), an article he wrote during his early career, was influenced by Goto's ideas. Yoshida's commentary covers Kubota's career in an extensive manner and provides contextual information about the period when Kubota was engaged in poverty intervention issues. However, since its analytical framework is social work, and it focuses on situating Kubota within the history of social work, Yoshida's commentary should not be counted among previous studies of Kubota's thinking about poverty in the strict sense.

The first study to focus exclusively on Kubota's thinking about poverty is Nakamura's commentary in the same collection. Nakamura (1980) states that Kubota formed his ideas about poverty in three phases (p. 532). The first phase was when Kubota came under Goto's influence at the Bureau of Hygiene up until 1897. The second phase was from around 1898 to 1902, during which time Kubota made a one-year study visit to Europe, participated in 社会政策学会 (Japan Association for Social Policy Studies), and led research on the conditions of factory workers. The last phase was when Kubota came under the influence of the idea of social solidarity.¹⁴

Nakamura (1980) also argues that Kubota's thinking about poverty was not static; some elements of the concept changed over time. In other words, Nakamura identifies that Kubota's thinking transformed over the years. He

¹⁴ Nakamura (1980) does not specify the dates of this phase.

suggests that one can observe this transformation by comparing three texts Kubota wrote at different times: “Opinion on the poor relief system,” written in 1899; 貧の處置法に就て (“About measures against poverty”), written in 1914; and 貧窮 (“Poverty”), written in 1920. Nakamura states that Kubota maintained his emphasis on poverty prevention for able-bodied people as the most effective poverty intervention measure, but his classification of poverty and his perception of the poor changed significantly across the three texts.

Nakamura (1980) states that Kubota maintained his emphasis on poverty prevention for able-bodied people as the most effective poverty intervention measure, but his classification of poverty and his perception of the poor changed significantly across the three texts. Nakamura’s understanding is that Kubota’s attitude toward poverty and the poor was very limited and harsh when he wrote “Opinion on the poor relief system” during his early career. For example, he argues that Kubota’s poverty intervention approach in this text, 公益主義 (public benefit-oriented approach), only sought to protect those who would contribute to an increase in public benefit.¹⁵ Nakamura points here to the following phrase in Kubota’s (1899/1980c) text:

公益主義とは専ら公益上より打算して救済するの謂にして憐愍慈惠即人情上より救済するに非ず。(In the public benefit-oriented approach, whether to provide relief or not is determined by the estimation of how this action would contribute to the public benefit. Relief should not be done based on feelings of human empathy such as pity or charitable spirit). (p. 155)

According to Nakamura (1980), the reason why Kubota strongly opposed material relief for the poor when he wrote “Opinion on the poor relief system” was that he attributed the cause of poverty to the person living in poverty. At the time when he wrote the text, Kubota did not identify any social causes of poverty, such as unemployment arising from economic fluctuations. But

¹⁵ Although Nakamura (1980) concludes that Kubota’s attitude toward the poor was harsh in “Opinion on the poor relief system,” he acknowledges that Kubota was not so hardline about poverty among the sick, referring to Kubota’s support for free medical care for this group in the text 貧民の疾病保護に就て (“About protection of the poor with sickness”), written in 1899.

when he wrote “About measures against poverty” in 1914, Kubota addressed unemployment—which was not clearly mentioned in the text written in 1899—as the leading cause of social-class poverty, and he suggested employment-seeking assistance and social insurance as intervention measures. Nakamura further states that by the time Kubota wrote “Poverty” in 1920, he saw poverty as a social problem caused by the malfunctioning of society, and he had started to acknowledge that poverty relief had equal importance to poverty prevention. Nakamura states that Kubota’s thinking during this period was different from his previous thinking because Kubota had formerly prioritized poverty prevention over poverty relief.

Following this commentary by Nakamura in *Seitaro Kubota’s collected works*, the only subsequent study to cover Kubota’s ideas about poverty throughout his career is Yukiko Noguchi’s 窪田静太郎にみる救済制度観の変遷 (“Transformation of Seitaro Kubota’s poverty relief idea”), published in 2000. Noguchi (2000) too recognizes the changes in Kubota’s thinking about poverty across the same three texts, “Opinion on the poor relief system,” “About poverty intervention measures,” and “Poverty.” The novelty of Noguchi’s study is that she further analyzes the pattern of changes in Kubota’s thinking about poverty by noting which people he designated as eligible for the suggested poverty intervention measures in the three texts. She pointed that by 1920, Kubota had started to advocate the necessity of intervening in the poverty of low-wage earners and the unemployed, whom he newly identified as risk groups for poverty.

3.2 Studies on Kubota’s thinking about poverty during his early career

While Nakamura’s commentary in *Seitaro Kubota’s collected works* interprets Kubota’s early thinking about poverty as harsh—referring to his emphasis on the public interest approach, which would offer poverty relief for those who were likely to provide a public benefit—Yoshimasa Ikeda offers a different understanding of Kubota’s early thinking about poverty in his study 天皇制的慈恵の動揺と再編成 (“The royal family’s charity and its reorganization”),

published in 1983. Ikeda understands Kubota's public benefit-oriented approach as underpinned by his criticism of the state's refusal to institute a poverty intervention scheme and its reliance on the charity of the royal family. Ikeda states that Kubota's insistence on the activation of municipal governance and the institutionalization of informal mutual assistance in local communities, found in his 1899 text 地方自治と社會的制度 ("Municipal governance and the social system"), was a de facto criticism of the state's dependence on the charity of the royal family as a substitute for the meager poverty relief offered by the state itself. Ikeda also explains that even though Kubota made covert criticisms of the state's reliance on the charity of the royal family in this regard, this did not mean that Kubota rejected charity per se; rather, what Kubota was calling into question was the sporadic nature of such charity.

Ikeda (1983) highlights the following phrase in Kubota's "Opinion on the poor relief system": "救貧制度の基礎は之を國家に置き、救貧行政は國の行政事務たるべきこと" ("The foundation of the poverty relief system should be under the state's control, and the governance of poverty relief should be under the state's administration") (Kubota, 1899/1980c, p. 157). Ikeda interprets these words, in which Kubota was insisting that the state should be the highest authority to administer a poverty relief system, as demanding that the state should be accountable for poverty relief. In other words, Ikeda proposes a new perspective on Kubota's discussion of poverty during his early career, namely, his emphasis on the state's responsibility for poverty relief.

Ikeda (1983) states that Kubota was not the first to demand that the state takes responsibility for poverty relief; a similar line of argument can be identified in Goto's work. However, Ikeda also points to a difference between Kubota's and Goto's proposed state poverty intervention measures. While Kubota focused on the institutionalization of state poverty interventions, Goto regarded state poverty interventions as a measure against the rise of socialism, and he emphasized that the state should act to prevent low-wage earners from falling into poverty.

Although Ikeda (1983) shares the same view as that offered by Yoshida's commentary in *Seitaro Kubota's collected works*—namely, that Kubota should be seen as the successor to Goto—he opposes Yoshida's designation of Kubota

as the pioneer of social work administration. Ikeda states that Kubota may not be fully entitled to this designation for two reasons. First, Kubota never worked at 地方局 (Bureau of Municipal Affairs), the office in charge of state poverty interventions. Second, the majority of Kubota's poverty intervention proposals were not adopted or realized by the state. Ikeda acknowledges Kubota's significant contribution to the development of social work administration. However, he sees the real pioneer of social work administration as Tomoichi Inoue, who played the key role at the Bureau of Municipal Affairs.

Keshi Jiang has published two studies on Kubota's early thinking about poverty: 窪田静太郎の初期防貧思想 ("Seitaro Kubota's poverty idea in his early period") and 自助と共済: 窪田静太郎の初期防貧思想 ("Self-help and mutual relief: Seitaro Kubota's poverty idea in his early career"). The first study is a brief review. The latter study is a chapter in his book titled 近代日本の社会事業思想—国家の「公益」と宗教の「愛」— (*The social welfare idea in modern Japan: National benefit and religious agape*), published in 2011. Since the book chapter includes key elements mentioned in the first study and provides a detailed discussion of Kubota's thinking about poverty, I will focus here on the book chapter.

Jiang (2011a) reveals Kubota's engagement in labor protection issues under Goto's supervision in addition to analyzing Kubota's thinking about poverty during his early career. For example, the chapter describes how Goto sent Kubota on a one-year study visit to Europe, and how Kubota drafted Workers' Sickness Insurance Bill (労働者疾病保険法案). Another unique element of this chapter is its discussion of how Kubota became involved in the enactment of 感化法 (*kankahō*, the Reformatory Act) in 1900.¹⁶

Jiang (2011a) mainly reviews four texts by Kubota, written in 1899: "Opinion on the poor relief system"; 貧民ノ疾病保護ニ就テ ("About protection of the poor with sickness"); 労働者強制保険 ("Compulsory insurance for workers"); 社會的制度一斑 ("Social systems"). According to Jiang, instead of establishing a poverty relief system, during his early career Kubota demanded the establishment of public systems to mitigate low-wage earners' financial difficulties, such as

¹⁶ The Reformatory Act mandated the establishment of institutions to provide juvenile delinquents with an education called 感化院 (*kankain*) (Kawano, 2013).

health insurance for workers and mutual assistance systems, which would function as poverty prevention measures for workers. Jiang also suggests that Kubota disapproved of charity because he believed that it would diminish people's willingness to live independently and would make them dependent on the system. Jiang's interpretation here differs from that of Ikeda, who suggests that Kubota rejected the sporadic nature of charity but not necessarily the act of charity itself (Ikeda, 1983, p. 182). Jiang states that the bottom line of Kubota's thinking about poverty during his early career was the principle of lesser eligibility, similar to that found in Great Britain's New Poor Law of 1834.

Although Jiang (2011a) does not specifically focus on the ideas about poverty, he does point out conceptual differences between Goto and Kubota. While both Goto and Kubota urged the state to establish social policies for the preservation of the public and national benefit, Kubota took a less humanistic perspective than Goto. Jiang attributes this difference to their personal and career differences. He explains that while Goto had work experience as a medical doctor and had familiarized himself with materialism and empiricism, Kubota was a young, elite government official with limited life experience.

Although Jiang (2011a) argues that Kubota generally took a strict attitude toward poverty intervention during his early career, he also states that as Kubota interacted with philanthropists and social policy scholars later in his career, he became more aware of the humanitarian approach and followed Theodor Lipps's philosophy. Jiang also suggests that even though Kubota focused solely on the public benefit and lacked a humanistic approach during his early career, in his later he became an individualist and an advocate for individual liberty. Here Jiang refers to the following words by Kubota:

教育の最高の目的は人間の完成（各個人も共同体も）にあらねばならぬ。之が爲めには人命の尊重人格の尊重を本位とし天地の生々化育に参贊するに在ることを忘れてはならぬ。（The highest aim of education should be the perfection of the human being (both individually and communally). To achieve this, respect for human lives and respect for personality are the fundamentals, and also it should not be forgotten that nature creates all beings and creates the universe. (Kubota, 1992a, pp.170–171)

3.3 Key findings from the review

Jiang (2011a) points out that even though Kubota was a key figure in the genesis of social policy administration, he is largely unknown, and his thinking has been left unexplored. Indeed, Kubota has a low profile in Japanese history, as the limited amount of previous research on him attests. Although small in quantity, those previous studies pinpointed some profound aspects of Kubota's thinking about poverty that I will now explore further. The first aspect is the changes in Kubota's thinking about poverty identified by Nakamura (1980) and Noguchi (2000). Both authors state that these changes can be seen in three texts by Kubota: "Opinion on the poor relief system," written in 1899; "About measures against poverty," written in 1914; and "Poverty," written in 1920. However, as Noguchi (2000) states, an analysis of these three texts may not be sufficient if we wish to further understand the transformation of Kubota's thinking about poverty (p. 262), and the limited quantity of available writing by Kubota has hindered researchers from uncovering more details about Kubota's thinking about poverty. It has also prevented them from exploring the background to the ideas about poverty that Kubota expressed in those texts. I took these points into consideration when selecting and analyzing my material in relation to Kubota's thinking about poverty.

The second significant topic to which existing studies have pointed is Goto's influence on Kubota as the head of the Bureau of Hygiene. Goto's influence on Kubota's early thinking about poverty seems to be an established fact, as multiple studies mention it (Ikeda, 1983; Jiang, 2011a, 2011c; Nakamura, 1980; Yoshida, 1980). However, there seems to be no consensus among researchers regarding the details of this influence, such as which specific elements of Goto's thinking about poverty made an impact on Kubota. For example, Ikeda (1983) identifies a similarity between Goto and Kubota in their emphasis on the state's responsibility for poverty relief. On the other hand, Jiang's study (2011a) points out that the young Kubota was less humanistic than Goto. To settle this difference of opinion, in the process of uncovering Kubota's thinking about poverty, I will also explore how Goto's influence shaped Kubota's thinking.

4 MATERIAL SELECTION AND ANALYSIS

To understand Kubota's thinking about poverty, I used his published texts. In this chapter, I first describe the strategies I used to locate and sort his texts. Then, I describe how I analyzed the sorted texts, which I have called Kubota's poverty texts. I conducted the analysis by using two principles of organization: periodization and the five dimensions of poverty. I explain how I generated and applied these principles to understand Kubota's thinking about poverty.

4.1 Material selection

The materials I used to understand Kubota's thinking about poverty were his published texts on poverty, such as journal articles and books. Finding as many such texts as possible was critical for producing a rich interpretation of Kubota's thinking about poverty, since existing studies on the topic had revealed that the limited number of available texts by Kubota had hindered researchers from learning more about his ideas (Noguchi, 2000). To identify Kubota's published texts about poverty, my first port of call was *Seitaro Kubota's collected works*. I also tried to locate more texts by Kubota. This was because this collection mainly contains his writings on social work, and it does not cover all of his publications (Naganuma, 2020). I accessed online library catalogues such as the Japan College of Social Work Library's Online Public Access Catalogue and the National Diet Library Digital Collection. In online catalogue searches, I set Kubota's full name as the keyword. Furthermore, I went through some old print journals whose titles were listed in 社会福祉分野逐次刊行物目録 (Social Welfare Serial Publications Catalogue) in the Japan College of Social Work Library.¹⁷ Since I was aware that not all old journals can be found in web-based library catalogues, I chose to review printed materials too.

¹⁷ This printed catalogue was published in 1987 by 社会福祉系大学図書館会議 (Social Welfare University Library Conference), which started in 1983 with university libraries that aimed to further develop scientific knowledge about social welfare/work (Sekine, 2006).

As of April 2022, the total number of published texts by Kubota that I have found amounted to 149.¹⁸ The full list of publications by Kubota that I found is provided in the Appendix. The topics of these texts are diverse, because Kubota was involved in a wide range of public administration matters. For example, he wrote about the law, occupational health and safety, and broad-spectrum public health matters such as the prevention of contagious diseases. The published texts also take a wide range of forms. They include but are not limited to journal articles, published speeches, book forewords, and personal diaries. I immersed myself in all the texts by Kubota I had gathered in order to sort his poverty texts, referring to the terms he used for poverty and people living in poverty as indicators. Some examples of terms Kubota used for the poor are 貧, 貧窮, and 貧乏.¹⁹ 貧民 and 窮民 are examples of words Kubota used to indicate people living in poverty.²⁰ In total I categorized 32 texts as poverty texts (**Table 1**). I discuss the content of the sorted texts in Chapter 5, Section 5.1.3.

Table 1. List of Kubota’s poverty texts

Title	English translation	Year published
労働者強制保険	Compulsory insurance for workers	1899
貧民ノ疾病保護ニ就テ	About protection of the poor with sickness	1899
社會的制度一斑	Social systems	1899
地方自治ト社會的制度	Municipal governance and the social system	1899
貧民救濟制度意見	Opinion on the poor relief system	1899
衛生 衛生法講義 (其一)	Hygiene: Lecture on hygiene law (series 1)	1899

¹⁸ Those include texts not written by Kubota but their main contents are his comments such as interview transcripts.

¹⁹ These are different from 貧困 (*hinkon*), the term for poverty commonly used in contemporary Japanese.

²⁰ Kubota mainly used 貧民 (*hinmin*) and 窮民 (*kyūmin*) to indicate people living in poverty. These are outdated terms. In contemporary Japanese, 生活困窮者 (*seikatsu konkyūsha*)—literally, “life sufferer”—is mainly used for people living in poverty.

Title	English translation	Year published
英國工場制度ノ沿革	History of the Factory Act in England	1901
工場制度に就て	About the Factory System	1902
工場法案ニ就テ	Proposal for the Factory Act	1903
英國に於ける労働者住宅問題 附本邦都市に於ける貸長屋改良問題	Workers' housing issue in England: In reference to the urban rental tenement issue in Japan	1909
社會衛生	Social hygiene	1909
衛生事務の要綱	An outline of hygiene administration	1911
英國に於ける國庫支辯養 老年金の影響	Impact of instituting a national pension system in England	1911
英國々立労働者強制保險 法案	Bill for compulsory national insurance for workers in England	1911
貧の處置法に就て	About measures against poverty	1914
貧に就て	About poverty	1915
労働者收得の増加に就きて 附労働者住宅改良の議	About increasing the income of workers: Discussion on improvement of workers' housing	1917
住宅問題に就て	About the housing issue	1918
住居問題に就て	Living quarters issue	1918
貧窮	Poverty	1920
住宅問題研究	Research on the housing issue (series 1-4)	1922
社會事業と衛生事務	Social work and hygiene administration	1923
社會事業の意義精神	Conception and fundamental idea of social work	1924
開會式辭	Opening remarks to the Seventh Congress of the National Association of Social Work	1925
社會事業家の本領	Nature of social worker	1925
社會事業の精神	The spirit of social work	1926
宗教と社會事業	Religion and social work	1928
我国に於ける社會事業統制機關	The system of social work administration in Japan	1928

Title	English translation	Year published
「救貧制度」稲村ヶ崎問答 ^a	Question and answer about the poverty relief system in Inamuragasaki	1928
窪田静太郎氏を中心とする座談會 ^a	Roundtable discussion with Seitaro Kubota	1932
救護法實施に際し本邦救濟制度の過去を憶ふ	In the time of enforcement of the new relief law, I look back on past poverty relief systems in Japan	1932
財團法人中央社會事業協會創立三十周年を迎へて	On the 30-year anniversary of the establishment of the National Association of Social Work	1935

^a These two texts are published transcripts of roundtable discussions in which Kubota participated. Although they were not authored by Kubota, I count them as the poverty texts because his reflections on state poverty interventions in the Meiji period are central to them.

4.2 Material analysis

In the process of sorting Kubota's poverty texts, I noticed that some of the content of Kubota's discussions of poverty changed with the passing of time. For example, Kubota started to provide clear explanations of why poverty had to be eliminated in texts written in his middle and late career (Kubota 1915, 1920/1980b), but texts written earlier in his career did not have such explanations. This brought me back to Nakamura (1980) and Noguchi (2000), who demonstrate that Kubota's thinking about poverty transformed over the course of time by comparing three texts: "Opinion on the poor relief system," written in 1899; "About measures against poverty," published in 1914; and "Poverty," written in 1920. To find out more about the transformation of Kubota's thinking about poverty, I decided to focus on Kubota's descriptions of poverty in his poverty texts, analyzing them in chronological order. The exploration of patterns in the transformation of his ideas over time became my focus of analysis.

4.2.1 Periodization

To understand the transformation of Kubota's thinking about poverty, I first tried to generate an organizing principle that would enable me to roughly capture that transformation. To do this, I turned to 時代区分 (*jidai kubun*, periodization), a widely used method in *senjo rekishigaku*. For example, Gluck (1995) states that periodization is one of the most widely used organizational principles in Japanese historical science (p. 10). Taniguchi (2020) points out that periodization entails both arbitrariness and subjectivity. He explains the process of periodization as follows. One notes a certain aspect of the past and uses it as a key facet to divide that past into periods. The aspect in question, which is intentionally and subjectively chosen by the historian, becomes the criterion to divide the past. If the historian judges that the aspect continued in spite of dramatic historical or social-structural changes, then the period is deemed to have continued. However, if the researcher judges that the aspect changed or disappeared, then the period is deemed to have discontinued.

I adopted the above-described Taniguchi (2020)'s periodization method as follows. First, from among the 32 texts listed in **Table 1**, I identified Kubota's paramount poverty texts, that is, the texts that contained his overall understanding of poverty and the poor. This included, for example, his definitions of poverty or the poor, his descriptions of the phenomenon of poverty, and his proposed poverty intervention measures. I selected eight texts written between 1899 to 1928 as the paramount poverty texts (**Table 2**).

Table 2. Kubota’s paramount poverty texts, used to create a periodization frame

Title	English translation	Year published
貧民ノ疾病保護ニ就テ	About protection of the poor with sickness	1899
社會的制度一斑	Social systems	1899
貧民救濟制度意見	Opinion on the poor relief system	1899
衛生 衛生法講義（其一）	Hygiene: Lecture on hygiene law (series 1)	1899
貧の處置法に就て	About measures against poverty	1914
貧に就て	About poverty	1915
貧窮	Poverty	1920
「救貧制度」稲村ヶ崎問答 ^a	Question and answer about the poverty relief system in Inamuragasaki	1928

^a This roundtable discussion transcript is authored by Tada. Since the transcript contains many comments by Kubota that reflect his opinions regarding poverty and state poverty intervention measures, I decided to include it as one of his paramount poverty texts.

I immersed myself in these eight texts to identify the element of his poverty arguments that displayed the most significant transformation patterns. I identified that the element that transformed most distinctively was his argumentation that poverty was a social problem that negatively impacted the larger society and therefore deserved public intervention. In other words, I noted his way of problematizing poverty, and I decided to utilize it as a key facet to create a periodization frame.

Kubota’s way of problematizing poverty metamorphosed alongside the emergence of new patterns of poverty and changing government attitudes toward poverty over time. While he was working at the Bureau of Hygiene from 1895 to 1909 (Kubota Seitaro rireki, n.d.), Kubota problematized poverty as a hindrance to the development of the state. In this period, his proposed poverty intervention measures were mainly targeted at those who would

likely contribute to the state's industrial development: as he stated in "Opinion on the poor relief system," poverty interventions for children and workers were to be prioritized. Kubota's problematization of poverty as a hindrance to the development of the state started to decline once he left the Bureau of Hygiene. Thereafter, in the 1910s, Kubota chiefly problematized poverty as a social question, an inevitable by-product of the capitalist economic system that affected workers the most, and his proposed poverty intervention measures were mostly about preventing workers from falling into poverty. For example, in "About measures against poverty," he suggested employment referral services for the unemployed and the provision of safe affordable housing as poverty prevention measures for workers. From 1920 onward, Kubota problematized poverty as an ethical issue. For example, in "Poverty," he stated that the reason for eliminating poverty was to satisfy social justice.

According to the ways in which Kubota problematized poverty, I generated three periods to categorize his thinking about poverty: 1) poverty as a hindrance to the development of the nation (1899–1909); 2) poverty as a social question (1910s); 3) poverty as an ethical issue (1920–1935). I ended the last period in 1935. That was because it was the year he published "On the 30-year anniversary of the establishment of the National Association of Social Work," which is the last publication in my list of Kubota's poverty texts (**Table 1**).

4.2.2 Content analysis of the transformation in Kubota's thinking about poverty

After developing these three periods, I tried to analyze how Kubota's thinking about poverty changed in the different periods. I tried to identify the contents and patterns of the transformation of his thinking about poverty in detail. While doing so, I noted his descriptions of poverty and the poor in the 32 poverty texts listed in **Table 1**. Since those descriptions were extensive, I first needed to develop an organizing principle. To develop this principle, I immersed myself in Kubota's 32 poverty texts. Through this immersion, I found that Kubota kept describing certain dimensions of poverty and the poor across the different time periods. I surmised that focusing on these dimensions would be the best way to trace the transformation of Kubota's

thinking about poverty. That is to say, I tried to capture the transformation of Kubota's thinking about poverty by focusing on those dimensions. Thus, from the selected texts, I elicited five dimensions of Kubota's description of poverty.

The first dimension is "state of being in poverty," which indicates the situation of poverty or the poor, including definitions of poverty and the poor. The second dimension is "cause of poverty," which refers to poverty-inducing mechanisms. The third dimension is "impact of poverty," which indicates the situations and consequences poverty entails. The fourth dimension is "function of poverty intervention," which includes the advocacy and rationale for the need for poverty interventions. The last is "poverty intervention measure," which encompasses means and systems to alleviate or eliminate poverty.

The descriptions of poverty I identified in Kubota's 32 poverty texts were sorted into these five dimensions. After I compiled the five sets of descriptions of poverty, I compared descriptions within each dimension. For example, I investigated whether the descriptions of poverty I had sorted into "state of being in poverty" written during his early career were different from those written later in his career. If there were differences, I tried to clarify the differences in detail. I also focused on the sociopolitical contexts, that is, the surrounding social and political factors that were likely to have influenced him while he was writing specific descriptions. For example, if I found Kubota starting to propose a certain poverty intervention measure, I looked for possible reasons for the new proposal not only in Kubota's argumentation itself, but also in the sociopolitical background of the time of the Empire Japan. To research these sociopolitical contexts, I used general historical sources such as journal articles in historical science. In addition to these historical sources, I also referred to the memoir-like poverty texts Kubota wrote after 1920.

5 PROLOGUE TO KUBOTA'S THINKING ABOUT POVERTY

Before I start to outline Kubota's thinking about poverty, I will provide three written accounts that will help to place Kubota's ideas in context. Providing such background narratives has particular importance for readers who are not familiar with Japanese social work history. The first account is Kubota's life story, with a focus on his involvement in poverty intervention issues. I have written this biography to guide readers' understanding of the formation of Kubota's thinking about poverty in the context of his personal life. I have written the other two accounts, which concern the Meiji government's poverty interventions and Goto's ideas about poverty intervention, to inform readers about background to the development and transformation of Kubota's thinking about poverty. It is particularly important to review Goto's ideas about poverty intervention because previous studies mention his influence on the formation of Kubota's thinking about poverty (Ikeda, 1983; Jiang, 2011a, 2011c; Nakamura, 1980; Yoshida, 1980).

5.1 Kubota's biography

For factual information about Kubota's career, such as the dates when he moved to different government jobs, I have mainly referred to two kinds of source. The first is the memoir-like texts he wrote in his later years (Kubota, 1929/1980l, 1932/1980g, 1935/1980m). The second is Kubota Seitaro rireki (Kubota Seitaro curriculum vitae) recorded in 枢密院高等官履歴 第七卷昭和ノ三 (*Curricula vitae of members of Privy Council volume 7*). The reason I refer to his curriculum vitae is that it was the only source I could find that provided detailed information about his career in the government.²¹ To narrate Kubota's biography, I have divided his career into two periods. The first is the period

²¹ *Seitaro Kubota's collected works* has a simplified chronological table of Kubota's life (pp. 543–544).

of his early career, which started when he began to serve in the Bureau of Hygiene at the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1895 (Kubota Seitaro rireki, n.d.). The second is the period of his middle and late career, from 1903 to 1946. This period began when he was appointed head of the Bureau of Hygiene, and it ended with his death (Kubota Seitaro rireki, n.d.).

5.1.1 Education and early career

Kubota was born into a former samurai-class family in Okayama Prefecture in September 1865 (Kubota Seitaro rireki, n.d.). He was admitted as a student at 帝國大學法科大學英法科 (Department of English Law, Faculty of Law, Imperial University of Japan) in 1888 (Kubota, 1926). The Faculty of Law provided training to future high-ranking government officials (Nakayama, 1978, pp. 88–90). The majority of those who graduated from the faculty with good grades were hired by either 内務省 (Ministry of Home Affairs) or 大蔵省 (Ministry of Finance) (Iwata, 2008). Consequently, working for the government may have been a natural choice for Kubota. After he graduated from the Imperial University, Kubota became a 試補 (probational official) at the Ministry of Home Affairs in July 1891 (Kubota Seitaro rireki, n.d.).

During the first few months after he started working as a probational official, he was placed successively at 土木局 (Bureau of Civil Engineering), 警保局 (Bureau of Police Affairs), and 県治局 (Bureau of Municipal Governance) (Kubota Seitaro rireki, n.d.). Thereafter he became 地方参事官 (prefectural councilor) in Saga, Tokushima, and Hyogo (Kubota Seitaro rireki, n.d.). During this period, Kubota engaged in administrative tasks related to education and public health administration (Jiang, 2011a). He returned to Tokyo as 内務省参事官 (councilor at the Ministry of Home Affairs) in December 1894, and he started working at the Bureau of Hygiene in April 1895 (Kubota Seitaro rireki, n.d.).

In a discussion he joined in his later years, Kubota looked back at the time he started working at the Bureau of Hygiene under Goto's supervision (Kubota Seitaro shi o chūshin to suru zadankai, 1932/1980, p. 492). He recalled that he had not previously had any particular interest in social work issues, but after he obtained his position in the bureau, his interest in such issues grew.

Under Goto's supervision, Kubota engaged in a wide range of public health issues, particularly with regard to the safeguarding of workers' health. For example, he conducted field research to understand the working environment in factories and the workers' situation (Kubota, 1923/1980j, p. 282). Goto also asked Kubota to draft a bill that aimed to provide medical care and compensation for workers who became sick or injured, referring to the German Health Insurance Act (Kubota, n.d., as cited in Tsurumi, 1937, p. 817; Yokoyama, 1980). Goto proposed Kubota's draft bill, 労働者疾病保険法案 (Workers' Sickness Insurance Bill), to 中央衛生會 (Central Hygiene Committee) at the Ministry of the Interior in 1898, but it was stillborn (Kubota, 1923/1980j, p. 282). Since *laissez-faire* was the dominant political and economic ideology, it was difficult to gain support for the state protection of workers.

Kubota started to participate in the Japan Association for Social Policy Studies around 1897 (Kubota, 1933/1980f). This was an economics research group modeled after Verein für Sozialpolitik (German Economic Association) (Narita, 1986). The Japan Association for Social Policy Studies sought to institute protection schemes for low-wage earners because they were concerned at the ill effects of economic disparity between the haves and the have-nots (Shakai seisaku gakkai, 1899). Kubota later explained that the reason he started to participate in this association was to broaden his theoretical knowledge, especially from economic perspectives, with an eye to interventions for low-wage earners (Kubota, 1933/1980f).

When Kubota had worked under Goto for nearly four years, he was dispatched to Europe for a one-year study visit from February 1898 onward (Kubota Seitaro rireki, n.d.). The biography of Goto written by Yusuke Tsurumi in 1937 gave an account in which Kubota described the specific orders he had received from Goto regarding his visit to Europe. Although the official purpose of the visit was to participate in an international conference on the topic of hygiene and demography in Madrid, Spain, Goto gave Kubota the specific instruction to visit public health and social welfare facilities around Europe in order to learn how those institutions functioned, particularly in Germany (Kubota, n.d. as cited in Tsurumi, 1937, p. 818). Jiang (2011a) mentions that Goto chose Kubota for this study visit because he was already familiar with German social policy (p. 221).

Kubota left Japan for Europe in February 1898, and in April he was in Spain²² to attend the congress on hygiene and demography (Kubota Seitaro rireki, n.d.). I have been unable to find the rest of his itinerary. As Kubota himself stated that he visited multiple health insurance administration offices and factories in Germany during his study visit (Kubota Seitaro shi o chūshin to suru zadankai, 1932/1980, p. 493), I speculate that he spent an extensive period in Germany. Jiang (2011a) surmises that Kubota also spent an extensive period in England, because after his return from Europe, Kubota published several articles on England's public hygiene and poverty relief system (pp. 222–223).²³

By the time Kubota returned from Europe in February 1899 (Kubota Seitaro rireki, n.d.), Goto had already resigned from the Bureau of Hygiene to serve as 台灣民政局長 (head of the Bureau of Taiwan Civil Administration) (Tsurumi, 1937, p. 810). In a discussion he joined in his later years, Kubota recalled that although he felt disappointed at Goto's resignation from the Bureau of Hygiene, it did not diminish his commitment to the establishment of systems to safeguard workers (Kubota Seitaro shi o chūshin to suru zadankai, 1932/1980, p. 493). Kubota found that among the civilians and government officials whose work involved dealing with issues around poverty, there were some who shared his concern for the safeguarding of workers and who would join him in addressing poverty as social issue (Kubota, 1929/1980). Such people were rare at that time, since classical liberalism was pervasive in

²² I was not able to discover the official English name of this congress from Kubota's writings. In Kubota's curriculum vitae, the name of the congress is translated into Japanese as 萬國衛生及デモグラフィー會議 (Kubota Seitaro rireki, p. 378). From the Japanese translation I surmise that Kubota participated in the Ninth International Congress of Hygiene and Demography, which was held in April 1898 (Ninth International Congress of Hygiene and Demography, Madrid, 1898). Naganuma (2020) also mentioned that Kubota participated in this congress (p. 36).

²³ Jiang (2011a) does not give the titles of Kubota's articles introducing the English public hygiene or poverty relief systems. I surmise that these articles included but were not limited to the following: 英國ニ於ケル不良少年ノ保護 ("Protection of juvenile delinquents in England," 1901); 英國工場制度ノ沿革 ("History of the Factory Act in England," 1901); 英國に於ける労働者住宅問題 符本邦都市に於ける貸長屋改良問題 ("Worker's housing issue in England: In reference to the urban rental tenant issue in Japan," 1909); 英國に於ける児童虐待防止法の梗概 ("An Overview of legislations related to child abuse prevention in England" 1909).

Japanese society, and poverty was a neglected issue. With these individuals,²⁴ Kubota formed 貧民研究會 (Society for Research on the Poor) in 1899 (Kubota, 1929/1980). The members of the society met once a month to learn about a wide range of issues around poverty (Kubota, 1929/1980).

While the Society for Research on the Poor operated in the capital, Tokyo, Osaka—a long-established commercial and industrial city in western Japan that had historically attracted low-wage earners, and whose population swelled during Meiji period due to industrialization—was developing charitable and philanthropic works in its own right. For example, as early as 1894, the journal 慈善新報 (*Charity Report*) was launched in Osaka (Ikeda, 1985). When Kubota and other members of the Society for Research on the Poor met one of Osaka's key philanthropists, Toshiro Kashima, in 1902, they discussed how since the number of charitable organizations in Japan was expected to grow, there would soon be a need for an association to network with charitable organizations and facilitate information exchange among them (Kubota, 1929/1980). Because of the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War, there was some delay, but 中央慈善協會 (Central Charity Association) was established in 1908 (Kubota, 1929/1980, 1942). Although the association's name included the word 慈善 (charity), this did not mean that the association was for charitable organizations only. The association also dealt with public services and systems for the assistance of low-wage earners, such as affordable public housing, which were called 社會政策 (social policy) (Kubota, 1935/1980m, p. 507). Despite this engagement in a wide range of issues, "charity" was the word the association chose for itself (Kubota, 1935/1980m). The association changed its name to 中央社會事業協會 (National Association of Social Work) in 1921 after the government started to accept the use of the word 社會 (society) (Kubota, 1935/1980m, pp. pp. 507–508).²⁵ For example, when a new bureau was established to manage social work issues in 1920, it was named 社會局 (Bureau of Social Affairs) (Kubota, 1935/1980m). Previously, the government

²⁴ They included but were not limited to the following people: Kinya Kume, a senior colleague of Kubota's at the Bureau of Hygiene; Hideyoshi Arimatsu and Shigejiro Ogawa, both from the Bureau of Police Affairs; and Shigeru Matsui at the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department (Kubota, 1929/1980, p. 457).

²⁵ Contemporary Japanese language writes 社會 as 社会.

had avoided using any terms that included the word “society” because it was mistakenly linked to socialism, which the government disdained (Kubota, 1935/1980m; Kubota Seitaro shi o chūshin to suru zadankai, 1932/1980, p. 496).²⁶ The main aim of the association was to research social work issues inside and outside of Japan and to disseminate the research results to the public (Kubota, 1935/1980m). As a platform for this, the association had its own journal, 慈善 (*Charity*).²⁷

Kubota served as an executive committee member of the Central Charity Association from the beginning (Kubota, 1935/1980m). He continued to serve in the association and supported a wide range of activities that aimed to alleviate poverty. For example, in 1911, he and some other members of the association published the report 救濟事業調査要項 (*Summary of poverty relief project research*), which listed poverty issues and agendas that the Meiji government should address immediately (Kubota, 1929/1980l, pp. 479–481).

In May 1900, Kubota was assigned to serve as the head of a research group at 農商務省 (Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce) (Kubota, 1933/1980f). Concerned at the atrocious working conditions of factory workers, which gave rise to serious health issues, officials at the ministry had been attempting to pass a factory act since the 1880s (Kagawa, 1983). In the absence of such a framework, the exploitation of workers was widespread in the Meiji period. For example, in the textile industry, which was the leading export industry, workers—the majority of whom were young women from farming villages—were forced to work long hours for low pay; the combination of overwork

²⁶ For example, Kubota recalled how the Meiji government avoided to use the word “society” in a discussion he joined in his later years. When the government instituted a new division to handle social welfare issues in 1917, they named it 救護課 (Relief Division) rather than choosing other names that would include the word “society” (Kubota Seitaro shi o chūshin to suru zadankai, 1932/1980, p. 496).

²⁷ Although the name of the journal has changed multiple times, it still exists today as 月刊福祉 (*Monthly Welfare*). The journal's editor describes the changes to the journal's title as follows (Gekkan fukushi henshūbu, 1984, p. 209). In 1917, the journal title was changed to 社會と救濟 (*Society and Relief*). From 1921 to 1941, it was called 社會事業 (*Social Work*). From 1941 to 1944, the journal was called 厚生問題 (*Welfare Issue*). After the defeat of the Asia-Pacific War, the journal was revived as 社會事業 (*Social Work*) in 1946. It has been called *Monthly Welfare* since 1960.

and poor hygiene in their workplaces and boarding houses led to the spread of tuberculosis among these workers (Inumaru, 1998).

Kubota organized a research team that consisted of professionals from various fields such as engineering, architecture, medicine, public hygiene, and economics (Kubota, 1933/1980f). Since the establishment of the research team, it published 25 research reports (Jiang, 2011d). The two pillars of its research were 1) the investigation and translation of factory acts in other countries and 2) field research, including interviews with workers across Japan (Oka, 1917, pp. 130–131). When conducting these interviews, Kubota and the other researchers made an effort to create a relaxed interview atmosphere to elicit honest accounts from the workers. For example, they sometimes conducted the interviews over dinner, the costs of which they paid from their own pockets (Oka, 1917, pp. 130–131). The final results of the field work, entitled 職工事情 (*Conditions of factory workers*), comprised three volumes and was published in 1903 (Soeda, 2010). This book is regarded as a pioneering work of labor research that revealed the appalling working conditions of low-wage earners (Inumaru, 1998).

Based on this enormous body of research data, a new factory bill was drafted (Kubota, 1933/1980f). The bill included the regulation of child labor and women's night-shift work, and consultations on it were held in multiple settings, such as 商業會議所 (Chamber of Commerce and Industry) (Kubota, 1909/1980i). However, the bill was stillborn due to the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War (Jiang, 2011a, p. 218). The enactment of the Factory Act had to wait until 1911, and even after its enactment, the enforcement of the act was delayed because of opposition from entrepreneurs (Soeda, 2010, p. 18). The act was finally enforced in 1916.

5.1.2 Middle and late career

Kubota served as head of the Bureau of Hygiene from September 1903 to December 1910 (Kubota Seitaro rireki, n.d.). He became a judicator at 行政裁判所 (Administrative Tribunal) in December 1910 (Kubota Seitaro rireki, n.d.). Even though he had a degree in law, this move from public health to law was a major career change. Kubota (1992b) later explained the reason for his career change as follows. While he was serving as the head of the Bureau of Hygiene,

there were frequent changes of 内務大臣 (minister of Home Affairs) due to party politics. Although he never had a personal grudge against any of the ministers, he hated the diplomatic complexities associated with the coming and going of different ministers. He tried to find a way to continue to dedicate himself to the development of poverty intervention systems in government, such as by becoming 貴族院議員 (member of the House of Lords).²⁸ However, since he had no political connections that would enable him to gain a seat in the house, he gave up his idea of including poverty intervention issues in his government job. He wanted to serve as a judicator at the Administrative Tribunal because it seemed to be more stable position. When a judicator position became vacant, Kubota took it.

Kubota was awarded 法學博士 (juris doctor degree) in 1916 because 博士會 (Doctoral Degree-Awarding Committee of the Ministry of Education) recognized that he possessed significant scientific knowledge worthy of the degree (Kubota Seitaro rireki, n.d.). In 1923, Kubota was appointed 行政裁判所長官 (Secretary of the Administrative Tribunal) (Kubota Seitaro rireki, n.d.). While attending the administrative court as its secretary, Kubota tried to reform the court's systems by submitting a bill to the cabinet (Kubota, 1992b, p. 189).

Kubota later reflected on his career change in a diary entry he wrote at the age of 77. In the diary entry, Kubota (1992b) described how he had started to think about retirement in his late 60s but had not wished to take full retirement and had consulted with Kiichiro Hiranuma. Hoping to offer his knowledge and expertise in the field of politics, Kubota had asked Hiranuma if he would recommend him to become a member of the House of Lords.

²⁸ The Japanese Imperial Diet was composed of two chambers, the House of Representatives (衆議院) and the House of Lords (貴族院). The House of Representatives consisted of male members selected by male-only suffrage. The House of Lords consisted of major taxpayers, members of the nobility, and royal family members. The system was abolished after the enactment of the new Constitution in 1947. The contemporary Japanese Diet is a two-house system comprising the House of Representatives (衆議院) and the House of Councilors (参議院). Members of both houses are selected by universal suffrage.

Instead of a seat in the house, Hiranuma, who was the vice-chair of the Privy Council, recommended Kubota to become a member of the Privy Council.²⁹

The Privy Council, which was abolished after the Asia-Pacific War, was the highest panel of the Japanese Empire, and it met to discuss important state affairs at the emperor's request (Sano, 2007, pp. 102–103). Kubota accepted the recommendation by Hirata (Kubota, 1992b, p. 190) and served as 枢密顧問官 (Privy Councilor) from January 1932 until his death in October 1946 (Kubota Seitaro rireki, n.d.).

Once Kubota had completed his time as the head of the Factory Research Group and started serving as the head of the Bureau of Hygiene in 1903 (Kubota Seitaro rireki, n.d.), he became less involved in issues around poverty. Although he was not able to engage in efforts to institute an integrated state poverty intervention system, he did try to alleviate specific cases of poverty during his middle and late career. For example, he tried to intervene in the poverty of Hansen's disease patients during his time as head of the Bureau of Hygiene (Kubota, 1933/1980h). Hansen's disease patients living in destitution who begged for money at Buddhist temples or Shintō shrine festivals became a "diplomatic issue" when foreigners started to be allowed to travel inside Japan without restrictions (Kubota, 1929/1980; Nichibenren hōmu kenkyū zaidan, 2005, p. 53). Since there were fewer cases of Hansen's disease in Europe and North America, and it was prevalent mostly in Asia, Africa, and Latin America at that time, the presence of Hansen's disease patients in public places was considered to represent the Japanese Empire as backward (Nichibenren hōmu kenkyū zaidan, 2005, p. 53).³⁰

In his memoir-like article 癩豫防制度創設の當時を回顧す ("Looking back at the time when the leprosy prevention system was established") written in 1933, Kubota described how he felt about the control of Hansen's disease. The rest of

²⁹ The Privy Council existed until the enactment of the new Constitution, which ruled that the emperor should have no political involvement, in 1947.

³⁰ For example, to remove itinerant Hansen's disease patients from public sight, in 1905 Masatsugu Yamane, a former chief police surgeon at the Metropolitan Police Department, proposed a bill to the Diet to add Hansen's disease as one of the targets of 伝染病予防法 (Infectious Diseases Prevention Act), since this act meant that patients with an infectious disease could be segregated from the public by force (Nichibenren hōmu kenkyū zaidan, 2005, p. 54).

this paragraph is the paraphrase of his reflection in this article. When leprosy was starting to be discussed as a public health issue in the Diet, Kubota understood that public intervention with regard to Hansen's disease would be significant in two respects. The first concerned protecting the public from infection by segregating patients with Hansen's disease; the second was protecting Hansen's disease patients who were living in poverty. Kubota felt that protecting the public from the disease was the Bureau of Hygiene's responsibility. However, he thought that little needed to be done to protect the public from infection with this disease. This was because Kubota understood the infectiousness of Hansen's disease to be low, as he was aware of almost no obvious cases of infection from person to person. Furthermore, since around 1899, the Bureau of Hygiene had been busy addressing acute infectious diseases such as plague, typhoid, and dysentery; they had not even had time to take preventive measures against chronic infectious diseases with high death rates, such as tuberculosis. Kubota and the officials at the Bureau of Hygiene considered that from the point of view of infectious disease control, Hansen's disease was a low priority. Kubota initially hesitated to be involved in poverty relief for Hansen's disease patients because the Bureau of Municipal Affairs was the office in charge of relief matters. Despite his initial hesitation, he later decided to commit himself to developing a public system to relieve itinerant leprosy patients. The person who contributed to his change of mind was Eiichi Shibusawa.³¹ Shibusawa kept urging on Kubota the necessity to provide relief for itinerant leprosy patients. He also successfully mobilized public opinion to recognize the necessity of relief for leprosy patients living in destitution. Moved by Shibusawa's enthusiasm, Kubota decided that the Bureau of Hygiene should also work for the relief of these patients. His original plan was to institute leprosaria in each prefecture; however, medical technocrats at the Bureau of Hygiene insisted on establishing leprosaria on remote islands in order to locate Hansen's disease patients around the country. Kubota was very much against sending these patients to remote places because it would impose a huge emotional burden on them. In the end, five national leprosaria for

³¹ Shibusawa is a well-known entrepreneur in Meiji period who also engaged in philanthropic acts throughout his life. For example, he served as the president of the Central Charity Association. He also managed a 養育院 (relief center) that regularly accommodated Hansen's disease patients (Kubota, 1933/1980h).

itinerant leprosy patients were established under 癩豫防法 (Leprosy Prevention Act) in 1907.³²

Since his subsequent positions in government were not supposed to include responsibility for poverty intervention issues, Kubota was not able to commit himself to efforts to institute a comprehensive state poverty intervention system. However, this did not mean that he completely withdrew from involvement in poverty interventions. He tried to continue to be involved in a wide range of poverty intervention efforts, participating in foundations including but not limited to 中央社會事業協會 (National Association of Social Work), 濟生會 (Saiseikai Imperial Gift Foundation), and 全國養老事業協會 (National Association for Welfare of the Aged).

5.1.3 Kubota's publications on poverty

I have described how I made my selection of Kubota's poverty texts in Section 4.1, and a list of his poverty texts is provided in **Table 1**. In this section, I briefly describe the content of those texts. Kubota's poverty texts can be divided into three main kinds. The first comprises texts where the main topic is poverty, including his rationale for why poverty interventions had to be made and his suggested poverty intervention measures. The second kind of text explains public systems and services; these systems and services did not necessarily target poverty per se, but Kubota considered that they had a poverty-alleviating function. The third kind includes memoir-like texts where Kubota looked back on his engagement in poverty intervention issues. These retrospective discussions are mostly found in texts he wrote after 1920. I will now briefly review the key texts by Kubota.

Kubota started writing about poverty soon after his return from his one-year study visit to Europe in 1899. Indeed, this was his most fruitful year for poverty texts, and he wrote six of them. In June, he privately published 勞働者強制保險 ("Compulsory insurance for workers"), which explained insurance policies for workers in Germany. In the same month, he also published "About

³² Kōsei rōdōshō (n.d.) states that although leprosaria were set up to provide relief for patients, this caused further prejudice against them because people jumped to the erroneous conclusion that patients had to be segregated from society and put into institutions because leprosy was highly infectious.

protection of the poor with sickness.” This article was written before the emergence of national healthcare, national health insurance, or statutory workers’ compensation. Sickness and injury were the leading causes of poverty for low-wage earners. In this article, Kubota argued that there were two main ways of protecting workers from falling into poverty due to sickness or injury. The first was 救貧的疾病保護 (poverty relief sickness protection), by which he meant free medical care. The second was 自助的疾病保護 (self-reliant sickness protection).

In the article “Social systems,” Kubota introduced laws, public systems, and services that had helped to alleviate or eliminate poverty in Europe. In “Municipal governance and the social system,” Kubota emphasized that a municipality’s fundamental functions were to enhance the mutual support system among the people and to increase public benefit. He also stressed the importance of the municipality’s role in poverty interventions, as well as the nation’s critical role in governing municipalities.

“Opinion on the poor relief system” was the first text in which Kubota comprehensively explained his poverty intervention ideas. He explained two poverty intervention approaches, 公益主義 (*kōeki shugi*, the public benefit-oriented approach) and 慈惠主義 (*jikei shugi*, the loving-kindness approach). He stated that *kōeki shugi* should be mainly applied when intervening in the poverty of those who had a capacity or potential for work, while *jikei shugi* was to be applied exceptionally to intervene in the poverty of the frail elderly and people with terminal illnesses or permanent physical impairments.

In 衛生 衛生法講義 (其一) (“Hygiene: Lecture on hygiene law (series 1)”), Kubota mainly explained what public health was and what role the state should play in its preservation. He explained that the individual’s exposure to health risk factors, such as living in an air-polluted area or working in a dangerous factory for long hours, was determined by their economic standing in society. He added that people living in poverty had no choice but to expose themselves to such health risk factors. He explained that since economic principles determined each individual’s standing in society, and since workers were unlikely to gain enough wealth to liberate themselves from unhygienic living and working conditions, the state had to eliminate these health risk factors.

After he started leading the factory research group, Kubota mainly wrote texts about low-wage earners and their working conditions in factories. For example, he published 工場制度に就て (“About the factory system”) in 1902 and 工場法案ニ就テ (“Proposal for the Factory Act”) in 1903. In 1904, he wrote 救貧制度に就て (一) (“About the poor relief system I”) and 救貧制度に就て (二) (“About the poor relief system II”), but the overwhelming majority of their contents were duplicated from “Opinion on the poor relief system,” which he had published in 1899, and I have therefore not counted them as ones of his poverty texts.

After Kubota started to serve in the Administrative Tribunal in 1910 (Kubota Seitaro rireki, n.d.), he was less involved in poverty intervention issues as part of his official duties, but he still published about poverty and low-wage earners. Kubota’s paramount texts on poverty in the 1910s were “About measures against poverty,” published in 1914, and 貧に就て (“About poverty”), published in 1915. He also wrote multiple texts during the 1910s that insisted on the necessity of affordable housing for low-wage earners, such as 住宅問題に就て (“About the housing issue”) and 住居問題に就て (“Living quarters issue”).

Although they were not written by Kubota, two published transcripts of roundtable discussions in which Kubota participated should be included among Kubota’s poverty texts, since they record comments by him that convey his reflections on state poverty interventions during the Meiji period. The first of these published transcript is 「救貧制度」 稲村ヶ崎問答 (“Question and answer about the poverty relief system in Inamuragasaki”), compiled by Tada and published in the journal 社会事業 (*Social Work*) in 1928.³³ Besides Kubota, there were two other participants, Takayuki Namae and Taichi Hara.³⁴ In the published transcript, there is one part in which Kubota looks back on his disagreement with the government’s focus on 生業扶助 (occupational

³³ Inamuragasaki is the name of the town where this roundtable discussion took place. There is no mention of Tada’s first name in the published transcript.

³⁴ Namae was one of the key figures in Japanese social work. He studied at the New York School of Philanthropy, worked for the Bureau of Social Affairs on a contract basis from 1908, and later taught social work at the Japan Women’s University (Ogasawara, 2013). Hara served as a board member for the National Association of Social Work (Shūgiin & Sangiin, 1960, p. 149).

assistance), a scheme that provided small amounts of funding as means of support and was the dominant poverty intervention measure after the Russo-Japanese War. Kubota also reveals that he and his collaborators in the Society for Research on the Poor had already started thinking about aiding people living in poverty around 1901 (Tada, 1928, p. 135). This is new information, since existing studies of Kubota's thinking about poverty claim that he was opposed to the provision of material aid for the poor during his early career (Nakamura, 1980).

Another roundtable discussion transcript that includes Kubota's reflections on poverty during the Meiji period is 窪田静太郎氏を中心とする座談會 ("Roundtable discussion with Seitaro Kubota"), originally published in *Social Work* in 1932 (with no specific editor or compiler named). This transcript is based on a roundtable discussion that took place February 1932 with twelve participants who were engaging or had engaged in poverty intervention issues, including Ajiro Tomita from 社會局 (Bureau of Social Affairs). Despite the presence of multiple participants in the roundtable discussion, the published transcript focuses on Kubota's comments, and the title of the transcript gives his name. The transcript includes Kubota's look back at a wide range of poverty intervention issues up to around 1900. It also contains Kubota's reflections on how Goto tried to teach him the importance of instituting healthcare systems to prevent workers from falling into poverty.

5.2 The Meiji government's poverty interventions

Although concrete figures on the prevalence of destitution in the early Meiji period are hard to ascertain, one study suggests that around 18 percent of the total population of the city of Osaka was living in poverty in 1870 (Osaka shakai fukushi kyōgi kai, 1958, as cited in Yoshida, 1960, p. 4). For the Meiji government—a new monarchical government established after a civil war and the defeat of the Tokugawa shogunate—poverty was a matter of concern (Otomo, 1979). For example, 王政復古の大号令 (Imperial Restoration Statement) of 1868, which proclaimed the new monarchy, also mentioned

inflation, the acceleration of the economic gap between rich and poor, and the increasing suffering of the poor (Yoshida, 1993, p.147).

Otomo (1979) classifies the early Meiji government's poverty intervention schemes as follows: 1) statutory poverty relief, 2) monetary awards for people of moral excellence,³⁵ and 3) the charity of the royal family (p. 1). She also states that of these three sources, the one with the deepest pockets was the charity of the royal family. As it was trying to build a modern nation-state with an emperor system (Irokawa, 1966, p. 27), the Meiji government needed to promote a new image of the emperor as the liberator of the people from bad government (A. Tanaka, 2003, p. 214). It used the charity of the royal family as an opportunity to do this.

Once the difficult time associated with the establishment of the new regime was over, the frugal Meiji government needed to restrict its spending on poverty interventions (Otomo, 1981). It regarded people's livelihood as a personal matter in which the government should not be involved (Otomo, 1981). The government particularly disliked providing people with material aid. There was a fear that providing material relief to the poor would erode people's 獨立自助の精神 (spirit of independence and self-help) (Kubota, 1932/1980g, p. 287). The value placed on independence had a significant influence on the disposition of society and people's behavior in Meiji Japan.³⁶ The desire to preserve the value of independence also impacted the government's predispositions with regard to poverty interventions. Self-help was another emphasized value during the Meiji period. The value of self-help had an origin in Samuel Smiles' book *Self-help*. Keiu Nakamura's Japanese

³⁵ These included 孝子 (children who were filial toward their parents), 節婦 (women of virtue), and 義僕 (persons of high morality serving the public good) (Otomo, 1979, p. 1).

³⁶ According to one of the most eminent Enlightenment thinkers of the Meiji period, Yukichi Fukuzawa (1873/1959), independence meant governing one's own body and mind, not relying on others' wisdom or resources, and fending for oneself (p. 43). Fukuzawa also emphasized the importance for all Japanese nationals to possess a spirit of independence. He created the slogan 一身獨立して一國獨立する事 (a congregation of independent people makes a nation independent) (Fukuzawa, 1873/1959, p.43). The book in which he coined the slogan became a bestseller, so it was well received by the general public. One of the major reasons behind the popularity of the value of independence was that it symbolized emancipation from the old class system (Hirota, 2001, p. 82).

translation of this book became one of the bestsellers of the Meiji period, and it impacted people's thinking about how to lead their lives in the new industrial society (Fujiwara, 1982). Although it originated in the English word, the term has a unique meaning in the Japanese language. While in English "self-help" connotes the individual's efforts to solve their own problems without relying on others (Merriam-Webster, n.d.), in the Japanese language 自助 (self-help) refers to the individual's effort to be independent and solve their life difficulties with the help of their family, relatives, friends, or neighborhood community (Watanabe, 2013).³⁷

In addition to its concern that poverty relief would interfere with the spirit of independence and self-help, the Meiji government had another reason for taking a laissez-faire approach to poverty: as a latecomer to the worldwide economic competition of the late 19th century, the Meiji government felt an urge to achieve rapid industrialization and economic development, expressed in the slogan 富國強兵 (rich nation and strong army) (Kubota, 1932/1980g). As Kubota mentioned in his roundtable reflections on the Meiji government's poverty interventions, the government prioritized any matters that would help to revise the unequal treaties ratified in 1858 with the United States, Holland, Russia, Great Britain, and France; all other seemingly unrelated issues became secondary (Tada, 1928, p. 135). These treaties had given the five countries merchandising and diplomatic advantages while imposing limitations on Japan. For example, the treaties did not allow Japan to have autonomy over tariffs. Since this was a significant hindrance to the Japanese Empire's economic growth, the Meiji government sought the revision of the treaties. The government's desperate pursuit of a "rich nation and strong army" left the poverty of socially vulnerable groups unattended (Kubota, 1932/1980g).

³⁷ Okamura (1983) states that in Japan there is a long history of those who cannot live independently relying on communal help (p. 6). For example, he mentions that an ordinance (戸令) released in 701 made family members or people living in the neighborhood responsible for taking care of those who could not live independently. Besides this mandate, Okamura explains that farming communities around the country employed the customary practice of mutual help, not just to relieve the poor living in the same area but also to assist one another with farming or domestic work tasks such as roof-thatching.

Kubota explains (1920/1980b) that there were only two state food aid schemes: 恤救規則 (Mercy Relief Rule), enacted in 1874, and 棄児養育米給与の制 (Rule for Granting Rice to Raise an Abandoned Child), enacted in 1871. However, he also mentioned that rigid eligibility criteria and complicated application processes made it extremely difficult to access these sources of aid, almost to the point that they existed in name only. For example, the Mercy Relief Rule was applicable only to children under 13 years of age who had no family or neighbors to rely on, or to frail elderly people over 70 years of age with no family or neighbors.³⁸ When people fell into destitution, the government expected them to rely on mutual assistance: the preamble of the Mercy Relief Rule even stated that poverty relief should be provided by 人民相互ノ情誼 (benevolence among the people) (Otomo, 1981, p. 154). Instead of instituting statutory poverty relief measures other than the Mercy Relief Rule and the Rule for Granting Rice to Raise an Abandoned Child, the Meiji government encouraged people to make their own preparations against mishaps that might put them at risk of losing their livelihood. For example, in 1875 the government started a postal savings system targeted at working-class people, modeled after the English system (H. Tanaka, 2012). Overall, the financially constrained Meiji government made poverty a personal issue and focused on personal responsibility for poverty interventions.

The Meiji government's *laissez-faire* attitude toward poverty started to change when an economic downturn took place and poverty became a public

³⁸ From the outset, the eligibility criteria established for the Mercy Relief Rule were rigid and its budget was tight. Nonetheless, the government used extra strategies to further minimize its budget. For example, Akashi (1982) points out that about six months after the announcement of the Mercy Relief Rule, the Ministry of Home Affairs issued the Notice of Application of the Mercy Relief Rule (窮民恤救申請調査箇条), which clarified that even when a person seemed to meet the Mercy Relief Rule eligibility criteria, the relief should be still withheld; only after a thorough investigation of the applicant could the relief be granted, and then only in cases of emergency and extreme distress.

concern from the middle of the 1880s onward (Ikeda, 1994, pp. 72–74).³⁹ Attempts were made within the government to institute state systems to intervene in poverty from around 1890. For example, the Ministry of Home Affairs proposed 窮民救助法案 (Poor Relief Bill) to the Imperial Diet in 1890 (Kubota, 1932/1980g). Modeled after the German poor relief law, this bill aimed to make local municipalities responsible for people living in poverty (Kitaba, 2013). This bill was rejected by the Diet, as were other bills proposed during the 1890s that aimed to institute state poverty intervention systems because the government was fully engaged in economic and military development, and the Diet did not support the allocation of budgets for poverty intervention (Ikeda, 1994, p. 82).

The first group of people that made the Meiji government realize the sheer need for poverty intervention in relation to the “rich nation and strong army” was the bereaved families of soldiers killed in the Russo-Japanese War (Kubota, 1932/1980g). Since breadwinners were drafted for the war, families began to struggle to make a living, particularly those that had already been living hand-to-mouth (Kitadomari, 1999). The government was unable to disregard these destitute bereaved families due to their contribution to the “rich nation and strong army.” According to 応召下士兵卒家族救助令施行に関する心得事項 (“Memorandum of draft for noncommissioned officers’ family aid”), released by the Minister of Home Affairs in 1904, the provision of assistance for their families would reduce the anxieties of soldiers drafted to fight for the nation, and therefore the Japanese Empire needed to protect those families (Terawaki, 2005). The Bureau of Municipal Affairs was the government body in charge of administering poverty interventions around the time of the Russo-Japanese War (Kubota, 1929/1980I). As Kubota explained in the roundtable discussion, Tomoichi Inoue was the person at the bureau who led the government’s project to aid the soldiers’ families (Tada, 1928, p. 136). Terawaki (2005) also mentions that Inoue played a leading role in

³⁹ During this period, newspaper reportage started to cover the urban slums (Ikeda, 1994, p. 72). Even though urban slums had already existed during the Edo period, an influx of poor peasants from rural areas now inflated these slums (Kagaya, 2014). Thanks to these news reports, the general public’s attention to slums and their residents grew, and this increased attention to slums gradually shifted toward poverty as a public concern (Ikeda, 1994, p. 72–73).

state poverty relief. In the roundtable discussion, Kubota explains that Inoue's idea for the state intervention for the soldiers' families was to provide the families with small sums as a means of support called occupational assistance (Tada, 1928, p. 136). Kubota also stated that Inoue had focused on assisting them to gain jobs, such as through employment referrals (Tada, 1928, p.136). This was not just down to Inoue in particular; there was a general aversion to providing people with material relief, due to the belief that it would make people lazy (Kubota, 1932/1980g).

After the Russo-Japanese War, the Meiji government struggled to administer the nation. After spending so much money on the war, the nation's economy was exhausted. Furthermore, the acceleration of militarization and the management of newly gained territories were an increasing drain on state finances (Narita, 2012b, p.164).⁴⁰ Following its victory in the Russo-Japanese War, Japan started to pursue full-scale imperialism, including the annexation of the Korean Peninsula in 1910 (Yoshida & Okada, 2000, p. 249). This pursuit of imperialism before the economy had recovered caused suffering among the Japanese people. Narita (2012b) explained that increases in taxes such as land tax were a burden on farmers, who struggled to make ends meet, both because their main workforce had been drafted for the war and because of poor crop yields (p. 164). He also mentioned that in urban areas too, low-wage earners living hand-to-mouth struggled to survive. Dissatisfaction with their lives mobilized people into social movements. For example, 1918 saw 米騒動 (rice riots), a nationwide series of outbursts of dissatisfaction associated with inflation and skyrocketing rice prices.⁴¹ As poverty become an increasingly pressing issue, social movements demanding an equal democratic society and socialism started to arise more frequently (Ikeda, 1994, p. 96).

⁴⁰ Japan had gained the lower half of Sakhalin Island, the Liaodong Peninsula, and the South Manchurian Railway in the Treaty of Portsmouth, which terminated the Russo-Japanese War.

⁴¹ Eguchi (1994) describes how the outbursts occurred as follows. They started in July 1918, in Toyama Prefecture, with an incident in which hundreds of fishermen's wives pleaded for a reduction in the price of rice and for the rice not to be transported outside of their area. Masses of people showed their dissatisfaction by attacking rice shops and big business owners' houses around the country. The people's uprising continued for about 50 days in 47 prefectures, eventually resulting in the resignation of the cabinet headed by Masatake Terauchi in September 1918.

The Meiji government was concerned to maintain social order. It was particularly concerned about the burgeoning of socialism and communism among low-wage earners (Kubota, 1932/1980g). The emphasis on suppressing the rise of socialism and communism also impacted the government's poverty intervention schemes. To discourage workers from leaning toward left-wing thought, the government started to pay attention to workers' welfare, especially workers' economic standing (Kubota, 1932/1980g). It tried to safeguard workers from falling into poverty. To this end, the government focused on developing 防貧制度 (poverty prevention system) which provided working class with in-kind benefits such as affordable public housing, a public market selling commodities at fair prices, public pawnbroking, and public bathhouses (Kubota, 1932/1980g, 1935/1980m).⁴² By administering schemes providing in-kind benefits for workers, the government tried to suppress the spread of socialism and communism among the working class. In other words, the government identified the function of poverty prevention as to deter popular uprisings, and it developed this further during the Taishō period (1912–1926) (Kubota, 1935/1980m).

While the Meiji government developed schemes to provide in-kind benefits for workers after the Russo-Japanese War, it maintained its hardline attitude toward material aid for the poor. For example, in 1908 the Bureau of Municipal Affairs issued a notice titled 濟貧恤救ハ隣保相扶ノ情誼ニ依リ互ニ協救セシメ國費救助ノ濫給矯正方ノ件 (“Poverty relief should be done by benevolent mutual assistance in the neighborhood so that the national budget will be tightened up”), which was basically the bureau's demand for a reduction in the number of applications for the Mercy Relief Rule via municipal offices, which received applications from local residents (Ogawa, 1960a). The notice worked well: from 1909, the year following the release of the notice, national expenditure on the Mercy Relief Rule reduced significantly (Ikeda, 1983).

⁴² Although visiting bathhouses had been a part of Japanese popular culture since the 12th century, the urban poor were not able to afford regular bathhouse visits (Kawabata, 2015).

5.3 Shinpei Goto's ideas about poverty prevention

Although noninterference defined the Meiji government's dominant attitude toward poverty, Shinpei Goto, the head of the Bureau of Hygiene, started to argue for the need to establish systems to prevent low-wage earners from falling into poverty from the latter half of the 1890s onward (Ikeda, 1983). Goto's main interest was in eliminating low-wage earners' poverty risk factors. At that time, low-wage earners were forced to work long hours in dangerous factories. There was no legislation for the protection of workers (Okouchi, 1938/1981). Atrocious working and living conditions made them susceptible to sickness or injury; furthermore, sickness or injury meant no income, since compensation systems were virtually nonexistent at that time. Seeing sickness and injury as the leading cause of poverty for low-wage earners, Goto insisted that the state should institute hospitals to provide free medical care and a mandatory workers' health insurance system (Goto, 1898, as cited in Kubota, 1929/1980, pp. 447–451).

The reason Goto paid attention to low-wage earners was that he saw them as the reservoir of national production power (Goto, 1898, as cited in Kubota, 1929/1980, p. 448). He understood that low-wage earners or working-class people⁴³ were the main actors in the industrial development of the nation. In the roundtable discussion "Question and answer about the poverty relief system in Inamuragasaki," Kubota looked back at the time when he was working under Goto's supervision, and he stated that Goto's focus on the prevention of workers' poverty was in line with the ethos of Meiji period, when the highest priority was given to the development of the nation, as exemplified in the slogan "rich nation and strong army" (Tada, 1928, p. 135). Goto expected that if workers were provided with healthcare and social insurance as preventive measures against poverty, they would be independent (Goto, 1898, as cited in Kubota, 1929/1980, p. 449). Kubota recalled Goto's attitude toward poverty relief in a discussion he joined in his later years (Kubota Seitaro shi o chūshin to suru zadankai, 1932/1980). As

⁴³ The working class started to emerge as a new social class during the period of the industrial revolution which started around 1897 in Japan (Yoshida, 1980).

a government official of the Meiji period, Goto highly valued independence. For this reason, he did not advocate for poverty relief, because he thought providing the poor with material aid would create lazy people who depended on the system (Kubota Seitaro shi o chūshin to suru zadankai, 1932/1980, p. 494).

Goto also understood that eliminating low-wage earners' poverty risks and taking care of their welfare would be key factors preventing their attraction toward socialism and communism (Kubota, n.d., as cited in Tsurumi, 1937, p. 774). He disapproved of these ideologies because he saw them as destructive of the social order (Goto, 1898, as cited in Kubota, 1929/1980, p. 448).

Goto was not the only one to pay attention to workers or to advocate for their protection from impoverishment. There were a small number of scholars and business owners who were concerned that unimpeded economic disparity between capitalists and workers would lead to the disruption of social stability. The trailblazer was the economist and social policy scholar Noburu Kanai, who was greatly influenced by the Verein für Sozialpolitik and insisted that the state should create social policy to protect workers (Kawai, 1939, pp. 71–73). Kumazo Kuwata, a former student of Kanai at Tokyo Imperial University, also insisted on the necessity of instituting social insurance for workers (Kubota, 1933/1980f). There was also the Japan Association for Social Policy Studies, formed in 1896. This association was founded by scholars (including Kanai and Kuwata) and business owners who asserted that the state needed to intervene in the economic disparity between capitalists and workers for the further development of the nation, instead of letting unregulated free competition rule (Shakai seisaku gakkai, 1899).

Despite the existence of these concerned scholars and the academic association, Goto was the only person who actually took action to institute state systems for the protection of low-wage earners in the 1890s (Kubota, n.d., as cited in Tsurumi, 1937, p. 818). To convince the government of the necessity for workers' protection, Goto wrote proposals, and he presented viable plans to realize the workers' poverty prevention schemes he envisioned in those documents. He submitted six proposals for poverty interventions between 1895 and 1898 while serving at the Bureau of Hygiene (Ikeda, 1983). Although Goto's ideas about preventing workers from falling into poverty

received attention from Prime Minister Hirobumi Ito, who greatly admired German state socialism (Tsurumi, 1937, pp. 764–773),⁴⁴ none of his proposals were realized during his time at the bureau (Ikeda, 1983).

⁴⁴ During his stay in Germany (1882–1883), Ito learned from Rudolf von Gneist and Lorenz von Stein (Irokawa, 1966, p. 432).

6 KUBOTA'S THINKING ABOUT POVERTY

I will outline Kubota's thinking about poverty by dividing it into the following three periods: 1) poverty as a hindrance to the development of the nation; 2) poverty as a social question; 3) poverty as an ethical issue. To highlight the differences in Kubota's thinking about poverty in the different periods, I have formulated the concept of the poverty intervention approach, by which I mean the principal idea that governs any assertion of a poverty intervention. I have identified the poverty intervention approach of each period: the public benefit-oriented approach, the social reform approach, and the social solidarity approach, respectively. I use each identified poverty intervention approach as the fundamental pillar to demonstrate Kubota's thinking about poverty in each period. By focusing on the poverty intervention approach, which is the idea behind Kubota's assertions about poverty interventions and specific poverty intervention measures, I intend to reveal Kubota's thinking about poverty in a holistic manner.

6.1 Poverty as a hindrance to the development of the nation (1899-1909)

For the Meiji government, which was aggressively pursuing the "rich nation and strong army," utility to the state was the most critical aspect of public administration. In other words, benefit to the state was the determining factor to decide whether a certain public policy was to be implemented or not. In the roundtable discussion "Question and answer about the poverty relief system in Inamuragasaki," Kubota commented that this utilitarian approach was widely taken by people in the government, including Kubota himself as well as Goto, his boss (Tada, 1928, p. 135). In other words, Kubota took a utilitarian approach to poverty intervention during his early career. Thus, the preservation and increase of benefit to the state was the most important factor in his suggestions regarding poverty intervention systems. He focused on intervening in the poverty of those who were likely to contribute to the

state's development. However, Kubota (1899/1980c) also insisted that the poverty of the frail elderly and people with terminal illnesses or permanent physical impairments should be intervened in from an ethical point of view.

6.1.1 Public benefit-oriented approach

The public benefit-oriented approach was Kubota's fundamental poverty intervention approach during his early career. In "Opinion on the poor relief system," written in 1899, he stated:

我國に於て將來定むべき救貧制度は宜く公益主義たるべし。單純なる慈惠主義たるべからず。公益主義とは専ら公益上より打算して救濟するの謂にして憐愍慈惠即人情上より救濟するに非ず。(Our country should establish a poverty relief system based on the public benefit-oriented approach. It should not be based on philanthropic ideology. In the public benefit-oriented approach, poverty relief is done based on an estimate of its impact on public benefit, not on feelings of human empathy such as pity and benevolence). (Kubota, 1899/1980c, p.155)

In his public-benefit-oriented approach, the most critical question is the grounds on which one should intervene in a particular case of poverty. To describe how the public benefit-oriented approach would work, in "Opinion on the poor relief system" Kubota provided a case example of relief for the sick poor. In the public benefit-oriented approach, the rationale for providing relief to this group was that providing free medical care and getting the person to back into the workforce as soon as possible was more beneficial to society. He emphasized that if the sick poor were to be relieved out of pity, this relief would not be in line with the public benefit-oriented approach.

Although literal meaning of 公益⁴⁵ (public benefit) is "a common asset for society" (Iizaka,1986), I interpret what Kubota (1899/1980c) meant by "public benefit" as benefit to the nation-state, that is, the Japanese Empire. In other words, I argue that Kubota proposed that the state should decide whether to intervene in a case of poverty according to its assessment of the intervention's

⁴⁵ In contemporary Japanese writing, 公益 is written as 公益.

impact for the state's benefit. For example, if the state judged that the result of a certain act of poverty intervention would help to preserve or increase the benefit to the state, then the state would most likely intervene in the case. If the government judged that the result of the act would make no impact on the benefit to the state, or would even decrease that benefit, then the government would not intervene in the case.

I have interpreted Kubota's (1899/1980c) use of the word "public benefit" as "state's benefit" by referring to the Japanese conception of 公 (public). According to Mizubayashi (2002), the public has been conceived as something that is more associated with governmental authority in Japan than is the case elsewhere (p. 13). I surmise that the Japanese association between the public and state power was even greater in the Meiji period. This is because the people at that time considered the state to be a reliable new protector against the Western countries following the abolition of the Tokugawa shogunate (Hirota, 2001, p. 89).⁴⁶

Furthermore, according to Kubota's recollections during the roundtable discussion, the Meiji government's zeal for the "rich nation and strong army" was overriding in public administration, and any matters that seemed unrelated to it became secondary (Tada, 1928, p. 135). As the Japanese Empire had such an intense desire for rapid economic and military growth, the public benefit was uncomplicatedly regarded as synonymous with benefit to the state.

Kubota (1899/1980c) explained that under his proposed state poverty intervention system based on the public benefit-oriented approach, people would stand on their own two feet by fully exercising their spirit of self-help. His major premise was that one would push oneself hard with one's own spirit of self-help and not rely on the state system.

The emphasis on the spirit of self-help was not unique to Kubota: exercising self-help, including using the help of one's reciprocal network such as family members and neighbors, and not relying on the public poverty relief system

⁴⁶ Hirota (2001) also mentions that not all Japanese people shared the same vision or expectation of the state, especially the Ainu, the indigenous people of northern Japan, and the Okinawans, whose Ryukyu kingdom was annexed to Japan in 1879 (p. 89).

were major parts of the Meiji government's de facto poverty intervention policy.⁴⁷

Kubota (1899/1980c) expected people to find their own solutions when they became poor, and not to rely on material relief from the state because that would reduce the benefit to the state. For example, Kubota stated in "Opinion on the poor relief system":

人未だ他人の扶助を受けざる間は窮乏を極むと雖尚且獨力自活せんと勉むるものなれども一度他人の救助を受くるときは又救助を受くことを耻とせず、却て之に依頼して自ら勵むことなきに至るものなり。此獨力自活せんと勉むるの精神は國家元氣の存する所にして最尊重すべく苟も傷くべからざる所のものなり。(A person who has yet to be dependent on others will make every effort to maintain their independence even in very difficult situations, but once this person starts receiving help from others, the individual no longer feels shame at receiving help, and rather will be dependent and stop making effort. The spirit to be self-reliant is the foundation of the state's strength, which should be highly respected and never eroded). (Kubota, 1899/1980c, p. 154)

Kubota (1899/1980c) was not in favor of the state providing material aid to people living in poverty because he understood that it would risk reducing their spirit of self-help. Indeed, in his proposal for a state poverty intervention system based on the public benefit-oriented approach, what mattered most was that the system would not interfere with people's spirit of self-help. That was because he thought the spirit of self-help was the most fundamental element needed to enhance the state's benefit.

Kubota (1899/1980c) also stated: "單に慈惠の爲めにするの慈惠は必ずや歩々民の自助心を消耗するものなり。換言すれば人をして乞食根生を起さしむるものなり。" (Providing people living in poverty with material aid out of compassion would wear out their spirit of self-help. In other words, it installs them on the path to beggary)" (p. 154). He also disapproved of charity, that

⁴⁷ For more information on how the Meiji government emphasized self-help, see Chapter 5, Section 5.2.

is, donating anything to people living in poverty. As a way of intervening in poverty without reducing the spirit of self-help among those living in poverty, Kubota emphasized 間接救助 (indirect relief), that is, the provision of means to gain food, clothing, and shelter as a form of poverty intervention.

In the article, “Social systems,” written in 1899, Kubota also insisted that the state needed to institute 社會的制度 (social systems), which he defined as public/private systems to safeguard vulnerable people in society. In this article he introduced 22 social systems already adopted in Europe and North America that he thought possessed poverty intervention functions without interfering in people’s spirit of self-help. **Table 3** lists the systems Kubota mentioned in this text.

Table 3. List of the social systems Kubota describes in “Social systems,” published in 1899

Social system name in Japanese	English translation	Main function/aim of system
工場制度	Factory Act	Statutory regulation of industrial working environment
雇主責任法	Regulation on employer’s responsibility	Protecting employees when workplace accidents occur
共済組合	Mutual aid association (friendly society)	Members of association pay installments and receive compensation when misfortunes occur
労働者保険	Workers’ insurance	Providing health insurance for industrial workers
貯金制度	Savings system	Providing leeway for low-wage earners when misfortunes occur
年金制度	Pension system	Preparing for old age
信用組合	Credit union	Financial cooperative
消費組合、生産組合等	Consumers’ cooperative society	Selling daily necessities at affordable prices
建築組合	Housing cooperative association	Providing affordable safe housing

Social system name in Japanese	English translation	Main function/aim of system
労働者貸家ノ制度	Subsidized housing for workers	Providing affordable housing for urban workers
市街交通機關ノ制度	Public transportation systems	Providing affordable transportation services for urban workers
公立浴場及洗濯場	Public baths and laundromats	Maintenance of public hygiene
貧民飲食所	Public cafeteria (<i>Volksküche</i> ^a)	Providing affordable meals for the poor
救急手當所	Emergency clinics	Providing temporary medical care
盲啞院白痴院	Institutions for children with physical and intellectual disabilities	Providing education for such children
幼兒預所	Child care centers	Caring for children while their parents are at work
雇傭仲介所	Employment services	Helping the unemployed to find new jobs
市町村ノ質屋業	Public pawnbrokers	Providing fair pawnbroking services
出獄人保護制度	Rehabilitation system for ex-offenders	Preventing subsequent offenses
幼年犯罪者感化制度	Institutions for juvenile delinquents	Providing education for juvenile delinquents
實業學校制度	Industrial schools	Providing vocational training for juvenile delinquents
労働調査局	Labor investigation bureau	Researching a wide range of employment issues

^a Kubota (1899/1980k) used this German phrase in the text (p. 150).

Kubota (1899/1980k) introduced these systems because he understood that they would not damage people's spirit of self-help, since the systems would not involve handing out material aid to people living in poverty. Although Kubota acknowledged that the poverty relief systems he had observed in Europe, such as the English Poor Law, could be also counted as social systems, he wrote that he was against the idea that the Japanese Empire should adopt

a similar poor relief system, because he considered the provision of material aid to the poor under those systems to decrease people's spirit of self-help.

In "Opinion on the poor relief system," published in the same year as "Social systems," Kubota stated that a 社會的警察制度 (social policing system) such as forcible employment could also be used as a poverty intervention measure. For example, in this text, he proposed the establishment of a workhouse in Hokkaido—at that time a frontier region—to which itinerant beggars from the mainland would be sent. This proposal has led Nakamura (1980) to argue that Kubota's public benefit-oriented approach was harsh and that his thinking about poverty during his early career lacked a human rights perspective.

6.1.2 Prioritized and exceptional cases of poverty in the public benefit-oriented approach

During his early career, when he had the highest regard for the preservation of the state's benefit, Kubota (1899/1980c) focused on intervening in the poverty of children and workers, since he thought that they were most likely to contribute to an increase in value to the state. As an intervention measure for children living in poverty, Kubota emphasized the importance of providing children with an education because he understood that, depending on their upbringing, children living in poverty could become either valuable members of society or criminals, rascals, or prostitutes when they grew up. He disapproved of providing children with food, shelter, and clothing before their education. He explained that handing out such material aid prior to their education was like teaching children to be beggars.

Kubota (1899/1980d) insisted that workers should be protected from becoming poor because he saw workers as the foundation of the state's wealth (p. 12). These remarks on workers were a result of the influence of Goto, who also identified workers as the fundamental source of the nation's economic development (Goto, 1898, as cited in Kubota, 1929/1980l, p. 448). Also like Goto, Kubota identified sickness and injury as the major cause of workers losing their livelihood (Kubota Seitaro shi o chūshin to suru zadankai, 1932/1980, p. 494). To reduce the risk of workers suffering sickness or injury, Kubota (1902/1980e) insisted that the state should regulate their workplaces, such as by enacting the Factory Act. For cases where workers did become sick

or injured, Kubota asserted that the state should institute some compensation system (Kubota, 1899/1980c).

In the article “About protection of the poor with sickness,” Kubota stated that there were essentially two kinds of compensation system. The first was 救貧的疾病保護 (poverty relief sickness protection), in which sick or injured people were indiscriminately provided with free medical care. The other was 自助的疾病保護 (self-reliant sickness protection), in which both employer and worker paid a premium, so that if a mishap occurred, the worker would receive compensation. As examples of this type of system, Kubota mentioned compulsory workers’ insurance systems such as the German social welfare legislation and mutual associations such as Friendly Society of Great Britain. Since those systems required workers to pay a premium, Kubota surmised that they did not damage the workers’ spirit of self-help. Thus, Kubota judged that self-reliant sickness protection was the type of state system the Meiji government should institute both to protect workers’ health and to safeguard them from becoming poor. Although Kubota argued for self-reliant sickness protection, this did not mean that he denied the necessity for free medical care. He emphasized that free medical care would be still needed even after the state instituted self-reliant sickness protection. He explained why free medical care would be needed as follows:

社會的ノ方法即共濟組合等ガ發達シテモ之ニ漏ルゝ者ノ中ニ施療ヲ與フルノ價値アル貧民モ少カラザルベシ。故ニ施療ノ方法ヲ以テ社會的ノ方法ヲ補ヒ保護ヲ全フスルノ要アリ。(Even after the development of social systems such as the mutual system, there would be some poor who fell through the cracks in the system, and among those there would be some who deserved to receive relief. Thus, to supplement social systems and complete the protection system, free medical care is necessary). (Kubota, 1899/1980d, pp. 16–17)

During his early career, Kubota mostly framed poverty as a hygiene issue, particularly workers’ hygiene. He was concerned at the Meiji government’s neglectful attitude toward workers’ hygiene (Kubota, 1899/1980d). As I explained earlier, under the influence of Goto, Kubota (1899/1980d)

considered the workers to be the driving force of the Japanese Empire's economic development, and he insisted that the state should protect their health. In addition to this utilitarian rationale, Kubota presented another line of reasoning as to why the state had to intervene in workers' health issues in his text "Hygiene: Lecture on hygiene law (series 1)," written in 1899. He explained that since workers in a capitalist economic system could not be expected to extricate themselves from their living and working conditions, the state should control those conditions on the workers' behalf (Kubota, 1899). Kubota stated:

又工場等テ過度ニ労働シテ遂ニ健康ヲ害スル、ソレモ自分ニヤメタラ宜ササ
ウニ思フカヤメタラ生活力出来ヌ、ソレハナセカト云フト詰リ富ノ分配カラ
來ツテ居ルカラ矢張労働者カスル危険ナ労働ヲスルノモ自分勝手テハナイ社
會ノ經濟上ノ組織カラ來テ居ルカラ已ムナク働イテ居ルト云フ個人ノ免カル
ヘカラサル場合即チ個人カ自分ノ行爲テハ支配シ得サル條件テアル、不潔ナ
ル空氣ハ充滿シ屋根カ落チテ來ルカモ知レヌ危険ナル工場ニ働クト云フコト
ハ實ハ各個人カ支配シ切レナイ條件テアル、ソレ故ニ國家ハ國家ノカラ以テ
健康上有害ナル危険ヲ取除イテヤラネハナラヌ、 (A worker overworks in a
workplace such as a factory and damages their own health. It seems to be
better that the worker should quit the job, but if they do, the worker will not
be able to live. That is because the distribution of wealth determines where
the worker works, and engaging in dangerous work is not their arbitrary
decision. Since it is the economic system of society that determines where
the worker works, working in a dangerous environment is beyond their
control. Working in a factory whose roof might collapse at any time and
which is filled with polluted air is a situation over which the worker has no
control. Therefore, the state should exercise its power and eliminate the
health-harming factors for workers). (Kubota, 1899, pp. 34-35)

Kubota (1899)'s mention of workers' limited abilities to gain more wealth and quit their unhygienic environment demonstrates that even during his early career, he noted the social-structural causes of workers' poverty. This was a logical explanation that did not seek the causes of poverty in the worker

who fell into destitution; rather, it speculated that some structures of society made the worker susceptible to destitution.

Although Kubota focused on intervening in the poverty of those who were likely to add value to the state's benefit, he did not completely reject the idea of intervening in the poverty of those who were not likely to bring any benefit to the state. Indeed, he argued in favor of intervening in the poverty of frail elderly people and people with terminal illnesses or permanent physical impairments who could not earn a livelihood in "Opinion on the poor relief system." In this article, he expressed his point of view regarding intervention in such cases as follows:

彼等は公益上より打算するときは救済の價値なきものなり。故に彼等を救済するは公益上より打算するにあらずして慈惠主義より來り、而も彼等にかぎりて慈惠主義を行ふも公益上無害なるものなり。何となれば彼等の自助心は最早其用を爲さざる自助心なれば多少之れを消耗するとも公益上失ふ所なければなり。(From the point of view of public benefit, they [the frail elderly and people with terminal illnesses or permanent physical impairments] do not deserve to receive the state's intervention. Thus, their poverty should be intervened in not from the public benefit perspective, but from benevolence. Exceptionally relieving their poverty out of benevolence would do no harm to the public interest. Since their spirit of self-help is no longer valid, even if receiving material relief from the state would diminish their spirit of self-help to a certain degree, it would not cause any damage to the public benefit). (Kubota, 1899/1980c, p. 155)

Although Kubota generally expected people to use their spirit of self-help and not to rely on the public system, so that the state would not have to allocate a budget to intervene in their poverty, he did not impose this expectation on the frail elderly or people with terminal illnesses or physical impairments (Kubota, 1899/1980c). He insisted that the state should intervene in their poverty out of benevolence and moral responsibility (Kubota, 1932/1980g, p. 288). As a way of intervening in their poverty, Kubota proposed that the state

should put them in institutions where they would receive food, clothing, and necessary care (Kubota, 1899/1980c).

In light of the general atmosphere that disfavored any form of material relief by the state for those in need, it was remarkable that Kubota (1899/1980c) insisted on intervening in the poverty of the frail elderly and people with terminal illnesses or physical impairments, even though his suggested poverty intervention measures—inpatient poverty relief—seem to be limited from today's perspective. In an article Kubota (1932/1980g) wrote in later years, in which he looked back at the time when he had insisted on intervening in the poverty of the frail elderly and people with terminal illnesses or physical impairments, he explained that the government had been dismissive of his advocacy of poverty interventions for these groups (pp. 288–289).

6.2 Poverty as a social question (1910s)

Political ideologies that identified the root cause of poverty in the existing capitalist economic system, and which insisted on replacing it with more collective ownership of the means of production as a solution to poverty, started to rise after the Russo-Japanese War and continued until the end of the Taishō period in 1926 (Kubota 1915, 1920/1980b). Kubota (1915) argued that it was wrong to seek a solution for poverty in the elimination of the existing economic system and proposed to seek solutions to poverty issues without challenging the social and economic status quo.

6.2.1 Social reform approach

Kubota's dominant poverty intervention approach in the 1910s was 社會改良主義 (social reform approach), which he described in "About poverty," published in 1915:

然るに社會共同の力を以て貧の原因を排除し又は貧せしむべき制度に未十分でない是に於て現代の社會組織を根本的に誤れるものとなして破壊せんとする者が生ずる乍併此の如きは到底空想に過ぎざるのみならず國家の發達人類の進歩と相容れざるものである夫故に根本に於て社會組織の現

制を維持しつゝ文明の進歩に伴ふ餘弊を匡救することが必要である是に於て社會改良主義なるものを生ずる (Since a poverty prevention system that aims to eliminate the cause of poverty by the collective effort of society is insufficient, there are some people who see the structure of modern society as essentially wrong and are trying to destroy it. This idea is not only fanciful but also incompatible with the development of the state and human progress. It is necessary to maintain the current social system, and at the same time to intervene in maladies that are inherent to the progress of human society. This is the reason why a social reformist approach is needed). (Kubota, 1915, p. 20)

Although the social reform approach emphasized the maintenance of the social and economic status quo, this did not mean that it let the autonomy of the free market reign completely. Seeing poverty as an unavoidable by-product of the capitalist economic system, this approach designated the state as the party responsible for instituting poverty intervention systems (Kubota, 1915).⁴⁸ This understanding of poverty was not unique to Kubota. The Japan Association for Social Policy Studies had the same idea. According to its prospectus, released in 1899, the association regarded the worsening economic gap between the haves and have-nots to be problematic on the grounds that it would cause antagonism between different social classes (Shakai seisaku gakkai, 1899). The prospectus also insisted on maintaining the capitalist economic system and avoiding class conflict by deploying the power of the state and private activities. Having been a member of this academic society since around 1897, and having worked closely with Kumazo Kuwata, one of the association's founding members (Kubota, 1933/1980f), Kubota was influenced by the association's ideas about poverty and poverty interventions (Nakamura, 1980). Yoshida (1980) mentions that Kuwata significantly influenced the shaping of Kubota's ideas.

⁴⁸ Although Kubota insisted on the state's responsibility, this did not mean that he disregard individuals' efforts to intervene in poverty. In "About poverty," he stated that the baseline of poverty intervention measures was the endeavors of the person who was in a state of poverty.

In "About poverty," Kubota argued that since the original meaning of poverty referred a psychological state in which one's economic desires were unmet, poverty had to be objectively measurable if it was to be regarded as a social question requiring state intervention. To this end, he proposed a poverty threshold:

然らば如何なるものかと云ふに客觀的に略同一の種類分量品質の經濟的資料を支配して居る人が或時代或社會に或多數を以て存在して居る而て其多數の人々（之を社會階級と云ふ以下之に倣ふ）の間に於ける普通の感念で自己等は生存に必要最小限度の經濟的資料を缺いて居ると思料する然るときは社會一般から之を認知して彼等は生存に必要な最小限度の資料を缺くものと爲し此の社會階級の者が支配すると同一以下の種類分量性質の經濟的資料を支配する者を（各人各個が不足を感じておるか満足しておるかに拘らず）貧状態に在るものと稱する(What is to be called poverty is that, at a certain time in a certain society, there is a large sum of people who possess the same kind, quantity, and quality of economic resources. (The mass is called a social class.) In the same social class, if an individual's possession of economic resources is regarded as less than absolute necessity for survival, that person and others who have an equal or lesser kind, quantity, and quality of economic resources are regarded as being in a state of poverty (regardless of whether each individual feels a shortage or satisfaction)). (Kubota, 1915, p. 21)

Kubota (1915)'s poverty threshold encompassed social class. He ascertained that in each social class, there was a shared belief about the minimal standard of economic resources necessary for survival. He then used this as the yardstick for measuring poverty. Using the socially determined bare minimum as a poverty measurement meant that Kubota understood the definition of poverty as relative: poverty fluctuated according to time period and geographical region. For example, Kubota also mentioned that something that had previously been considered a luxury might now be regarded as an absolute necessity: as human society progressed, the standard of living advanced, as did the shared belief regarding the minimal standard of

economic resources necessary for survival, and consequently, the poverty threshold was pushed higher.

Kubota (1915)'s poverty threshold, which made poverty measurable, should be highlighted as Kubota's most innovative idea about poverty in the 1910s. It indicates the expansion of the target groups of poor people for whom his proposed poverty intervention systems were intended. In texts written before this period, he had not mentioned the poverty threshold. He had barely mentioned that the poor belonged to the working class (Kubota, 1899/1980d). Furthermore, he had prioritized intervening in the poverty of children and workers from a utilitarian perspective (Kubota, 1899/1980c).

Kubota also described how to intervene in poverty using a social reform approach in "About poverty":

乍併此の主義に基いて貧を排除するは一擧して現制を打破せんとする主義の如く簡單なるを許さず貧の因て來る原因を究め原因の種類結果の性質に應じて種々の方法施設は國家自ら之を行ふか否らざるも他を誘導奨勵強制援助する等國家の力を俟つものが多いのである (In this [social reform] approach, the elimination of poverty would not be as simple as in other approaches that aim to overturn the current regime at a single blow. It needs to pin down the cause of poverty, and according to the nature of the cause and its results, the state has to institute extensive intervention measures on its own or to lead and support others to do so). (Kubota, 1915, p. 20)

Kubota (1914/1980a, 1915) emphasized that the intervention measures had to be specific to the causes and patterns of poverty. For effective poverty interventions, he roughly categorized poverty into two types based on cause and effect. These were 個人の貧 (personal poverty) and 社會階級の貧 (social-class poverty), described in "About measures against poverty" and "About poverty," his paramount poverty texts of the 1910s.

The following description of how Kubota conceived of personal poverty is derived from "About measures against poverty," since the descriptions in this text are more clear-cut than in the other text. Kubota explained that the term "personal poverty" indicated that the individual was in a state of

poverty that was often caused by the interconnectedness of two causes: an autonomous cause, which he attributed to the individual's inclinations, and an external cause, which existed beyond the individual's control. He also stated that as society became more complex and industrialization proceeded, external causes became the dominant causes of poverty. As a case example, Kubota discussed how the introduction of machinery in factories had led to an increase in workers' injuries, which subsequently caused their poverty. Kubota stated that one should intervene in personal poverty by 1) eliminating external causes, 2) intervening when an external cause had already thrown an individual into poverty, 3) eliminating autonomous causes, which included placing the individual in a workhouse, and 4) providing relief to a person who was living in poverty as a result of autonomous causes. Although he mentioned poverty relief, he emphasized that this should be applied only in exceptional cases.

Kubota (1914/1980a, 1915)'s second category of poverty, social-class poverty, meant that an entire social class was in a state of poverty. The following description of social-class poverty is derived from Kubota's "About poverty," since this text gives a more elaborate explanation of the topic than "About poverty intervention measures."

In "About poverty," Kubota described two patterns of social-class poverty. The first was 相対的貧 (relative poverty), which occurred when the supply of material resources fell behind at the level of social class. The second was 絶對的貧 (absolute poverty), in which a social class suffered from a sheer shortage of material resources. Kubota considered absolute poverty to be the more harmful pattern, explaining it as follows:

社會階級の絶對的貧が公益上に及ぼす結果の最大なるものは經濟上の要素たる勞力の改善を妨げ爲めに國富の増進を阻害するに在る而して其最恐るべきは社會階級相互の間の反目から團體の結合を解弛して國の基礎を動搖せしめるに在る蓋社會主義、共產主義、無政府主義の如きは社會階級の貧から醗酵し此間に成長するのである夫故に社會階級の貧殊に絶對的貧の處置は國家百年の長計からして最必要なるものである (The greatest impact of absolute social-class poverty on the public benefit is that it disturbs the

improvement of the workforce, the fundamental element of economic development, and it disrupts the development of national wealth. What is most to be feared about social-class poverty is that it generates social-class conflict, disrupts the solidarity of the people, and shakes the foundations of the nation. Ideologies such as socialism, communism, and anarchism seethe and grow amid social-class poverty. Therefore, measures against social-class poverty, particularly against absolute poverty, are the most needed in the state's long-term planning). (Kubota, 1915, p. 36)

During the 1910s, Kubota (1915) thought that in an industrialized society, the most critical cause of absolute social-class poverty was unemployment. He explained the phenomenon of absolute poverty and the role the state ought to play. He stated that alongside frequent fluctuations in industry, the occurrence of unemployment became more sudden, frequent, and serious in an industrialized society. Kubota insisted that the state should focus on controlling the prices of daily necessities, and this included revising the tax system that caused price increases and opening public markets that would sell commodities at fair prices around the country.

6.2.2 Social policy

In the 1910s, Kubota regarded 社會政策 (social policy) as the most effective poverty intervention measure. In "About measures against poverty," he stated that of all poverty intervention measures, social policy should be focused on the most. In today's Japanese language, "social policy" connotes a system of public policies to intervene in a wide range of social issues.⁴⁹ However, in Kubota's day, the meaning of "social policy" was different from this. Kubota described social policy as follows:

所謂社會政策といふものは現今の私有財産制度の下に於きましては此制度と伴ふ所の弊害を排除する種々の方策といふものであって私有財産制度の下に於きましては資本階級と労働階級とが相別れて對立することになる。之を自然の自由競争に放任する時には少なくとも眼前の利害が相衝突する

⁴⁹ Contemporary Japanese writes "social policy" as 社会政策.

といふ所から、両者が軋轢し延いて全體の國家團體の結合を破壊する。少くとも全團體及各員の健全なる發達を阻害する。それ故に永遠の目的から打算して階級相互の利害を調和するといふ必要がある。此の如き方策が即ち社會政策と稱するものでありませう。(So-called social policy is wide-ranging measures to eliminate the maladies of the private ownership system. In this system, capitalists and workers are opposed to each other. If the tension between the two parties would be left to take its course, class conflict would arise, and it would disrupt the solidarity of the nation. At least, the conflict would disturb the healthy development of society and the healthy growth of each member of society. To build a better future, there is a need to mitigate capitalists' interests and workers' interests. A series of measures aiming for this mitigation is called social policy). (Kubota, 1914/1980a, p. 264)

The original aim of social policy was to mitigate class conflict; it did not aim straightforwardly to intervene in poverty. Nevertheless, Kubota (1914/1980a, 1915) regarded social policy as an effective measure to prevent workers from falling into poverty. The concept of social policy was not Kubota's invention. The progenitor of this Japanese concept was Noburu Kanai, who had been a member of the German Verein für Sozialpolitik (Kawai, 1939, p. 72) and made efforts to disseminate its theories in Japan (Kubota Seitaro shi o chūshin to suru zadankai, 1932/1980, p. 493).⁵⁰

As examples of specific social policy measures, Kubota (1915) mentioned unemployment insurance, the employment referral system (helping the unemployed to find new jobs), the safe bank savings system (encouraging workers to start saving against mishaps), and subsidiary housing for workers. Of these social policy measures, he put most of his energy and effort into subsidiary housing. Kubota (1918) regarded the lack of hygienic and affordable housing as the most urgent issue (p. 6). This was because since the onset of industrialization, the geographical concentration of the population had caused a serious housing shortage in urban areas.

⁵⁰ For more information about Kanai and the Verein für Sozialpolitik, see Chapter 5, Section 5.3.

6.3 Poverty as an ethical question (1920–1935)

Kubota's overall conception of poverty between 1920 and 1935 overlapped with his ideas from the 1910s. For example, he saw poverty as a social-class issue that was inherent to industrial society (Kubota, 1920/1980b). He also maintained the same understanding of poverty as interlocked with the progress of human society: that is, the more human society developed, the more complexity he identified in the dynamics surrounding poverty, such as its causes and effects (Kubota, 1920/1980b). But although Kubota's fundamental understanding of poverty remained very similar to that of the 1910s, there were some features of his thinking about poverty that started to appear only after 1920. The first of these features was that Kubota (1920/1980b) started to regard “共同生活に伴ふ人性自然の要求 (human and natural demand for communal life) as the most fundamental reason for the need to intervene in poverty (p. 273). He also started to emphasize the importance of establishing an extensive and flexible state poverty relief system that would provide the necessities of life to those who were already living in poverty (Kubota, 1920/1980b). In other words, after 1920, Kubota started to advocate for a universal state poverty relief system. This was a significant difference from his previous thinking about poverty, because the poverty intervention measures he had proposed in the 1910s had centered on preventing working-class people from falling into poverty.

6.3.1 Human and natural demand for communal life as a reason to intervene in poverty

Kubota's logical explanation of the need for poverty interventions changed after the 1910s. Although he had already stated that the elimination of poverty was necessary from an ethical point of view in the text “About poverty,” written in 1915 (p. 35), his rationale for poverty interventions during the 1910s was to mitigate social-class conflict. In “Poverty,” written in 1920, Kubota discussed the “human and natural demand for communal life,” by which he meant that people's demand for a society that fully implemented justice and humanity was the preeminent reason for eliminating poverty (p. 273). He explained this as follows:

思ふに人性の悲哀は半以上貧窮から生ずる。此種の悲哀が不斷に我々の前に展開せられて居ることは、我々の堪へ得る所でない。殊に其の貧窮が當人の責に歸す可らざる原因から來て居る場合には、其處に何等か社會上の缺陷があること、正義が傷つけられて居ることに氣付いて、我々の社會的良心に苦痛を感じざるを得ぬのである。此の苦痛を免れ人道と正義の要求を充し、社會的良心に満足を與へることが貧窮の排除の問題の核心であつて、唯此の一事のみよりしても、我々の社會から貧窮を排除する爲あらゆる努力を試むべき充分の理由があるのである。而して貧窮を排除し、人道及社會的正義に満足を與へることはやがて國家生活、社會生活を維持し、其の健全なる發達を見る所以となるのである。(I think more than half of human sorrow stems from poverty. It is unbearable to see such sorrow going on continuously in front of our very eyes. Particularly, when we witness poverty induced by some external cause over which the sufferer has no control, we realize that there are some malfunctions in our society, and justice is damaged; this realization induces pain in our social conscience. Eliminating this pain, demanding humanity and justice, and fulfilling social conscience are the most fundamental reasons why we have to make every effort to eliminate poverty from our society. Eliminating poverty and fulfilling people's demand for humanity and social justice would help to sustain the stability of the state and society, which would facilitate the further development of both). (Kubota, 1920/1980b, p. 273)

Kubota was trying to point out here that the existence of poverty meant that the state had not yet achieved a just society; in order to achieve it, the government had to make efforts toward the removal of poverty. He complained that since the Meiji Restoration, the government had prioritized the “rich nation and strong army” and had neglected to institute systems to intervene in poverty so as to satisfy the “human and natural demand for communal life” (Kubota, 1920/1980b, p. 273).

It remains unknown why Kubota (1920/1980b) started to emphasize the “human and natural demand for communal life” as the rationale for poverty interventions. I have not been able to trace this information, either in Kubota's own texts or in existing secondary literature on him. He may

have started to integrate his thinking about poverty interventions with the concept of 社會事業 (social work)⁵¹. This concept gained a foothold in Japan in the 1920s (Yamagata, 2013). The 1920s Japanese conception of social work was influenced by the social work ideology of the United States and the *solidarisme* (solidarism) of Léon Bourgeois (Yoshida, 1994, p. 146). Kubota (1935/1980m) explained that aim of social work was to realize 社會連帶の思想 (the idea of social solidarity) and to engage in improving people's lives (p. 508). He described his interpretation of this idea in 社會事業の意義精神 ("Conception and fundamental idea of social work").

又た近來我國に於ても、社會連帶と云ふ學説が盛んに唱へられるが、此學説によると社會の人々は相依り相俟つて生存するもので、社會を離れて各個人は絶対に生存することは出来ない、即ち社會の人々は社會連帶の關係に立つものであるから、社會の一部の人々が、苦痛を受け困難をしてゐるときには、他の人々は夫れ夫れ應分の力を盡して、其苦痛や困難を取り除けてやる事が當然の勗めであつて、恰も親子兄弟の内に誰れか困まるものがあれば、互に助け合ふのと同じことである、(Recently in our country, the theory of social solidarity has become popular. According to this theory, people in society live interdependently, and an individual would never be able to survive away from society. Since members of society are in relationships of social solidarity, if certain members of society are in great straits and are struggling, it is only natural that other members should do their best to relieve that pain and struggle. This is the same as mutual help between a parent and child or among siblings). (Kubota, 1924, p. 3)

I regard the idea of social solidarity as Kubota (1924) described it here as the foundation of his insistence on state poverty interventions from 1920 onward. In other words, Kubota took a social solidarity approach to poverty issues after 1920. The influence of the idea of social solidarity on Kubota's thinking about poverty is also mentioned by Nakamura (1980).

⁵¹ 社會事業 is an old character form. In contemporary Japanese, it is written 社会事業.

6.3.2 Asserting the need to provide material relief for the poor

Kubota started to firmly assert the need to provide the poor with material aid, which he called 救貧處置 (poverty relief measure), in the text “Poverty.”⁵² In the roundtable discussion “Question and answer about the poverty relief system in Inamuragasaki” (Tada, 1928), Kubota explained what he meant by poverty relief and his rationalization why it was needed (p. 139). He described poverty relief as an extensive state relief system that aimed to alleviate the poverty of individuals, particularly those who were unable to receive assistance from existing relief schemes. The reason he advocated for this system was that he understood the government’s approach to poverty at the time as partial. For example, he commented that although he agreed with the way the government dealt with poverty by focusing on a certain aspect—such as children’s poverty, or the poverty of patients with Hansen’s disease or tuberculosis—he nevertheless wanted to point out that there were some people who fell through the cracks in the system.

Recognizing the limitations of the state’s existing poverty intervention system, in the round-table discussion that took place in 1928, Kubota urged the state to institute a safety net that would at least provide people living in poverty with the absolute necessities of life (Tada, 1928, p. 139). Kubota’s insistence on a safety net may have been connected to the deteriorating situation with regard to poverty at that time. According to one study, about ten percent of Japan’s total population were categorized as 一般貧民 (the general poor) who managed in some way to gain only the absolutely necessary food, clothing, and shelter (Shakaikyoku, 1922, as cited in Ogawa, 1960b, p. 203). The same report put ten percent of the general poor into the category of 極貧の窮民 (the destitute poor) who lacked the absolute necessities for survival (Shakaikyoku, 1922, as cited in Ogawa, 1960b, p. 203).

While Kubota insisted on the need for poverty relief in this sense from 1920 onward, he did not explain in detail how to implement it. This may be because of his lesser official involvement in poverty issues at that time. Although he had been serving as an executive member of the Central Charity Association,

⁵² Kubota mentioned about poverty relief measure in “About poverty” written in 1915 (pp. 41–42), but his strong assertion started in this text written in 1920.

and he had tried to make his voice heard on the issue of poverty interventions, by 1920 the newly established Bureau of Social Affairs had become the office in charge of poverty intervention issues (Kubota, 1980m/1935).

7 SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

This chapter consists of the four parts. The first part summarizes my analysis of Kubota's thinking about poverty, which I discussed in detail in Chapter 6. The second part compares my findings with some of the findings from the previous studies described in Chapter 3. In the third part, I explain what I have learned from analyzing Kubota's thinking about poverty, especially, its relation to public discussions of poverty in contemporary Japan. The last part discusses the implication for future research.

7.1 Summary of my analysis of Kubota's thinking about poverty

Based on indications in previous studies that Kubota's thinking about poverty shifted over time (Nakamura, 1980; Noguchi, 2000), I focused on analyzing the contents and patterns of the shifts in his thinking in order to understand how he conceptualized poverty. To this end, I divided the poverty texts he wrote between 1899 and 1935 into three different periods based on how he problematized poverty. Kubota changed his ways of problematizing poverty over these years because the thinking about poverty, and surrounding contexts such as the government's attitude toward poverty interventions, kept changing. Along with these changes, Kubota's problematization of poverty also changed.

In the first period, Kubota problematized poverty as a hindrance to the development of the nation. He argued that since poverty was an obstacle to the realization of the national slogan "rich nation and strong army," the state must intervene in it. Although Kubota asserted that the state had to intervene in poverty, he did not insist that the state should provide relief to all people living in poverty. He was aware that the institution of an extensive poverty intervention system to provide material aid would be harmful to the development of the state. This was because he feared that providing material aid in an indiscriminate manner would erode people's spirit of self-help,

which he valued as the most vital source of the development of the state (Kubota, 1899/1980c). In order not to interfere in the development of the nation and to preserve the benefit to the state, Kubota took a utilitarian approach to poverty intervention and asserted that the state should focus on intervening in the poverty of those who were likely to contribute to the state's development. These were workers and children. As interventions in workers' poverty, Kubota (1899/1980c) proposed healthcare systems and health insurance for workers so that sickness or injury would not make them poor. As an intervention in children's poverty, Kubota (1899/1980c) proposed the provision of education. Although Kubota focused on prioritizing poverty interventions for workers and children from a utilitarian perspective, he did not dismiss the idea of intervening in the poverty of frail elderly people and people with terminal illnesses or permanent physical impairments that disabled them for work (Kubota, 1899/1980c). He proposed that out of benevolence and moral responsibility, these people should be put into institutions where they would receive food, shelter, clothing, and the care necessary for their survival (Kubota, 1899/1980c).

In the 1910s, taking a social reformist approach, Kubota problematized poverty as a social question that was a negative by-product of social progress. During this period, he emphasized the importance of the state's role in administering poverty interventions. This was because he understood that as society progressed, poverty-inducing mechanisms became more complicated, and there were more social causes of poverty over which individuals had very little control, such as large-scale unemployment (Kubota, 1914/1980a, 1915). Kubota proposed social policy—by which he meant a wide-ranging public administration that aimed to provide economic assistance to working-class people such as subsidiary housing—as an effective poverty prevention measure, even though its original aim was to mitigate the economic gap between the haves and have-nots (Kubota, 1914/1980a).

Kubota's argument for poverty interventions from 1920 onward was founded in a social solidarist approach, and he started to problematize poverty as an ethical issue. He explained that when people witnessed the misery of poverty caused by some external factor over which the person living in poverty had no control, it sparked a crisis of conscience in them

because they realized that their society was unjust (Kubota, 1920/1980b). He started to advocate that the government of a just society was also the state's responsibility. Regarding poverty as an ethical issue also impacted on his strategic ideas about poverty intervention. Previously, he had prioritized intervening in the poverty of those who possessed some attributes that would contribute to the development of the state, but after 1920, he insisted on intervening in the poverty of all people. He stated that people living in poverty must be fed and sheltered by the state, even if the institution of such aid might lead some people to misuse the system in the roundtable discussion (Tada, 1928, p. 139). **Table 4** summarizes how the elements of Kubota's thinking about poverty transformed across the three different time periods.

While I focused on identifying the patterns and content of transformations in Kubota's thinking about poverty, I also found an unchanging element in his thinking that transcended the three different periods. This was his understanding of how poverty was induced. He understood that the structures of the capitalist economic system inevitably and constantly produced the causes of poverty. Although he identified the root cause of poverty in the capitalist economic system, he was against replacing it with anything else, such as the shared ownership of the means of production urged by socialists. This was because he saw the ongoing maintenance of the capitalist economic system as the way to further develop the Japanese Empire, which was his prime concern. Since he insisted on the maintenance of the existing economic system, it can be said that he took a reformist position on poverty intervention throughout all the years of his career, even though his ways of problematizing poverty changed at different periods.

Table 4. Summary of the transformations of elements of Kubota’s thinking about poverty

	Poverty as a hindrance to the development of the nation (1899–1909)	Poverty as a social question (1910s)	Poverty as an ethical issue (1920–1935)
Poverty intervention approach	Public benefit-oriented	Social reform	Social solidarity
Main targets	Workers, children	People who belonged to the working class	People who lacked the absolute necessities of life
State of poverty	Living and working in unhygienic conditions	Having fewer economic resources than the minimum standard	Having fewer economic resources than the minimum standard
Major cause of poverty	Economic principles	Unemployment	Insufficient state poverty relief system
Social impact of poverty	Disturbs industrial development	Leads to social unrest	Harms the value of social justice
Focused poverty intervention measures	Individuals’ use of the spirit of self-help, education, social systems, social policing system	Control of prices of daily necessities, social policy	Poverty relief system

7.2 Comparing my analysis with the analyses done with previous studies

Based on Nakamura (1980)’s and Noguchi (2000)’s findings, which identify transformations in Kubota’s thinking about poverty by comparing three texts—“Opinion on the poor relief system” (1899), “About measures against poverty” (1914), and “Poverty” (1920)—I have focused on analyzing the contents and patterns of his changing thinking about poverty. Although I have been able to access more of Kubota’s texts than those two previous researchers, thanks to the digitalization of library systems and materials, I have divided

his thinking about poverty into time periods in a way that is similar to theirs. Each of the texts by Kubota that Nakamura (1980) and Noguchi (2000) identify as key to his changing understanding of poverty can be slotted into periods that I have generated based on the way he problematized poverty. My broad outline of how Kubota's thinking changed over time is similar to the outline provided by Nakamura (1980) and Noguchi (2000). However, despite this broad similarity, the details of my analysis of Kubota's thinking about poverty in each time period differ from those found in existing studies. For example, my analysis of Kubota's views about the causes of poverty during his early career differs from that offered by Nakamura (1980). While Nakamura (1980) analyzes "Opinion on the poor relief system" and concludes that Kubota was not yet able to locate the causes of poverty in society when he wrote the text, I argue that Kubota at this time had already noted the social-structural cause of poverty. I draw this conclusion by analyzing another text he wrote in the same year, "Hygiene: Lecture on hygiene law (series 1)." I owe my different perspective on Kubota's view of the causes of poverty during his early career to the advantage of conducting my research at a time when libraries have been digitalized. I found "Hygiene: Lecture on hygiene law (series 1)" by using Kubota's full name as the keyword for a search in the National Diet Library Digital Collection. Since "Hygiene: Lecture on hygiene law (series 1)" was published in the journal 警察眼 (*Police Eyes*), which does not immediately seem to be related to issues of poverty or social welfare, I would not have been able to find this text through a manual search.

7.3 Learning from Kubota's thinking about poverty

As explained in Chapter 2, the *senjo rekishigaku* paradigm regards history as a series of intentional acts by a historian who tries to bring insights from the past into the present in order to alleviate or solve a contemporary social issue. In this study, I aim to find insights from the past by analyzing Kubota's thinking about poverty and to bring these insights to current public discussions of poverty in which *jiko sekinin* (personal responsibility) is widespread. I question

the intense contemporary focus on *jiko sekinin* because it simplifies poverty as a personal matter.

Kubota's logical explanation of how poverty is caused opposes the contemporary idea of *jiko sekinin*. In his 1899 work "Hygiene: Lecture on hygiene law (series 1)", Kubota argued that the wealth gap between the haves and the have-nots is caused by the principles of economy, and that there is little room for individuals' efforts to alleviate their own poverty (p. 33). Furthermore, in his 1915 work "About poverty", Kubota stated that as civilization proceeds, the causes of poverty due to social structures increase; simultaneously, it becomes even harder for individuals to avoid poverty by their own efforts (pp.19–20). These two works from different time periods indicate that Kubota ascribed the causes of poverty to the systems of society, not to individuals. Kubota's view of systems or societal structures as causes of poverty should be actively used to oppose the current phenomenon of excessively emphasizing *jiko sekinin*. That is because the logic of *jiko sekinin* begins by blaming poverty on the indiscretion of individuals.

7.4 The implication for future research

Finally, I would like to make a suggestion for future research on Kubota's thinking about poverty. I have interpreted Kubota's thinking about poverty by using the descriptions of poverty he gave in his published texts. With these materials, I was able to identify the fundamental elements of his thinking about poverty. However, in order to learn more about the backdrop to his thinking, such as how and why he insisted on specific poverty intervention measures at particular times, I would have liked to do more contextualization by using wide-ranging historical sources including Kubota's own writings. It has recently come to my attention that the Japan College of Social Work possesses Kubota's unpublished personal diaries for the period from 1902 to 1944 (Naganuma, 2020).⁵³ Since I learned too late of the existence of these

⁵³ Naganuma (2020) states that the 39 volumes of Kubota's personal diaries in the college's possession are not continuous, and they include entries written in 1902, 1905–1912, 1913–1933, and 1935–1944.

unpublished personal diaries, I was not able to include them in the data. However, in order to understand Kubota's thinking about poverty in its rich contexts, these unpublished personal diaries should be treated as a data source.

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APPENDIX

This list of Kubota's publications is arranged in a chronological order. The publication information is in a widely used referencing format in Japanese-language scientific publications. Only the titles of Kubota's publications have been translated into English; the translated title appears at the top of each publication.

Discussion: Employers' responsibility and workers' compensation. 「討論 論題 建築請負人甲ハ家ヲ建ルコトヲ請負ヒタルニ、其工作中職工ノ一人乙懈怠ニ由リ他ノ職工丙ニ負傷セシメタリ。此ニ於テ丙ハ甲ニ對シ賠償ノ訴ヲ起セリ。甲ニ責任アリヤ。但シ乙ノ雇入ニ付テハ甲ハ不注意ノ廉ナク又乙ハ相當ノ技能才智ヲ有スル丁年ノ職工ナリ。」『法學協會雜誌』1891年9卷1号、ページ番号不明（同論文は日本社会事業大学編1980年『窪田静太郎 論集』日本社会事業大学、323-325ページに所載）

Discussion: Principal debtor and guarantor. 「討論 論題 主債務者詐偽ニ由リテ取消シ得ベキ時ニ保證人知リツツ保證シタリ後日ニ至リ主債務者其義務ヲ取消シタル時保證人義務ヲ負フヤ否ヤ。」『法學協會雜誌』1891年9卷3号、ページ番号不明（同論文は日本社会事業大学編1980年『窪田静太郎 論集』日本社会事業大学、326-329ページに所載）

Limiting prostitutes' term of service. 「娼妓稼ノ年期ノ制限」『警察新報』1891年3号、12-21ページ

Limiting female entertainers' living district (series 1). 「藝妓ノ居住地ノ制限」『警察新報』1892年7号、12-16ページ

Limiting female entertainers' living district (series 2). 「藝妓ノ居住地ノ制限（承前）」『警察新報』1892年8号、10-15ページ

Question and answer about law: What is the local police force? 「法令質疑（一）問題 地方警察トハイカナルモノヲ云ウヤ」『警察新報』1892年11号、19-22ページ

Question and answer about law: About hunting law. 「法令辯疑（三）問題 十六年未滿ノ者、白痴、瘋癲等ノ者、故ナク弓箭銃砲ヲ放ツノ刑ヲ受ケシ者、ニハ免狀ヲ付與セサルハ鳥獸獵規則第七條規定ナリ茲ニ鳥獸獵免狀ヲ願出ツルモノアリ其資格ヲ取調フルニ第七條ニ該ルモノニアラサルモ惡漢者ニシテ之レニ免狀ヲ與フルキハ危險尠カラス此場合ニ於テハ許否權アルヲ以テ免狀ヲ付與セサルヲ得ルカ將タ第七條列記ノ外ハ如何ナルモノト雖モ許サルヘカラサルカ 解答」 『警察新報』 1892年12号、14-17ページ

Theory of law. 『法学通論』 1893年、私家版

Public administration of hygiene and prevention of contagious disease (series 1). 「衛生 傳染病豫防に關する行政機關に就て(上)」 『警察眼』 1897年6卷3号(112)、17-25ページ

Public administration of hygiene and prevention of contagious disease (series 2). 「衛生 傳染病豫防に關する行政機關に就て(下)」 『警察眼』 1897年6卷4号(113)、219-227ページ

About the Contagious Disease Prevention Act. 「豫防法に就て」 『警察眼』 1897年6卷9号(118)、4-12ページ

Compulsory insurance for workers. 『労働者強制保險』 1899年、私家版

About protection of the poor with sickness. 「貧民ノ疾病保護ニ就テ」 『國家學會雜誌』 1899年13卷148号、72-84ページ

Social systems. 「社會的の制度一斑」 『國家學會雜誌』 1899年13卷149号、69-89ページ

Municipal governance and the social system. 「地方自治ト社會的の制度」 『國家學會雜誌』 1899年13卷150号、44-56ページ

Hygiene: Lecture on hygiene law (series 1). 「衛生 衛生法講義（其一）」 『警察眼』 1899年10卷8号(165)、523-532ページ

Hygiene: Lecture on hygiene law (series 2). 「衛生 衛生法講義（其二）」 『警察眼』 1899年10卷9号(166)、570-580ページ

Hygiene: Lecture on hygiene law (series 3). 「衛生 衛生法講義（其三）」 『警察眼』 1899年10卷10号(167)、642-662ページ

Hygiene: Lecture on hygiene law (series 4). 「衛生 衛生法講義（其四）」 『警察眼』 1899年10卷11号(168)、714-728ページ

Hygiene: Lecture on hygiene law (series 5). 「衛生 衛生法講義（其五）」 『警察眼』 1899年10卷12号(169)、786-796ページ

- Opinion on the poor relief system. 「貧民救済制度意見」 『社會』 1899年11号、ページ番号不明（同論文は日本社会事業大学編1980年『窪田静太郎論集』日本社会事業大学、154-159ページに所載）
- Hygiene: Lecture on hygiene law (series 6). 「衛生 衛生法講義（其六）」 『警察眼』 1900年11巻1号(170)、6-24ページ
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- Hygiene: Lecture on hygiene law (series 8). 「衛生 衛生法講義（其八）」 『警察眼』 1900年11巻3号(172)、14-46ページ
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- Hygiene: Lecture on hygiene law (series 10). 「衛生 衛生法講義（其十）」 『警察眼』 1900年11巻5号(174)、24-68ページ
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- Lecture on hygiene (series 1). 「衛生法講義」 『警察協會雜誌』 1900年1号、40-44 ページ
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- Lecture on hygiene (series 3). 「衛生法講義(承前)」 『警察協會雜誌』 1900年3号、28-33 ページ
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AKIKO KOSAKA

Seitaro Kubota was one of the few government officials who asserted the necessity for state poverty intervention systems at a time when the Japanese government was reluctant to intervene in poverty issues. By analyzing his ideas about poverty with particular attention to its transformation patterns, this study aims to provide a narrative of the genesis of social work in Japan since the 1890s. .



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